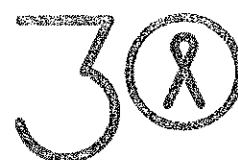


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HIV Ireland
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**ANNOUNCING THE WORLD'S
MOST SENSITIVE CONDOM.**

Mates are every bit as sensitive and reliable as other condoms. They're just as effective at helping to prevent the transmission of cervical cancer, venereal diseases and even AIDS.

Yet they cost less than other condoms.

What makes them twice as sensitive though, is the fact that profits from Mates Healthcare Ltd. go to help the fight against AIDS. AIDS is neither a gay plague, nor something that's going to go away if we ignore it.

In Africa, it's estimated that there are 10,000,000 carriers - men, women and children.

In New York, the disease is already the biggest single killer of ~~women~~ between the ages of 25-35. And in this country, it's estimated that up to 100,000 people will be infected by 1991.

Mates Healthcare Ltd. was set up with the dual aims of making condoms more widely available and acceptable, and of raising money to provide practical assistance, education and information about AIDS.

To make condoms more widely used, we're introducing a range. Including Coloured Mates, Natural Mates and Ribbed Mates, all of which carry the BSI Kite-mark.

And, thanks to many forward-thinking retailers, Mates are far more widely available. Mates Healthcare Ltd. will be using its profits to help educate people about 'Safer Sex' techniques. Providing educational videos, informative literature and practical advice.

We also plan to give money to counselling services and hospices for those dying of the disease.

In short, we want to provide as much money as we can where it will be the most use.

These days, it makes sense to use a condom. And we think it makes more sense to use Mates.

MATES. YOU MAKE LOVE. THEY MAKE SENSE.



To tolerate or to deplore?

Today the General Synod debates its attitudes to homosexuality. Sally Brompton talks to two ministers in neighbouring parishes who hold radically conflicting views

While Britain's Anglican clergy awaits the outcome of the General Synod's current battle to determine its latest interpretation of good and evil, the views of the Church of England's grass-roots ministers are as complex as the ambiguities in the Bible itself.

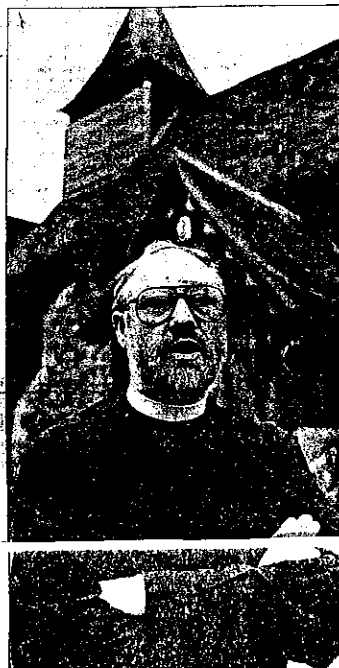
Loosely divided into those governed by traditional conservative beliefs and morality and the relatively new liberal lobby, the reactions of the men in the pulpit

They are men like Father Neil Richardson and the Rev John Weeks, parish priests bound together by a sincere vocation and desire to spread the gospel, yet separated by moral convictions so diverse that they might almost belong to separate calls.

The fact that Richardson and Weeks graduated from the same theological college in Salisbury and minister in the same west London borough merely serves to emphasize the profound divisions in the modern Church of England.

While their parishes are just a few minutes drive apart in the multi-class and multi-cultural suburb of Ealing, Richardson and Weeks represent either side of the moral dilemma regarding homosexuality and promiscuity being debated by the Synod.

Neither male fits into the traditional mould of the more upper-class, Oxbridge-educated clergyman, sustainer of the "gentleman's church" which the Church of England was once held to be. Richardson, aged 41, comes from a northern background with a solid tradition of Christian socialism. His father was a tailor's cutter, "an ordinary working man", and Richardson went from secondary modern to technical college, then to university, and to gather together other O and A levels to train as a teacher, teaching English and religious education in the 1960s.



'Homosexuals have got as much right to sexual expression as everybody else; we should look for the good in it and encourage fidelity'

Neil Richardson (left), Rector of the Holy Cross Church, Glenora

...the sexual practice of sexual intercourse between men I find abhorrent. It feels as if I cannot understand it, because the act is entirely negative, it has no liberative purpose and is entirely contrary to the creative order of things and the way that we as human beings have evolved.

"Even so, I find that I can have sympathy for a person who is torn apart by the realization that he is homosexual not just by tendency but in practice. But I do believe that those who are unrepentant about their sexual orientation are practising homosexuals with more than one partner should not be parents."

Although the two men meet regularly at deanery synods and clergy chapter meetings, they have never discussed their personal views, although Weeks recalls one meeting of the local high school board, of which they are both governors when "we were very


education for two years before going to theological college. He was ordained a priest at the age of 29, serving first in Oldham, Manchester, before becoming rector of the Catholic-style Church of the Holy Cross, Greenford, in 1982 (average congregation: 120).

Last year he became a member of Ealing's socialist council — "I see being a councillor as an expression of an aspect of ministering as a Christian" — supporting its controversial proposal to

teach gay rights in schools and causing an additional furore when it was discovered that he gives church blessings to gay and lesbian couples. He describes himself as "a working-class person who has become gentrified to some extent". His wife, Marion, is a part-time physiotherapist and they have two sons aged 16 and 18 and a 12-year-old son.

Weeks, aged 59, who was brought up as a Congregationalist, is the son of a former Quaker and commercial traveller. He went to a grammar school, got an honours degree in economics and political

science at Trinity College, Dublin, and worked as export manager for a chemical firm in Leeds. It was only when he married his wife, Veronica, the daughter of an Anglican parson, that he was confirmed into the Church of England.

 He decided to take the cloth himself after realizing that "the commercial world was not my scene". He was ordained a priest

when he was 36, serving in four west London parishes including St Mary's, Hanwell (average congregation: 130), where he has been rector since 1984. His wife works part-time as an occupational therapist and they have two daughters aged 23 and 24.

24. While Richardson accepts and supports homosexual relationships among the clergy — "they feel the only way to be true to their nature is to express their love towards another person of the same sex" — it is an attitude which dismays Weeks.

"We're just normal colleagues, friendly but not friends," Richardson says. "We're certainly not bosom pals," Weeks agrees. Even so, when he and his wife first moved to Hanwell they were invited to lunch at the Richardson and Richardson has been

sons and Richardson has been known to drop into Weeks rectory to borrow the odd bit of church music. When they do meet, however, they are more concerned about comparing notes on funeral directors or roof repairers than

Richardson ("I'm very much moderate") maintains that "homosexuals have got as much right to sexual expression and sexual satisfaction as everybody else."

sexual satisfaction as everybody else; I think we should look for the good in it and encourage fidelity and strength of relationship." Weeks ("I see myself as a liberal traditionalist") says: "I'm not certain how faithful a relationship can be between two males. I have a nasty feeling that it is far more difficult for homosexuals to be faithful within a relationship than it is for heterosexuals."



**'The practice
of sexual
intercourse
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I find
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It appals me.
It is
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the creative
order of
things'**

John Weeks (left), Rector
of St Mary's, Harwell

Weeds does not approve of what he describes as Richardson's "political gospel," particularly when it comes to encouraging gay rights in schools. For Richardson, however, it is an integral part of his beliefs. "I think the question of sexuality should be treated honestly, sympathetically and sensitively in schools. I think we should teach children that there are some people who are homosexual and that for them sexual expression is their proper and natural outlet for their sexual energy and that they have every right to that loving expression, in the same way that heterosexual couples do." Weeds failed to curle up at this point; he merely looked at the local preachers who met him recently with cries of "Throw a noose round his necks" and "Take his collar off."

Weeks's view is that sex should be confined to heterosexual married couples. He refuses to marry divorcees, although he offers them a special service of blessing to follow the civil ceremony. He regards it as the clergy's duty to take a moral lead. "I don't think we should be put on pedestals by people who have very high expectations of us," he says.

"I think my role is really to be the opposite of what the world pursues in many ways. I think we are concerned with the quality of relationships within the pastoral family."

Richardson, however, believes that "the Church is a reflection of the people and the society of which it is a part. I am frustrated most by the feeling that I am dealing with volunteers. You're not in a command structure. You have to deal with change at a much slower rate than you want to deal with it because you've got to take your congregation with you. The hardest part is trying to win over the volunteers to your way of thinking."

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He talks in the chintzy living-room of his 1920s rectory, a tall, bluff, avuncular figure with an endearing guffaw. Richardson describes him as a "very stable, steady, experienced clergyman who has got a lot to offer younger clergy, possibly a future dean and

For his part, Weeks sees Richardson as "an amiable,

Richardson as an amiable, articulate clergyman who doesn't lose his cool. As a person, I quite like Neil," he admits. "I would always seek to understand his point of view even though I can't endorse it."

Weeks believes in such biblical fundamentals as the virgin birth — "I have got this conception that, despite all the murky areas that we see around us, life is essentially immensely creative", Richardson is harder to pin down on his specific biblical beliefs. "Some days I might believe in the virgin birth and some days I might not. I don't want to be put into a box.

The Bible is about self-understanding. I often think we don't do ourselves any favours by hiding the truth about life from ourselves."

Stocky and bearded, he sprawls in an armchair in the living-room of his rambling rectory, while his wife pours coffee into large red mugs. She stays to listen to her husband's opinions, which, for the most part, she shares.

Richardson acknowledges that his political activities cause concern among his parishioners, while some of his council colleagues are uneasy about the fact that he is a churchman. "There are areas of uncomfortable feeling, areas where people have not really known whether I am there as a clergyman who is interested in people's problems anyway or as a councillor who is elected to solve that particular problem. Sometimes they have difficulty talking to me because they don't know who he's talking to."

Time for the Church of England to re-affirm biblical morality

Tony Highton on why the Synod should today denounce homosexuality

For years the General Synod of the Church of England has managed to sit on the fence over sexual morality in general and homosexuality in particular. However, I find I have greatly increased my personal popularity by putting up a private member's motion on the subject which requires a decision. Normally debates on these motions are tucked into odd corners of the Synod's timetable. But at its first stage this one gained a large number of signatures which sent shock waves through the Establishment. Hence it is a main debate, with up to two hours allotted for it.

The motion says fornication, adultery and homosexual practice are sinful in all circumstances and that Christian leaders are to be exemplary in sexual morality as a condition of being appointed to or remaining in office. It also calls on the Church to show compassion to those who have fallen into these sins, offering forgiveness to the penitent and healing.

With the massive media interest, it really isn't on to avoid making a decision this time. It would be seen as a spectacular failure by the Church. I have it via the grapevine that some of the hierarchy think that either a Yes or a No vote would be a disaster. I can't really see the bishops requiring a division by houses (ie bishops, clergy and laity voting separately) to defeat the motion when the TV cameras would automatically record each bishop's vote. We would know who voted against

sexual immorality and who didn't. Why did I do it? It certainly wasn't just to rock the boat. Rather, after a great deal of prayer, thought and consultation, I felt there were serious reasons to go ahead.

First, the Church is here to serve God yet it all too often plays fast and loose with the Bible (which Church law officially describes as the word of God). Only the biblically and historically illiterate could think my motion is something new. The Bible clearly condemns the practices. For example, in Romans 1:27 we are told: "Men abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion." And the tradition of the universal Church for 2,000 years has agreed with this. I am simply asking Synod to reaffirm it.

Today, however, some Christians arrogantly reject this tradition, and the likes of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement interpret Scripture with arguments that could prove that black is white. The tolerance of, for example, homosexual practice undermines the central message of the Christian faith. It is fundamental to that message that sin is sin, otherwise the cross of Christ is reduced to the level of a sad martyrdom. The message of Jesus was "re-

pent for the kingdom of Heaven is near". Our message sometimes seems to be that sin does not really matter, and if it does God forgives everybody anyway, irrespective of whether they repent. This is a cheap replica of the real message, that Christ's forgiveness is freely available to those who repent — however serious their sin.

One fundamental sin is to act in a way which is contrary to God's created order. Homosexual practice is a case in point. God created mankind male and female. The two sexes are complementary, and true sexual fulfilment can only come in heterosexual marriage. Homosexual acts are a sad parody of this. And they are profoundly unhealthy — doing damage to the body and readily introducing diseases into it. The American Public Health Association discovered that 75 per cent of homosexuals had had at least one sexually transmitted disease. In addition to this, many psychiatrists report that guilt is a big problem for homosexuals.

All this points to the fact that homosexual practice is contrary to the created order. But recreation is central to the Church's message. Coming to faith in Christ means a new start: a new creation by the supernatural intervention of God. Compare this with the pathetic determinism current in the Church, which says homosexuals were born that way and must remain

like it. They have these tendencies and so have no choice but to fulfil them.

This flies in the face of the evidence. Various psychological techniques claim some success in changing the orientation of dissatisfied homosexuals. Also, religious conversion has meant transformation for many (as reported, for example, in the evidence from the British Medical Association to the Wolfenden Committee in 1955).

Secondly, the Church is here to serve the nation, and we are failing badly — only 2 per cent of the population attend the Church of England on an average Sunday.

Morality is central to the welfare of a nation, and Aids underlines the disturbing consequences of immorality. The credibility of the Church has not been enhanced by our inordinate delay in saying anything as a Synod about Aids. Yet it is a pandemic which is spread by promiscuity.

The nation has begun to find that materialism is dissatisfying, that sexual licence is disastrous. There is a spiritual hunger, but the Church of England often doesn't seem attractive fare. The occult and the cults, with all their dangers, sadly fill the vacuum for some people.

On the other hand, local churches which are stressing the teaching of the Scriptures regarding doctrine and morals, as well as tapping into the super-

natural power of Jesus Christ, are growing. They are seeing lives transformed, individuals healed. They function as caring families with every member playing his or her full part in the Church. Their worship is joyful and they are conveying the message of God's love to their local community. I spend much more of my time encouraging my own and other churches in these matters than I do on synodical business. However, my motion will not get an easy ride. I can anticipate some of the arguments against it. First, that homosexuals are nice people — elderly canons and caring "couples". But since when was being nicely perverted better than simply being perverted?

Then I'll be accused of wanting a witch-hunt. This is ridiculous. I don't want people to be spied on and "caught out". There is no need, anyway. The problems all too often come to light without being hunted.

And, of course, I will be labelled a "fundamentalist" — a real debate-stopper if ever there was one! If it means a "flat-earth", I reject the title. If it implies a call to reaffirm, intelligently, basic biblical principles, I accept it.

Last of all, the Synod will be tempted by that peculiarly Anglican doctrine that if we are "nice" to people and do not challenge them, they will flock to church. That is not only the opposite of Christ's methods, it's got to be one of the most disapproved theories of all time. Tony Highton is rector of Hawkswell, Essex.

Plea to retailers on AIDS fight

BY RAYMOND SNODDY

F7 11/11/87

MS ANITA RODDICK, managing director of the Body Shop, yesterday attacked some of her fellow retailers for failing to support the Virgin Healthcare Foundation, which plans to market inexpensive condoms and education for young people in the battle against AIDS.

Ms Roddick, a trustee of the foundation set up by Mr Richard Branson, chairman of the Virgin Group, said yesterday it had not been easy to persuade some retailers in areas such as fashion to stock Mates, the foundation's new condom.

Too many retailers, she said, had judged "profit lines and image more important than social responsibility." Marks and Spencer, for example, had said that sale of condoms was "not within their customer profile."

Ms Roddick said the aim of the campaign was to make condoms, particularly for the young people most at risk from AIDS, a completely unremarkable purchase.

Only three organisations had agreed to sell Mates condoms, priced on average at 15p compared with the current average price of 20p, without profit - Medicare, Virgin and the Body Shop.

A wide range of outlets, including more than 1,000 branches of Boots, Superdrug, W.H. Smith, Safeway and pubs, clubs, hotels and garages had agreed to stock Mates on a commercial basis.

The aim is to sell 70m condoms, manufactured by Ansell of the US, in the first year of the campaign. An estimated 120m-130m were sold last year in the

UK and of that 96 per cent of the market is held by London International.

Mr John Jackson, chief executive of Mates Healthcare, the trading company set up by the foundation, believes Mates condoms will raise £5m in profit for its educational programme in the first year.

A £3m advertising campaign on television and the press will try to reduce the embarrassment in buying condoms. Although UK condom sales have risen by 20 per cent in the UK this year, that compares with a rise of 90 per cent in West Germany and 300 per cent in Japan. Yet the British Medical Association estimates that by 1991 more than 100,000 people in Britain may be infected by HIV, the AIDS virus, and 10,000 will have died.

Unknown
11th November 1987

Phone service on AIDS today

By Mark Brennock

A NEW telephone service giving information on AIDS begins operation in Dublin today. AIDS Helpline will provide callers with information on how to avoid the virus, and will refer people in need of treatment for drug addiction or other problems to the relevant specialist services.

The service has been set up by "AIDS Action Alliance", an independent group set up to provide information and education about the disease. Among the organisations affiliated to this group are the Irish Association of Social Workers, the Union of Students in Ireland, the Well Woman Centre, Gay Health Action and trade unions.

The phone service will be staffed by 12 volunteers who have previously worked on telephone information services. It will operate initially on Sundays from 3 to 6 p.m., and on Mondays from 7 to 10 p.m. A spokeswoman for AIDS Action Alliance said yesterday that it would be the only "independent, non-directive, non-judgmental and unbiased" information service available. The telephone number is 307888.



1 Pennington Street, London, E1 9XN Telephone: 01-481-4100

CONFIDENTIAL AIDS

When doctors become patients they are entitled to patients' rights to confidentiality of condition and treatment. But a doctor's overriding duty is to his own patients. So what of doctors who have Aids? Is his right to confidentiality as a patient paramount? Or do his patients have a right to know of his condition. As the law stands, their patients have no right to know.

That has been established by a High Court judgment imposing a permanent injunction, with a fine, forbidding the publication of a *News of the World* report of two doctors with Aids continuing to treat patients. The case was brought against the newspaper by a regional health authority on the grounds that the information had been obtained by a breach of confidential records by a hospital employee. Mr Justice Rose's judgment was that public interest in the information, and the freedom of the press were "substantially outweighed" by confidentiality and loyalty generally and "with particular reference to Aids patients' hospital records".

Whatever the claims of confidentiality, it is doubtful whether the judge would have reached the same conclusion had he been convinced of a serious risk of the doctors passing on the illness to patients. The case seemed to turn on the majority medical opinion that the risk was not big — although a haematologist said in evidence that there was a serious risk to some patients from Aids carriers.

Sir Donald Acheson, the Government's chief medical officer, summarized the prevailing medical view when he said the risk was "slightly more than negligible". "Negligible" means some risk but one so slight as to be disregarded. "Slightly more than negligible" can fairly be taken to mean a very small risk which cannot be disregarded entirely. If so, is it a risk that patients would willingly take if they were aware of it?

Sir Donald conceded there was some risk by agreeing with the British Medical Association that major operations should not be performed by Aids-infected surgeons because the disease is blood-borne, or passed on by other body fluids, and not "air-borne" as most infectious conditions are.

The disease which perhaps compares most closely with Aids, in the sense that it too is blood-borne, is hepatitis B. Here the official guidance, issued in 1981, is that NHS staff found to be carriers should not be barred from work, but should have expert advice about how to avoid passing it on by using gloves and various other hygienic procedures.

The ultimate protection is the doctor's ethical obligation not to expose the patient to harm. Only if it is found that a surgeon has passed an infection on during his work is it recommended that he should stop surgery. For one patient at least, it is by then too late. With many diseases that does not so much matter. But Aids is irreversible and fatal. The resolution passed at the British Medical Association's conference, to allow doctors to test their patients for Aids without their consent, showed the doctors' concern about the risk to themselves. This was over-ruled by the BMA leaders on the grounds that it would breach the doctrine of the patient's "implied consent" to normal medical tests when that patient routinely consults a doctor. The same kind of misplaced sensitivity is being shown now.

Probably few patients would feel comfortable with the idea of being treated by a doctor, dentist or nurse with Aids. Their misgivings are rebutted by medical opinion. But patients know that medical opinions change, that little is known about this disease, that what is orthodoxy to one generation of doctors can be error to the next. They know enough to have a reasonable wish not to have any sort of internal treatment by a doctor who might suffer from the disease and who might happen to have a cut hand. Sir Gerard Vaughan, the former Conservative Minister for Health, said yesterday that he would not like to have any wound of his dressed by a doctor with Aids.

The risk may be very small. But in so grave a matter the patient ought to have the information with which to make up his own mind. The Government and the medical profession should discuss what patients' rights should now be. They should certainly not be secondary to a theoretical concern not to seem prejudiced.

Branson joins Aids fight with Mates

By Thomson Prentice, Science Correspondent

Mr Richard Branson, chairman of the Virgin group, launched an £8 million campaign yesterday to promote condoms everywhere from supermarkets to youth clubs as part of the fight against Aids.

A series of television commercials for the group's brand of condoms, Mates, began on independent television last night.

They are to be adapted by the BBC as public information

announcements, without using the brand name.

The message of the commercials, which make no reference to Aids, is: "You make love; they make sense".

Mr Michael Grade, director of programmes at BBC Television, said the BBC's policy might be misinterpreted as encouraging promiscuity, but that prospect was outweighed by the need for advice about condoms to prevent the spread of Aids.

"It isn't for television to take one moral view or another but we do have an obligation to play a role in public health education."

All the Virgin group's profits from condom sales will go to the Virgin Healthcare Foundation, set up by Mr Branson to raise £5 million within the next year for Aids educational projects.

Mr Branson said: "The single most important health care issue we face is Aids.

"The most effective way of helping to stop the spread of the disease is through the use of condoms."

Mr Branson moved into the condom market after the Government rejected his suggestion this year that the male sheath should be distributed freely as an anti-Aids measure.

The condoms will be supplied by supermarkets, record stores and in vending machines in public houses, clubs, colleges and sports centres.

Independent
11th November 1987

Branson unveils £5m drive urging use of condoms

RICHARD BRANSON recruited showbusiness stars, medical experts and industrial leaders yesterday to launch Mates, the competitively-priced condoms which he hopes will help stop the spread of Aids.

At a Press conference in London, Mr Branson, head of the Virgin entertainment group, unveiled a £5m, 12-month publicity and marketing campaign to try to destroy the stigma surrounding the use of condoms. He said: "Wearing a condom is like giving up sugar in your tea: you won't like it for a few days but after that you won't notice the difference. The distinction is that it could save your life."

The British Medical Association estimates that by 1991, 10,000 people will have died from Aids in the UK, with about 100,000 being identified as carriers of the virus.

Mr Branson, 37, who has two young children, disclosed that he has pledged £5m of his own money to underwrite the project.

The publicity campaign, aimed specifically at the young, but also at all sexually active age groups, will entail the distribution of educational video films for sixth-formers and also a series of six one-minute television commercials to be broadcast on both BBC and ITV, starting last night.

Sales of 30 million Mates condoms started yesterday, not only at chemists' but also at a wide variety of stores, clubs, newsagents, grocery shops, student unions and hotels, over the counter and from a new batch of 30,000 vending ma-

chines around the UK. The project is being run by a new charity, the Virgin Healthcare Foundation. Mr Branson emphasised that it would channel 100 per cent of any profits directly back to its Aids education programme and other health-related charities.

The four trustees of the foundation are to be Mr Branson, its founder; Michael Grade, the BBC's director of television programmes; John Jackson, former chairman of the cosmetics company Chesebrough-Pond's, and Anita Roddick, founder and managing director of the Body Shop beauty care chain.

The foundation's 25 patrons include Professor Roy Anderson, epidemiologist at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London; Dr Alan Maryon Davis, senior medical adviser at the Health Education Authority, and Dr Peter Emerson, formerly Dean of Westminster Medical School.

Sir Ralph Halpern, chairman of the Burton Group, Simon Hornby, chairman of W.H. Smith & Son, and the journalists Penny Junor and Claire Rayner, are also patrons.

Elton John, Peter Gabriel, Genesis, Phil Collins, Roger Taylor of Queen, Feargal Sharkey, Sandie Shaw, Lulu and the composer Andrew Lloyd Webber have all agreed to become patrons.

Other celebrities expressing support for the project include and Roger Waters, of Pink Floyd, and Mick Jagger.

Synod urges fidelity as best way to fight AIDS

From Robert Nowell

"THE only safe way of preventing the spread of this disease in our society is through fidelity," the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, told the Church of England General Synod yesterday when it debated AIDS and the Church's response to this threat.

At the conclusion of the debate, the synod welcomed the concern reflected in Government initiatives and urged all members of the Church of England to respond with compassion and understanding to all those affected by AIDS. It also affirmed the Church's traditional teaching on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships, but what precisely this means was left to today's debate on a private members motion from the Rev. Tony Highton calling on the synod to reaffirm the biblical standard that "fornication, adultery and homosexual acts are sinful in all circumstances".

Introducing the debate, the Bishop of Gloucester, Dr John Yates, said the Church was called to emphasise as strongly and loudly and often as it could that adherence to the Church's

teaching on chastity and fidelity would halt the spread of AIDS through sexual intercourse. "The challenge to the Churches is to find ways of doing that positively and attractively, rather than negatively and judgmentally," he added.

Dr Runcie stressed that the price of divorcing the physical pleasure of sex from its moral commitment was "very high". "If you try to love on a limited liability basis, you limit your ability to love at all" he said. Hence the Church upheld the idea of Christian marriage, life-long, exclusive and faithful, as the only setting in which human sexuality could be responsibly and fully enjoyed.

"Our business is not to frighten people into good behaviour but to enable them to see human beings, both themselves and others, as children of God whose bodies are sacred, not disposable sex aids, and whose happiness lies in the sharing of a whole life, not in mere encounters in bed."

Earlier, the archbishop warned against a witch-hunt. "One of the first things human beings do when they are frightened is always to look for someone to blame", he said. He thought this was based on bad theology. Disease was no respecter of virtue, and Christians must have better ways of dealing with fear.

A lay member of the synod, Mr Timothy Royle, from the Gloucester diocese, offered a foretaste of today's debate when he described AIDS as a manifestation of the misuse of the human body and stressed that homosexual acts were contrary to nature. He claimed that AIDS had been brought about by the practice in Africa of indulging in both vaginal and anal intercourse.



THE British millionaire, Mr Richard Branson, and Mr Bob Geldof who yesterday launched a £5 million campaign to promote the use of condoms to combat AIDS.

They started a drive for a range of condoms called "Mates", in the hope that greater use of the contraceptive will help stop the spread of the disease.

The British Medical Association estimates that by 1991, some 10,000 people in the UK will have died from AIDS, with around 100,000 being identified as carriers of the virus.

The number of those affected is said to be doubling every 10 months, with 624 already dead.

The World Health Organisation predicts that 50 million people will be infected within the next five years.

— (PA wirepicture).



Archbishop Runcie

Church of England leaders clash over debate on homosexuality

Synod rejects gay clergy bid

A MOVE to drop a debate on homosexuality among Church of England clergy from the agenda at the Church's General Synod was rejected yesterday.

The Rev Peter Wheatley, vicar of St James', West Hampstead, north London, said a Sunday paper had prophesied the Synod's bitterest debate in years. Other papers had taken the opportunity to "pursue a veritable witch-hunt in our church", he said.

He said this was not an atmosphere in which to debate a motion by the Rev Tony Highton, rector of Hawkeswell in Essex, who had called for a return to Biblical standards of morality with homosexual acts declared sinful.

Mr Wheatley said he would welcome any procedural measure to stop the debate taking place as planned today.

However, Canon Brian Brindley, chairman of the Synod's business sub-committee, said Mr Highton's private

members motion had been voted top of the list selected for debate, with 168 members wanting it to be discussed. It was now a matter for the Synod.

The Rev Terry Loudon of Ventnor, on the Isle of Wight, made a call for "lifelong virginity" as he proposed one of several new amendments to Mr Highton's motion on morality.

Mr Loudon's amendment would replace the motion with a statement that the Synod reaffirmed "the Biblical teaching that lifelong virginity is the ideal sexual ethic for Christians".

Another amendment, from Mrs Muriel Curtis of Sheffield, would accept most of the Highton motion, but deplored the teaching of sex in some schools "which deliberately ignores marriage or which suggests that homosexual and lesbian relationships are as acceptable as heterosexual ones, and the practice of some local authorities of accepting homosexual and lesbian couples as foster parents for children in care".



AIDS PROTESTORS: members of a group which held a demonstration at Church House, London, yesterday to coincide with a debate on Aids at the start of the General Synod. The protestors urged the Church to treat homosexuals "with compassion rather than condemnation"

The Irish Independent
11th November 1987

AIDS plea by Runcie

THE AIDS crisis should not be turned into a witch-hunt, but into a challenge to stop people using their bodies as "disposable sex aids", the Archbishop of Canterbury said yesterday.

Dr. Robert Runcie was speaking during the first of two major sex-related debates at the Church of England General Synod at Westminster.

The Synod unanimously backed a motion on AIDS which affirmed the church's traditional teaching "on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships", but urged all church members to respond with compassion and understanding to those affected by the disease.

It welcomed the concern reflected in AIDS initiatives

by the government and other bodies and agreed there should be continuing advice within the Church on the theological, moral and pastoral issues involved.

Dr. Runcie said yesterday: "Our business is not to frighten people into good behaviour, but to enable them to see human beings, both themselves and others, as children of God whose bodies are sacred, not disposable sex aids, and whose happiness lies in the sharing of a whole life, not in mere encounters in bed".

AIDS created fear and one of the first things people did when they were frightened was to look for someone to blame, said Dr. Runcie.

TODAY the Synod of the Church of England has an excellent opportunity to refute Mrs Thatcher's allegation that it no longer upholds moral standards.

It is being forced by a group of angry and worried evangelical clergy to make clear its attitude to homosexuality. Will it honestly and in plain words, reassert the Church's traditional teaching, that such behaviour is always sinful?

Or will it bow to the powerful homosexual lobby within its own ranks and try to fudge the issue? The likelihood is that it will react as it always does nowadays when faced with a simple moral choice — reach for the weasel words.

The tragedy is that this debate, which is bound to hurt the Church whatever its outcome, should not have been necessary. In the sensible past, the Anglican bishops were always unanimous in treating homosexuality as wrong, while silently accepting that a minority of Anglican clergymen felt unable to accept a normal sexual life.

Gladstone, the great Liberal statesman and pillar of Anglicanism, when privately told that a clergyman he planned to promote might be homosexual, refused to withdraw the appointment. He drew a sharp distinction between a carnal inclination and his practice.

Chaste

Homosexuals, he said, were often gifted teachers and pastors. He trusted in the man's probity and self-discipline to keep the moral law. That was also the view of the Anglican hierarchy. Publicly they condemned the vice. Privately they accepted that a homosexual might make an excellent parish priest, provided he restrained his urges and remained chaste.

Most Christians will accept the logic of this distinction. After all, in the Catholic Church, the vast majority of its priests manage to restrain their natural impulses and stick to their vow of celibacy.

Unfortunately, this official but effective arrangement has now broken down. Homosexual activists, who do not merely practise their vices but flaunt them and proselytise, have infiltrated the Church of England and conduct noisy and shameless propaganda from within its ranks.

An organisation called the Gay Christian Movement completely rejects traditional Anglican teaching and declares: 'It is entirely compatible with the Christian faith not only to love another person of the same sex but also to express the love fully in a personal sexual relationship'.

One of its publications goes even further and asserts that to feel love for a person of the same sex and not to express it actively is 'less than Christian'.

Some pamphlets are openly on sale at one London church, along with other homosexual material which most people would call pornographic. The Movement boasts a mailing list of 10,000. The Reverend Tony Higton, whose campaign has



ILLUSTRATION: PHILIP ARGENT

Gays, the clergy, and the Church's duty to the nation



by **PAUL JOHNSON**

forced the issue on the Synod, calculates that there are 400 clerical names on this list.

Rachel Tingle, who has made a special study of the subject, paints a depressing picture of the strength of the homosexual lobby in the London diocese. It is calculated that in one London district, the number of clergy with homosexual leanings may be more than half the total.

The moment anyone draws attention to what homosexuals are doing within the Church, and demands that the bishops reassert the moral law, the Gay Christians set up a screaming, claiming that they are being witch-hunted.

But no one, including Tony Higton, wants a purge. Certainly nobody is being hurried. Quite the contrary. The bishops have

leaned over backwards not to get involved in the issue. The Bishop of London, Dr Graham Leonard, is reluctant to move against his errant clergy.

Nor do I blame him. The ecclesiastical law is antiquated, complex and expensive, and the chances of a bishop taking effective disciplinary action against one of his clergy are low.

What is surprising and reprehensible, however, is the stunning silence of the hierarchy. Not one of the bishops was prepared to speak out in the House of Lords last year in support of a Bill to stop local councils promoting homosexuality. When the Rev Tony Higton tried to get them to make an open statement condemning homosexual activity (together with adultery and fornication) only eight out of 40 would do so.

The truth is the bishops are terrified of being thought intolerant. They are more scared of this than of the far more serious accusation of neglecting their moral duty. They prefer the strictures of Mrs Thatcher to the smallest hint of criticism in the liberal-progressive media.

But their attitude reveals how far out of touch they are with ordinary people.

The bishops, as a group, are stuck in the culture of the 1960s, when freedom was the watchword and broadmindedness the greatest virtue. They do not seem to realise that the moral tone has changed, and taken on a much sadder note.

Obnoxious

The British people are appalled as they contemplate the results of a generation of permissiveness. The increasingly flamboyant and impudent behaviour of homosexual militants is not the worst of their worries — they are far more concerned about violence, for instance — but they certainly want it curbed.

They find it scandalous and unacceptable that, among the ring-leaders of this obnoxious minority, should be clergymen of the national church.

For that, surely, is a relevant point. The Church of England is established by law and enjoys privileges, status and wealth bestowed upon it by the nation. In return it owes definite obligations to society, and one of them is to uphold decent standards of conduct among its clergy.

Nobody desires a mass unfrocking of vicars. What people expect, and what the Anglican church clearly needs, is a forceful reassertion by its leaders that homosexual intercourse is wrong and that clergy who involve in it betray their ministry.

That is what the Synod should do this week, and so persuade an increasingly cynical and hostile public that the Church of England still has a spark of moral fire in its belly.

Synod damns Aids witch-hunters

By Walter Schwarz
Religious Affairs
Correspondent

The right response to Aids victims is compassion and help, the Church of England decided yesterday when the general synod overwhelmingly approved a report which said the disease could not be seen as God's judgment.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, said: "A characteristic symptom of a plague throughout history is a witch-hunt; I believe we have seen something of this with the Aids plague. I believe it is based on bad theology."

He was referring to the traditionalists who wanted homosexual acts to be condemned and blamed for the spread of Aids. Some of these distributed leaflets outside Church House as the tense debate began.

An officially-supported motion approved by the synod urged all Church members to

"respond with compassion and understanding to all those affected by Aids."

The result was a victory for liberal attitudes, and for skillful synod management which kept the Aids issue and the homosexuality issue apart.

Members who wanted more robust condemnation of what one called the sleep-around society won only one amendment to the motion.

The amendment withdrew the Church's proposed welcome for the Government's Aids campaign, saying only that it welcomed the "concern reflected".

Moving this amendment, the Rev Gavin Reid of Guildford who objected to the Government's slogans said: "History may show that the development of a sleep-around society has done more harm morally and psychologically than Aids has done physically."

The moralisers will have their main chance today when their champion, the Rev Tony

Higton of Essex, will move a motion condemning licentiousness in general and homosexuality in particular.

The debate began tensely as a member proposed scrapping today's discussion on Mr Higton's motion because the debate would "be damaging to the whole Church" after press publicity on homosexuals in the Church.

Other members thought Mr Higton's motion on morality should logically be debated before the Aids issue. But the Bishop of Gloucester, the Rt Rev John Yates, moving the official motion on Aids, said the Church should give out "a clear signal of reassurance, support and hope in the context of Aids."

An amendment seeking to reaffirm Church teachings on chastity in the context of Aids received only a handful of votes.

Dr Runcie, who has expressed sympathy for stable ho-

mosexual relationships, said that "even if we think people have brought their troubles on their own heads, to say 'I told you so, you should never have got yourself in this mess' is about as far from Christianity as any utterance could be."

The case for more outspoken recognition of homosexual relationships was made by the Rev Malcom Johnson of St Botolph's Church, Aldgate, where the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement is based.

Mr Johnson said: "If we want to avoid promiscuity, one vitally important way is to encourage gay people to make deep, long-lasting friendships — not out of fear but out of love."

Aids sufferers' feeling of alienation was "the fault of society, not the disease," he said. "Many us believe the Church to be largely responsible for society's present views. God forgive us for that."

Leader comment, page 14;
Pictures, page 7 and back.

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Two thoughts for the Synod

It has never seemed to us that the leader column of a newspaper is the natural channel for detailed pronouncements on moral theology. The General Synod of the Church of England, however, is itself a secular institution which does not eschew decisions, taken by majority vote, about what is theologically sound and what is not. Its decisions create a climate of opinion and redound through the rest of the secular world. Today the Synod is asked to decide, in effect, whether it is possible to be both a homosexual and a Christian. The Rev Tony Higton believes it is not and in particular that homosexuals should not be admitted to the priesthood. He said on the Radio 4 programme, Sunday, that in an extreme case where persuasion failed he would have to refuse a homosexual the sacraments. This opinion will no doubt be wholeheartedly endorsed by a majority of those political and other leaders of public opinion who call on the churches to give moral leadership because they assume before asking that they know the direction the leadership will take. In our untutored

view it would be healthy for the Synod to spring a surprise.

Two points need briefly to be made in support of that hope. One is that every individual should be free to seek, though not at others' expense, whatever fulfilment is possible within the limits of his or her preordained nature. Thus the Church of England's Board of Social Responsibility, discussing homosexuality eight years ago, said: "There are circumstances in which individuals may justifiably choose to enter into a homosexual relationship with the hope of enjoying a companionship and physical expression of sexual love similar to that found in marriage." It balanced this finding (for it was, after all, a committee) by warning against a collapse into hedonism in which the "permanence and exclusiveness" of sexual relations become questions of mere passing convenience. In today's cultural terms — it is hard to speak *sub specie aeternitatis* — the Board seemed to have thought that out wisely and well. Secondly Jesus, though slow to condemn individuals, was quick to condemn those who would undertake the condemnation for him. ("Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.") Canon John Bowker, Dean of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Mr Higton's most prominent opponent, says that in this as in other controversies much of the Church's thinking, delineated by St Paul, was socially conditioned. He cites evidence for homosexual unions in the early Christian church which were elaborately and publicly blessed. Only his peers can weigh that evidence. But laity of the most Pauline disposition can remember that the greatest of gifts is charity.

Church to rule on 'gay' clergy

By Clifford Longley
Religious Affairs
Correspondent

The General Synod meets today to decide whether to outlaw homosexuality in the Church of England, having heard last night for the first time an official admission that homosexuality was not at present considered a bar to ordination.

That came after a set piece debate on Aids, which was steered away from making any moral judgements on homosexuality before today's debate.

The disclosure will strengthen the hand of those who are calling on the synod for a clear ruling that practising homosexuals are unsuitable for ordination or office in the church.

In the following debate, the otherwise routine reception of the annual report of the Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry, Canon George Austin of St Alban's, asked whether it was correct, as stated in the *Church Times*, that the council did not rule out homosexuals as candidates for ordination.

The chairman of the council, the Bishop of Bristol, the

Synod debate 6

Rt Rev Barry Rogerson, challenged the word "practising" attributed to Canon Timothy Tyndall, secretary of the council, in the article.

The key motion for debate today calls on the synod to declare that "fornication, adultery and homosexual acts are sinful in all circumstances" and that Christian leaders are required to be exemplary "in all spheres of morality" as a condition of appointment.

The debate on Aids, which preceded the exchange between Canon Austin and the Bishop of Bristol was marked by a deliberate ambiguity over the Church's attitude.

At one point an amendment was moved referring to "chastity without and fidelity within heterosexual marriage" in place of the formula "chastity and fidelity in personal relationships". That change was defeated. The synod responded with enthusiasm to the Archbishop of Canterbury's emphasis on faithfulness and chastity as the Church's response to Aids.

Fidelity was the true way of preventing the spread of the disease, Dr Robert Runcie said. "Many have thought that the physical pleasure of sex can be divorced from its moral commitment. If you try to love on a limited liability basis, you limit your ability to love at all".

Yesterday's debate was on a report and motion which urged all members of the Church of England to respond "with compassion and understanding" to all those affected by Aids, and which was carried unanimously with one small amendment. That slightly diluted the synod's approval of the Aids counter-measures which the Government had instituted.

'No sex, please... we're Christians'

A MARRIED clergyman with three children will today call for all sex to be declared 'un-Christian'.

The Reverend Terry Loudon is asking the General Synod of the Church of England to back the proposal.

'Lifetime virginity is the ideal sexual ethic for Christians, and

By STEVE DOUGHTY
Home Affairs Correspondent

endorses the opinions of Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian and Jerome that, for Christians, an orderly sex life is inferior to no sex life at all.

Many churchmen see Mr Loudon's contribution as light

relief in the continuing debate on Anglican attitude to homosexuals.

The 39-year-old rector of Nifon and Chal, Isle of Wight, confessed last night that he had not told his wife about his amendment to a motion condemning homosexuality.

The church's homosexual lobby has warned of a witch

hunt if the condemnatory motion is passed today.

The Archbishop of Canterbury yesterday warned of a witch hunt against AIDS victims. Christians must treat victims of the disease with compassion said Dr Robert Runcie.

But the Archbishop was clear in his condemnation of promis-

cuity. AIDS, he said, 'is an example of what can happen when human beings lose touch with the real meaning of sexual love.'

Barnaby Miln, leader of the Christian Action on AIDS movement called for a memorial to AIDS victims in Westminster Abbey.

The moral dilemma --- Page 51.

GENERAL SYNOD

Plea on compassion for Aids victims

A motion urging all members of the Church of England to respond with compassion and understanding to all those affected by the disease Aids, was unanimously carried yesterday by the General Synod of the Church of England meeting at Church House, Westminster.

The synod accepted a report on Aids prepared by its board of social responsibility, with the Rt Rev John Yates, Bishop of Gloucester, as chairman, outlining the ways in which the church could help people suffering from Aids.

The motion, as carried, said that the synod affirmed the church's traditional teaching of chastity and fidelity in personal relationships. It welcomed the concern reflected in the initiative taken by the Government and statutory and voluntary bodies. The motion also requested the House of Bishops and the board of social responsibility to continue to advise the church on the theological, moral and pastoral issues involved.

An attempt to amend the motion on Aids was successfully resisted because, it was contended, it would pre-empt a debate due today on homosexuality.

In the only vote of the day the synod carried by 147 votes to 112 the insertion of the words "The concern reflected in" in the first part of the motion. That was inserted at the urging of Mr Gavin Reid (Guildford) who criticized the aspects of Government "safe sex" propaganda by leaflet, television and newspaper advertisement. He took the view that some of the propaganda amounted to an official government endorsement of a growing climate of opinion that regarded chastity and fidelity as hopelessly outdated.

Earlier, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie,

said that fidelity was the only safe way of preventing the spread of the disease Aids.

Many had thought that the physical pleasure of sex could be divorced from its moral commitment but the price of that thought was very high.

He added: "If you try to love on a limited liability basis, you limit your ability to love at all. For these reasons the Church upholds the idea of Christian marriage, lifelong, exclusive and faithful as the only setting in which human sexuality can be responsibly and fully enjoyed."

"Our business is not to frighten people into good behaviour but to enable them to see human beings, both themselves and others as children of God whose bodies are sacred, not disposable sex aids, and whose happiness lies in the sharing of a whole life, not in mere encounters in bed."

Fidelity was the church's teaching and contrary to popular misconceptions, it applied to a lot more than sex. They were therefore right to press public bodies, education authorities and all concerned with the prevention of this disease to lay emphasis on the need for faithfulness and chastity.

The Rt Rev John Yates, Bishop of Gloucester, chairman of the board for social responsibility, said in introducing the board's report on Aids that there had been raging epidemics before affecting millions of people, but Aids seemed frighteningly different. That was partly because it carried off the young and strong, and partly because of the hidden and sexually transmissible seeds of mortal sickness that so many people might be carrying within themselves for years undetected.

The horror was compounded because most of those who became infected were known to have lifestyles that most people



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, with eight women deacons taking their seats for the first time in the House of Clergy of the General Synod. The deacons, seen here yesterday in the Dean's Yard, Westminster, are, from left: Celia Chapman (Lichfield), Christine Farrington (Salisbury), Vivienne Faulk (Ely), Iris McIntyre (Salisbury), June Osborne (London), Judith Rose (Rochester), Jennifer Barbour (Ripon), and Anne Jennings (Manchester).

would repudiate. That made the plight of those infected by blood transfusion or from their mothers in childbirth unhappier still.

There was no reason to think that Aids posed a problem that could not be encompassed by the church's theology. There was no call for theological panic. The main need was to show love and compassion.

One of the most grievous pains suffered by Aids patients was said to be that people were afraid to hold their hands. It was the church's physical and metaphorical task to make sure that Christians held hands with those who suffered with Aids.

Mr Barnaby Miln (Hereford), chairman of Christian Action on Aids, welcomed the report. He said that it was still largely among homosexuals, here and in the United States, that the involvement and responsibility

for education, care and fund raising remained. However, there remained a deep suspicion of the church, which the report did not tackle.

He called for a day of prayer for people with Aids, and endorsed the request of the Methodist conference in Portsmouth this year for an ecumenical consultation on Aids.

He said that participants in the forthcoming Lambeth conference should take a programme of action on Aids to their dioceses. Churches and overseas relief agencies should campaign for generous funds for Aids work in the Third World.

The number of doctors specializing in Aids was being severely restricted because of the Government's ban on new permanent specialty training posts in the National Health Service, he said. He called on

the church to ask the Government to lift the ban.

The Government should also be told that many small but significant Aids research projects were not getting government funding, he said. Dr Helen King (Guildford) said that the question of the shared chalice had not been taken with sufficient seriousness. They should not bury their heads in the sand and "pretend it cannot happen to us" and ignore facts about transmission which were at present known.

The Rev Malcolm Johnson (London) suggested that local ecumenical task forces were needed. Members should not be drawn solely from the minority groups who were at risk.

Such committees could co-ordinate all the necessary work and work carefully with organizations such as the Ter-

rence Higgins Trust who had asked him to commend the report on its behalf. The Anglican Church should also follow the example of the United Reformed Church and appoint a full-time adviser.

He reflected that in the war against Aids the report did not affirm committed relationships. That might have meant a rough reception at synod but if they wanted to avoid promiscuity, one vitally important way was to encourage homosexual people to make deep, long-lasting friendships.

There was a real danger that in this debate and that on homosexuality, they sent the wrong advice to them at this critical time. Behaviour was rarely changed by negative advice, so he regretted the report could not have included something more positive.

Spectrum, page 14

Runcie defines Christian 'safe sex'

By Andrew Brown
Religious Affairs
Correspondent

THE Church of England's General Synod yesterday debated Aids. In the best Anglican tradition, the debate encouraged almost all the Church's tendencies.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, caught the mood of the Synod and was greatly applauded for a good speech, delivered badly, which had something for everyone.

"The only safe way of preventing the spread of this disease in this society is through fidelity. That is what we mean by safe sex. Many have thought that the physical pleasure of sex can be divorced from its moral commitment.

"The price of that divorce is very high. If you try to love on a limited liability basis, you limit your ability to love at all.

"It is for these reasons that the Church upholds the idea of Christian marriage, lifelong, exclusive, and faithful, as the only setting in which human sexuality can be responsibly and fully enjoyed."

The substance of this will surely please the evangelicals, though the reasons Dr Runcie gave for upholding the ideal of Christian marriage are derived from experience and thus open to argument. They are not simply proclaimed from scriptural authority.

Once people have the disease, though, the Archbishop's message is unequivocal: "Even if people have brought their troubles on their own heads, to say 'I told you so. You should never have got yourself into this mess' is about as far from Christianity as any utterance could be."

An evangelical group had been handing out leaflets to delegates at the doors of Church House claiming that "the Bible witnesses that God sometimes does 'zap' individuals... to attempt to remove the element of judgement from the widespread epidemic is to close our minds to one of God's ways of speaking to the human race."

"Worse than that, to advocate precautions instead of speaking of repentance and renunciation of immoral behaviour is surely to compound our condemnation. We have been warned."

There was little of that style in the debate yesterday, though Timothy Royle, an evangelical former managing director of the Hogg Robinson travel agency, expressed his belief that the disease had arisen because Africans had used the "anal passages" of women in a way which God had not intended.

He also told the Synod how he had plucked up the courage to shake the one remaining hand of a needless leper with no feet whom he had met in Nepal; and how grateful he had been to God for this ever since.

Dr Runcie spoke out clearly against panic. "One of the first things that human beings do when they are frightened is to look for someone to blame. A characteristic symptom of a plague is a witch-hunt."

"We have seen something of this with the Aids plague. I believe it is based on bad theology. Disease is no respecter of virtue. Christians must have better ways of dealing with fear... we should know that love casts out fear — but not by dodging it. And when this fear includes shame, stigma, and loneliness, that is also comprehended in the death that Christ died."

He had, he said, been proud to



At the Synod yesterday: Canon Dr Gareth Bennett, of Oxford University (top); the Bishop of Portsmouth, the Rt Rev Timothy Bavin; and the Bishop of Truro, the Rt Rev Peter Mumford.

see, and sometimes put to shame by, the care being given to people with Aids.

But the Synod did not respond to appeals made by the pressure group Christian Action Against Aids.

Its chairman, Barnaby Miln, wanted Church leaders to organise a national day of prayer for Aids victims, and a national memorial to them, in either West-

minster Abbey or St Paul's Cathedral. In both cases, he was following an American model.

The Synod was not ready to move that far, and for so long as Aids remains an overwhelmingly homosexual disease in this country, seems unlikely to do so.

Despite intense media interest, the disease itself preoccupies only those within the Church who are already preoccupied by homosex-

uality. It might seem that a Church which cannot even make up its mind about the morality of homosexual acts is incapable of even beginning to formulate an agreed and coherent doctrine on Aids.

But the purpose of Anglican doctrine is not to tell people what to do, but to encourage them in what they are already doing. That, this debate has achieved.

HERBIE KNOTT

Warning against AIDS witch-hunt

THE AIDS crisis should not be turned into a witch-hunt, but into a challenge to stop people using their bodies as "disposable sex aids", the Archbishop of Canterbury said yesterday.

Dr. Robert Runcie was speaking during the first of two major sex-related debates at the Church of England General Assembly at Westminster.

The Synod unanimously backed a motion on AIDS which affirmed the Church's traditional teaching "on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships", but urged all Church members to respond with compassion and understanding to those affected by the disease. It welcomed the concern reflected

in AIDS initiatives by the Government and other bodies, and agreed there should be continuing advice within the Church on the theological, moral and pastoral issues involved.

The Synod is due to debate a call by an Essex rector today for a return to Biblical standards of morality, which would mean practising homosexuals being banned from the clergy.

Dr. Runcie said yesterday: "Our business is not to frighten people into good behaviour, but to enable them to see human beings, both themselves and others, as children of God whose bodies are sacred, not disposable sex aids, and whose happiness lies in the sharing of a

whole life, not in mere encounters in bed."

AIDS created fear and one of the first things people did when they were frightened was to look for someone to blame, said Dr. Runcie.

"A characteristic symptom of a plague is a witch-hunt. We have seen something of this with the AIDS plague. I believe it is based on bad theology — disease is no respecter of virtue."

He added: "Even if we think people have brought their troubles on their own heads, to say 'I told you so, you should never have got yourself into this mess', is about as far from Christianity as any utterance could be."

It was sometimes suggested that

the Church should talk about chastity and fidelity, leaving it to public bodies to deal with practical issues like contraceptive advice and provision of clean needles for drug injectors.

"I have no hesitation in supporting the need to offer detailed, down-to-earth practical advice," Dr. Runcie said.

"But I want us to accept the major challenge. There is a responsibility on all of us to speak of what is required in our personal relations if the disease is to be brought under control."

"And the only safe way of preventing the spread of this disease in our society is through fidelity."

Why doctors with Aids are a danger

by Dr Thomas Stuttaford

Press reports of Mr Justice Rose's judgment in *X v. Y*, in which he decided that doctors who suffer from Aids should be allowed to practise, suggest that the court dwelt on the problems of whether the HIV virus could be transmitted via an infected doctor's blood to an unsuspecting patient and the very obvious possible hazards of internal examination.

However, the reports suggest that the court missed perhaps the most important point of all: that as the Aids virus has a predilection for attacking the brain, 60 per cent of Aids cases have symptoms of dementia when the disease is first diagnosed. This raises the question whether the opinion of a doctor suffering from Aids is likely to do justice to himself, his profession and the patient.

In most doctors' view the danger of someone with a degree of dementia practising is a greater risk to the community than the possibility that he might transmit the HIV virus to an individual patient, catastrophic as this would be. It seems inconsistent for the BMA and the General Medical Council to set up an elaborate system to prevent a doctor suffering from alcoholism from practising, presumably because his judgement is unreliable, but to take no similar steps to prevent those doctors who catch a disease of which dementia forms such a prominent part from taking life and death decisions.

Mr Justice Rose's judgment shows that he has a touching faith in the powers of counselling, but if he met patients who continue to catch NSU (non-specific urethritis) and gonorrhoea when HIV positive, his reliance on it would be shaken. The apparent assumption

that doctors would not behave as other men is flattering but misplaced, and nobody could rely on adequate standards of practice and hygiene once a doctor became demented.

There are differences between senile dementia — the hazards of which officialdom is trying to reduce by encouraging early retirement — and of alcoholic dementia and the dementia of Aids, but on the whole it seems to be less dangerous to be treated by an elderly doctor, or one who drinks too much, than by one suffering from Aids dementia.

Alcoholics are usually aware when they have drunk too much, but even if a drunken doctor is called to deal with an emergency, patients and relatives notice it and react accordingly. A doctor with Aids will show no outward easily recognizable sign. The patient he is treating will not realize that the opinion he is being offered is flawed and will therefore take no steps to ameliorate the danger.

The present teaching seems to be based on the belief that once an Aids patient has dementia he will

die fairly rapidly and therefore, if there was any danger, it would be for only a short time; but research in America suggests that changes occur in an Aids patient's intellect before it is readily noticed either by the patient or other people. Judgement is therefore impaired before signs of dementia are apparent.

Doctors, whether in general or hospital practice, are not dealing with people with normal resistance to infection, but with patients whose resistance has already been lowered by disease, injury, blood loss or the stress associated with psychiatric disease. And, by the very nature of their work, they spend a disproportionate amount of time with the very old and the very young, groups particularly vulnerable to infection.

As to whether the immune system of a doctor with Aids would have been compromised, he/she is likely to have fallen prey to a wide variety of diseases. TB is common in Aids patients, as is thrush, cyto-megalovirus, one of the viruses which can damage the unborn child, and perhaps most

common of all, a wide variety of gastro-intestinal infections which, as they cause diarrhoea, might easily spread.

A doctor who is obsessively clean and exceedingly careful might be safe working with patients while suffering from these conditions, but it is extremely unlikely that a doctor in other circumstances would want to continue to practise if he or she realized there was a risk, however small, of giving a newborn baby or a frail elderly patient gastro-enteritis, or worse. Once his judgement, and with it the will to maintain meticulous levels of cleanliness, have been undermined by dementia, a doctor with Aids would be unlikely to continue to maintain standards necessary to protect the patient.

Doctors exist for patients, not patients for doctors. Many doctors therefore question if it is ethically right for any patient anywhere to be put at risk, however small the risk might be, to boost the morale of a sick doctor, however much sympathy is felt for him. Physicians working in genito-urinary medicine are unlikely to have chosen their branch of the profession unless they had even more tolerance and sympathy for human frailty than that found in most doctors. These qualities may make them good venereologists, but not necessarily the ideal advisers for politicians, the Civil Service, or even High Court judges, who are expected to maintain public health standards.

Two years ago a minister with Aids retired after confused performances at question time. Is the Department of Health expecting lower standards from doctors than politicians?

12/11/87

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The General Synod

Move to oust gay Christians fails

CLERGY behaviour was a matter "best left to their fathers in God within the present terms of the law", The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, declared yesterday as the General Synod of the Church of England rejected a move to cast out homosexuals.

He said critics might be right in thinking the Church had been "too silent about the sin" in their efforts not to turn away sinners.

"We can only plead that Jesus incurred criticism on just the same grounds. I believe we should try to follow his example however difficult it may be — and, as we learn from St Paul, we know that we are in no position to cast stones."

Church House was packed, with almost all the Synod's 564 members present, for a debate on the Rev Tony Higton's motion stating "fornication, adultery and homosexual acts" to be sinful in all circumstances. It called for Christian leaders to be "exemplary in all spheres of morality, including sexual morality" as a condition of office.

"Scripture describes all homosexual relationships, including those involving nice people with nice motives, as an abomination and a perversion," Mr Higton told a minority who wanted to encourage homosexuals to shun promiscuity and form "good, godly permanent relationships".

But both Dr Runcie and The Bishop of London, the Rt Rev Graham Leonard, warned against the judgemental nature of Mr Higton's motion and after a three-hour debate the Synod compromised on an amendment proclaiming only that fornication, adultery and homosexual genital acts "fall short" of the ideal of sexual intercourse as an act of total commitment within marriage.

Passed by 388 votes to 19, the amendment was moved by The Bishop of Chester, the Rt Rev Michael Baughen, who said many genuine homosexually orientated people did live for the Lord without genital acts, often with great courage. They gave much love and support to the church's life.

But the bishop's amendment made no reference to discipline, and an attempt by the Rev David Holloway to introduce it resulted in the closest vote of the debate and split between laity and churchmen. Mr Holloway wanted to add: "That if a bishop, priest or

By Stephen Goodwin

deacon is to be 'a wholesome example and pattern to the flock of Christ' appropriate discipline among the clergy should be exercised in cases of sexual immorality."

He said the Church was in crisis. "Charges of a 'homosexual mafia' in the Church — even in high places — are being made." Nor could the web of suspicion be rejected. "Too many of us have first hand knowledge that confirms part of what is being alleged," he said.

In separate votes of the three houses of the Synod, the bishops were 14-5 against the discipline amendment, the clergy 138-82 against, but the laity 136-84 in favour. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York abstained, and the amendment was narrowly defeated.

Opening the debate, Mr Higton, the rector of Hawkswell, Essex, said some who called on the Synod to support faithful homosexual relationships were hypocritically involved in many relationships themselves.

He quoted a letter from the headmaster of a church school in which he said their rector, a declared homosexual, used the Church for an exhibition in a homosexual rights campaign. "The pamphlets and posters were most explicit and were freely available. 'Homo', 'gay' and 'lesbian' became part of the vocabulary of the playground of my junior school. The rector resigned, following a conviction for child molestation. He has been appointed to another parish," the headmaster wrote.

Mr Higton said a priest had written to him about "The Consultation", a gathering of homosexual Anglican priests and others which meets in a London church. "It was chaired by a member of this Synod. The main concern of the priest who wrote to me was that 'the worst feature was the bookstall, which was full of hard core male porn, which would be liable to make a shopkeeper arrested'."

Mr Higton assured the Synod he was not calling for a witch-hunt or hasty accusations but "rather for godly discipline which upholds the teaching of scriptures".

For the opposing camp, the Rev Malcolm Johnson said the Higton

motion's hidden agenda was to "finally knock homosexuals into the gutter". It again heaped abuse on a minority group who had suffered enough at the Church's hands.

Mr Johnson of St Botolph's, Aldgate, London, where the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement has its office, asked: "Why cannot we accept the fact that homosexuals will by their nature want to form sex relationships and will need positive guidance from us as they do?"

Dr Runcie, supporting the Bishop of Chester's amendment, told the Synod he could not accept the extreme claims that homosexual unions were simply alternative lifestyles to Christian marriage.

"I do not deny, and cannot, that homosexual acts are condemned in the biblical and Christian tradition. It is our duty to teach the Christian idea to our children and not to confuse them with options.

"But while there are both homosexual and heterosexual people whose conduct is undisciplined, self-centred, and out of control, questions arise over our response to homosexuals who are seeking to behave responsibly towards other people, who are not sleeping around, not molesting children, not breaking up other people's marriages and friendships.

"In the face of much cruel prejudice I want to insist that to be homosexual by nature is to be a full human being," Dr Runcie said. They ought to listen to what such homosexuals said about their situation. Nothing would be solved by the Church of England being "railroaded" down this or that lobby route.

The Bishop of Chester said he hoped his amendment would provide the Synod with a way of affirming Biblical and traditional principles.

The motion passed after amendments reads: "This Synod affirms that the Biblical and traditional teaching on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships is a response to, and expression of, God's love for each one of us, and in particular affirms:

1. That sexual intercourse is an act of total commitment, which belongs properly within a permanent married relationship.
2. That fornication and adultery are sins against this ideal, and are to be met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion.
3. That homosexual genital acts also fall short of this ideal and are, likewise, to be met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion.
4. That all Christians are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality, including sexual morality, and that holiness of life is particularly required of Christian leaders."

Daily Mail

LIBRARY

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1987

22p

Church of England rules homosexuality sinful but won't throw out the sinners

SCANDAL OF GAY VICARS

By STEVE DOUGHTY, Home Affairs Correspondent

THE Church of England, faced with evidence from one of its own ministers about increasing 'gay' activity among clergy, ruled yesterday that homosexuality is sinful.

But it refused to expel any of the priesthood who indulge in that sin.

This classic fudge, after an intense debate at the General Synod, the Church's Parliament, left both gay and anti-gay groups claiming victory over an issue which is increasingly splitting the Anglican movement.

The sensation of the debate was a dossier of evidence produced by the Rev Tony Higon, the Essex rector who brought the issue before the Synod. He said homosexuality was widespread among Church of England clergy and must be driven out. And he told how:

Homosexual practice became so rampant in one Anglican theological college that students from another college were forbidden by staff to visit it. At one joint study day, one student was solicited several times by different people. At another college, a staff member made improper approaches to a colleague and a student.

A rector who was a declared homosexual used his church for a 'gay equality' exhibition, with explicit pamphlets and posters. 'Homo', 'gay' and 'lesbian' became part of the vocabulary of the playground in the church's junior school. The rector resigned following a conviction for child molesting. He has been appointed to another parish.

Condemned

One priest pursued a layman who was disgusted by his advances, and violently assaulted a householder who refused to let him see the object of his desires.

Another priest was convicted of gross indecency in a public toilet. He was moved to a new diocese and convicted of a similar offence, but escaped with a suspension.

The mother of a young Christian rang Mr Higon in great distress because she had seen



'I don't know any gay vicars - we've become a nation of glum vicars!'

Turn to Page 2, Col. 6

Potter 7, Keith Waterhouse 8, World Wide 10, Femail 13-14

Daily Mail, Thursday, November 12, 1987

Church gays row

Continued from Page One

him pursued and driven into homosexual relationships by clerical members of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement.

Mr Higon asked how the church could reply to a phone call like one he received from a woman distressed that her church-going husband was having homosexual affairs with married clergy.

And he condemned a regular gathering of homosexual Anglican priests in London which, he said, ran a booklet including hardcore male pornography.

Mr Higon said the church world are facing a crisis. The decision not about sexual morality but about the credibility of the General Synod itself of the Church of England.

Mr Higon's mother called for a return to Biblical standards of morality, with sex permissible only between man and wife. It said fornication, adultery and homosexual acts were sinful in all circumstances, and clergy members should be conditional on upholding exemplary morality.

Weaker

But the establishment Bishops, led by Dr Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, backed an amendment saying that fornication and adultery were sins against the Gospel, and that homosexual genital acts also fall short of this ideal.

The amendment was carried by 403 votes to eight, with 19 abstentions. It was proposed by the Bishop of Chester, the Rev Michael Baughen.

But Mrs Thatcher's favourite clergyman, the Bishop of London Dr Graham Leonard, was among those who abstained. He said: 'I cannot go along with making clear judgments about fornication and adultery, and a weaker judgement about homosexual genital acts, which will I believe, be seen by the world as evading the issue.'

Even Dr Leonard, however, would not support the demand that homosexual priests be sacked. 'To remain in office implies we who hold office must believe that we are exemplary in all spheres of morality. I cannot say that - nor can any of you.'

With the Synod meeting in the full glare of television lights and with every member aware of the Prime Minister's call for stronger moral leadership from the church, Dr Runcie restated his view that although homosexuality is wrong, homosexuals are full human beings who should not be persecuted.

Services

The Synod overwhelmingly rejected a move from the Rev Malcolm Johnson, a London vicar and member of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, that would have given church recognition to all stable relationships, whether heterosexual or homosexual. It would have paved the way for church services to bless homosexual 'marriages'.

Mr Higon from Hawkeley, Essex, was joined by demonstrators including former London Labour Parliamentary candidate Peter Tatchell, who shouted that the rector was responsible for persecution of homosexuals.

Mr Higon said he was 'thrilled' at the result of the debate. 'We have achieved a declaration that homosexuality is sinful. We have put the message across.'

Gay parsons are given reprieve

A RECTOR'S call to oust practising homosexuals from the clergy was rejected decisively by the Church of England general synod yesterday, when they voted for a bishop's amendment toning down the wording.

The complex series of votes came at the end of a three-hour debate on the sexual morality issue, concentrating mainly on reported growing numbers of homosexuals among the clergy.

The scale of the vote — 388 to 11 in favour of the amendment by the Bishop of Chester, Right Rev. Michael Baughen — surprised many observers at the synod, who had expected a more bitter and divisive debate.

"Many of us expected the gay lobby within the church — after all, they have claimed that one in three clergymen is now homosexual — would have been able to attract more votes," said one.

The original motion from Rev. Tony Higon of Hawkwell in Essex, called for a return to Biblical standard of sexual morality, with sex only permissible between man and wife.

Fornication, adultery and homosexual acts were sinful in all circumstances, and clergymen's jobs should be conditional on upholding exemplary morality, his motion declared.

The synod voted for this motion by 403 to 8,

with 13 abstentions, but that was after it had been effectively rewritten by the successful amendment from the Bishop of Chester.

The Bishop had talked of "chastity and fidelity in personal relationships", adding that sexual intercourse was an act "of total commitment which belongs properly within a permanent married relationship".

His further affirmation "that homosexual genital acts also fell short of this ideal", was amended by an addition successfully moved by Rev. P. R. Forster, of Durham and Newcastle Universities, saying such acts "are likewise to be met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion."

Synod condemns homosexual acts but not homosexuals

From Robert Nowell,
in London

THE CHURCH of England's General Synod yesterday voted decisively in condemnation of homosexual activities. It avoided both the censorious rigour of the original motion put forward by the Rev Tony Higton, Rector of Hawkwell, Essex, and the permissiveness of an amendment reflecting the views of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, which found only 46 votes in its favour and 325 against.

By 388 to 19, it adopted the amendment put forward by the Bishop of Chester, Dr Michael Baughen, and when this was voted on as the substantive motion, it was passed by 403 votes to eight with 13 abstentions.

The synod thus affirms that the Biblical and traditional teachings on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships was a response to, and expression of, God's love for each one of us; that "sexual intercourse is an act of total commitment which belongs properly within a permanent married relationship;" that fornication and adultery were sins against this ideal, to be met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion; and that homosexual genital acts also fell short of this ideal and were to be dealt with in the same way.

But the synod did not see itself

as sanctioning any kind of witch-hunt, even though the immediate reaction of members of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement was to see its vote as providing theological justification for "queer-bashing". Indeed, Mr Higton himself, repudiated any such idea and said he was against the rejection or persecution of anyone. What he wanted was Godly discipline which upheld the teaching of scripture.

The synod, however, was not so keen on such Godly disciplines being spelt out. An amendment from Mr Higton's ally, the Rev David Holloway, would have called for "appropriate discipline" among the clergy in cases of sexual immorality. But this was narrowly defeated, with a majority of the bishops and clergy against it and only a majority of the laity supporting it.

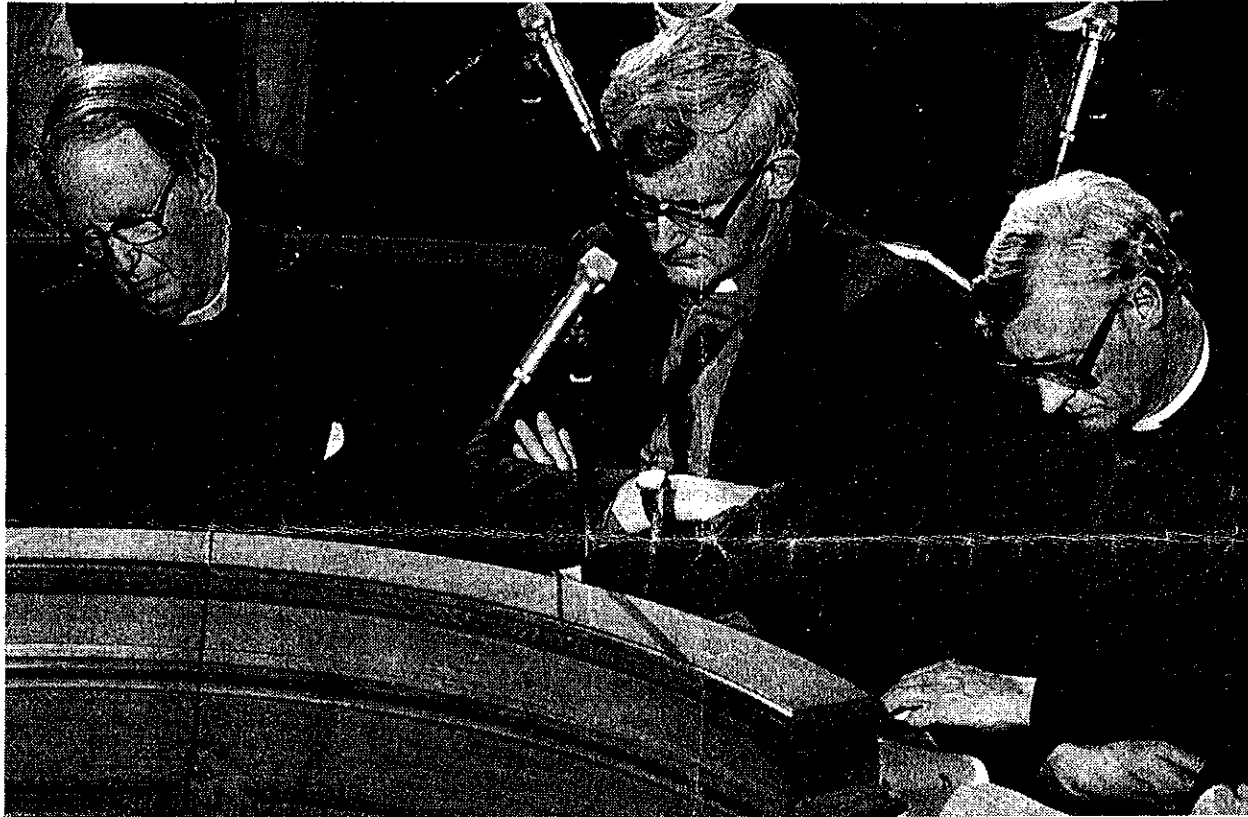
The Bishop of Chester stated firmly that, biologically, homosexual genital acts were always a lie, a deception, but went on to show his sympathy for homosexuals. "While having no sympathy whatsoever with the flagrant promotion of homosexual lifestyles, which draws many into its activities who are not orientated that way," he said, "we must recognise the enormous pressures of sexual urges in those who are genuinely and strongly homosexually orientated, not by their own action.

"They cannot choose marriage or to sin in adultery. If they 'burn' as St Paul puts it, they cannot marry." But Dr Baughen emphasised that, in the light of the New Testament call to holiness, "heterosexual promiscuity or the promotion of homosexual genital acts and even so-called homosexual marriages are not only a sordid falling short, but contrary to and incompatible with the grace and holiness of God."

By contrast, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, seemed to take a gentler line. He could not accept the extreme claim that homosexual unions were simply alternative lifestyles to Christian marriage. "But," he said, "while there are both homosexual and heterosexual people whose conduct is undisciplined, self-centred and out of control, questions arise over our response to homosexuals who are seeking to behave responsibly towards other people, who are not sleeping around, not molesting children, not breaking up other people's marriages and friendships.

"In the face of much cruel prejudice, I want to insist that to be homosexual by nature is to be a full human being, that they have human rights like the rest of us. We need to listen to what such homosexuals say about their situation."

HERBIE KNOTT



Deep in thought: The Bishop of Winchester, the Rt Rev Colin James (left), the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, the Rt Rev John Dennis (centre), and the Bishop of Edmonton, the Rt Rev Brian Masters, at the General Synod in Westminster yesterday.

Compromise on homosexual clergy

AT YESTERDAY'S General Synod debate on homosexual clergymen a compromise amendment by the Bishop of Chester, the Rt Rev Michael Baughen, was passed overwhelmingly, although the Rev Tony Higton's motion condemning fornication, adultery and homosexual acts, which it amended, would have been of purely symbolic value if carried. The voting was 388 to 19.

The bishop's amendment seemed to reaffirm Mr Higton's straightforward convictions but in a sufficiently greater number of words to make room for widely differing interpretations.

There was nothing unnatural in the way in which Mr Higton and the Rev Richard Kirker, of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, both stated that they were content with the outcome. Mr Higton said he did not believe his motion had been watered down. "I got almost everything we were aiming for," he added.

The spectacle of Synod members seeking publicity can be repugnant to a neutral observer. Peter Bruinvels and the Rev David Holloway, leaping to their feet

By Andrew Brown, Religious Affairs Correspondent

at the end of each speech as fast as other Synod members started to applaud, must have had on many members innocent of these practices the same repellent effect as the propaganda of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement earlier.

Mr Holloway denounced the "web of suspicion and rumour" which had led to "charges of a homosexual mafia" in the church "even in high places". In case we had failed to get the message about this web of suspicion and rumour, he went on to say that "too many of us have first-hand knowledge of what is being alleged".

Those who listened to his speech could only gain second-hand knowledge; he alleged, for instance, that there exists an Anglican training college where candidates for ordination are interviewed with their wives, girlfriends, or boyfriends, according to taste. He said he knew of a large comprehensive in which the sixth form had been lectured on

gender by a homosexual who announced he was living with an Anglican priest whose bishop fully approved of their relationship.

Mr Higton offered our imaginations the spectacle of a theological college so spectacularly sodomical that students from other colleges were forbidden to visit for fear of being propositioned two or three times a day.

The bishops seemed to remain unmoved by such stories. But if even half are true there cannot be a bishop in the church who is not aware of the existence of homosexual clergy and who has not had to deal with the resulting problems. They tend to believe that they deal with them pretty well as things are.

The real fight of the day was over Mr Holloway's amendment to the Bishop of Chester's amendment, which exhorted bishops to discipline appropriately the affected clergy. This suggested objective or public criteria by which "appropriate discipline" might be judged, and was clearly unac-



ceptable to the bishops, most of whom voted against it. But a considerable number, among them both archbishops and the Bishops of Oxford and Durham, abstained.

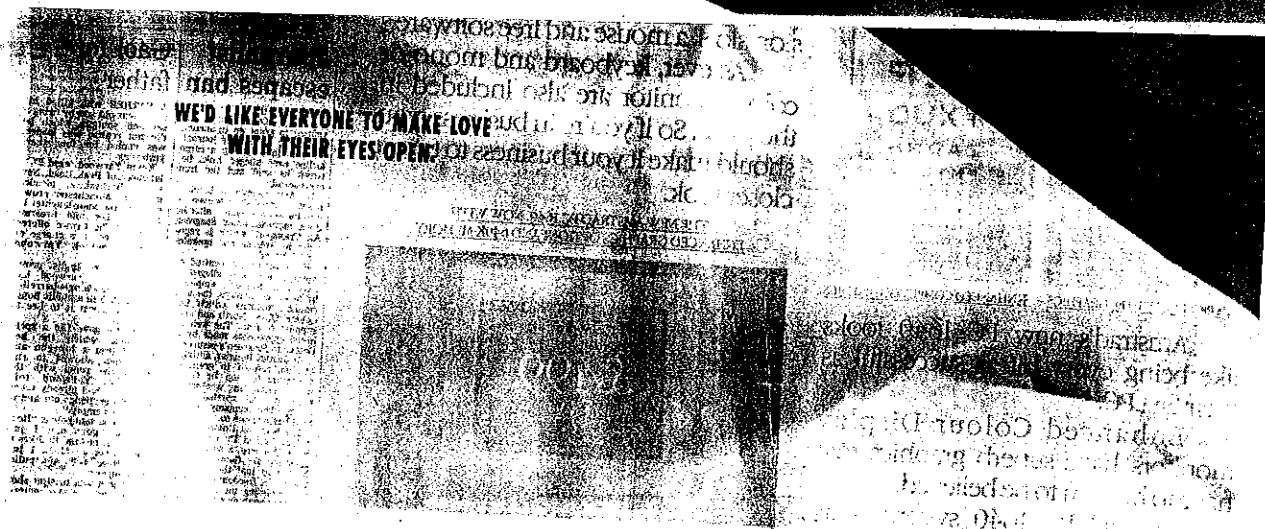
Synod report, page 6
Letter, page 23

Irish Times

12th November 1987

Needles for AIDS

ACUPUNCTURE has proven effective in treating AIDS sufferers, a US doctor told an international seminar in Beijing on natural medicine, the New China News Agency reported. Dr Mike Smith was quoted as saying that acupuncture provided long-term prevention and protection from AIDS and lowered the incidence of relapses. — (AFP)



No, we're not suggesting a new way of lovemaking. And no, we don't want to preach.

We'd just like everyone to use a bit of common sense.

Because making love today is riskier than it used to be. Every time that you sleep with someone, you're also sleeping with all the other people they've ever slept with. Which explains the spread of sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS.

Already, 2000 heterosexual people in this country have been infected with the virus. In New York, AIDS is the biggest killer of women between 25-35. British Medical Association figures suggest that up to 100,000 people will be infected in Britain by 1991.

But it's not all doom and gloom. Because there is a simple

way to dramatically reduce your chances of catching the virus. Condoms will greatly reduce the chances of the virus passing from one person to another.

Which is why we started Mates Healthcare.

We want to make condoms more accessible and, at the same time, raise money to help stop the spread of AIDS.

Mates is a new range of condoms.

Including Natural Mates, Ribbed Mates and Coloured Mates, all of which carry the BSI Kite-mark.

They cost less than other condoms but they're just as reliable (in fact, they're made by one of the world's largest manufacturers).

And thanks to leading retailers, they're available in pubs,

newsagents, garages, clubs, record stores, supermarkets and chemists. What makes Mates doubly effective, though, is what we'll be doing with all profits, from Mates Healthcare Ltd.

We'll be providing literature, videos and education in 'Safe Sex' techniques - all specifically targeted at young people.

We also plan to give money to counselling services and hospices for those dying of the disease.

In short, we'll be doing everything we can to provide practical advice and assistance to help stop the spread of AIDS.

Sex is a fact of life.

So, unfortunately, is AIDS. Please, when you make love, don't close your eyes to the dangers.

MATES. YOU MAKE LOVE. THEY MAKE SENSE.



GENERAL SYNOD

Moderate homosexuality motion wins big majority

By Alan Wood

The General Synod of the Church of England adopted by massive majority yesterday the most moderate of the various options before it for disapproving of homosexual conduct in general and particularly among clergy.

It affirmed that biblical and traditional teaching on chastity and fidelity in personal relationships was a response to, and expression of, God's love.

By 403 votes in favour, eight against and 13 abstentions, the synod affirmed that sexual intercourse was an act of total commitment, involving properly ordered relationship, that fornication and adultery were sins against this ideal and were to be met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion that homosexual genital acts also fell short of this ideal and were likewise met by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion, and that all Christians were "called to live in conformity in all spheres of morality, including sexual morality, and that holiness of life is particularly required of Christian leaders".

This formula was contained in an amendment moved by the Bishop of Chester and in a series of votes. The synod then rejected the main motion moved by the Rev Tony Hilton, which was looked upon by many as a call for the expulsion from the church of homosexual clerics and also an amendment from the Rev Malcolm Johnson of Aldgate, London, in whose church the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement had its office, calling on the church to encourage in Christian teaching and example, stability, commitment and permanence in all human relationships.

In making the middle course, synod took on board both and cheered the comment by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, that nothing would be solved by the Church of England being railroaded down this or that lobby route. Mr Johnson's amendment was rejected by 323 votes to 76. The only amendment carried, and thus in the final motion adopted, came from the Rev P R Foster (Durham and Newcastle Universities) who wanted homosexual genital acts to be "discussed not by a call to repentance and the exercise of compassion".

The only division by houses came on a move by the Rev David Holloway (Newcastle), who sought to add that if a bishop, priest or deacon was to be "a wholesome example and

pattern to the flock of Christ" appropriate discipline among the clergy should be exercised in cases of sexual immorality.

Voting by show of hands was close, with many bishops voting against, and in the vote by Houses there were 14 bishops against and five in favour among the clergy there were 138 against and 82 in favour, and in the Laity there were 136 in favour and 84 against. Thus the motion was lost as there were two houses against it.

The Bishop of Chester's amendment was carried by 388 votes to 19 and the main motion as amended, lost, went through. Mr Hilton's original motion had called on the synod to reaffirm the biblical standard that sexual intercourse should take place only between a man and woman married to each other, that fornication, adultery and homosexual acts were sinful in all circumstances, and that Christian leaders were called to exemplify in all spheres of morality, including sexual morality, as a condition of being appointed to or remaining in office.

Mr Hilton, from Hawkeley, Essex, said he was not calling for a witch hunt or hasty accusations but for godly discipline which upheld the teaching of scripture, including the teaching that all homosexual practice was an abomination and a perversion.

● **Very few homosexual men are in a stable, faithful relationship** ●

Those engaged in it should be challenged on an individual basis to repent and only if they refused should they face discipline. His main concern was over immoral practices among clergy and only secondarily about homosexuality among church members. Scripture called on them for self-discipline and abstinence with respect to sex outside heterosexual marriage. Very few homosexual men were in a stable, faithful relationship with other men.

He said some young members did not know what was going on. Homosexual practices had become so rampant in the Anglican theological college that students from another theological college had to be forbidden by staff to visit it. At a joint study day between the two colleges, one student was solicited several times by different people.

He and the agencies, mother of a young Christian man had

run him in great distress because she had seen him pursued and drawn into homosexual relationships by clerical members of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement.

A priest had written to him about "The Consultation", a gathering of homosexual Anglican priests and others which met at a London church for the eucharist and discussion. It was chaired by a member of synod. The priest said the worst feature was the booklet which was full of hard core male pornography.

Synod could make a major psychological contribution to help to create a climate of opinion in the Church and nation which favoured biblical morality and the removal of hypocrisy in the church. They could ensure that only those upholding biblical and traditional morality were ordained. The bishops could investigate the situations concerning clergy brought to their attention and that homosexual acts and church discipline.

The Bishop of London (the Right Rev Graham Leonard) stated he would say as a Christian that fornication, adultery or homosexual sexual acts were sinful. Marriage, celibacy and abstinence could all be proper expressions of Christiana affection in their sexual lives of which chastity must always be a characteristic. It seems that if they were to remain in office, they must be exemplary in all spheres of morality. "I cannot say that one can say of you", he commented.

Mr Johnson (London), in referring to his amendment about the permanence and commitment of relationships, considered the hidden agenda behind Mr Hilton's motion was to knock homosexuals in the gutter and once again to help alone on a minority group which had suffered enough at the church's hand. That motion was negative, lacking in faith, hope and love.

About 4 per cent of the population, a larger number than the ethnic minorities, were exclusively or predominantly homosexual. His amendment offered guidance, with its encouragement of stability, commitment and permanence in all relationships. The motion wanted to combat promiscuity, as it did, even good stable relationships it would have the opposite effect.

In literature supporting the motion, he detected a strong smell of cowardice because it attacked, and had encouraged the media to attack, the gay clergy who could not defend themselves.

The attack had already started in the gutter press and he hoped the supporters of the motion realised their responsibility in this. His amendment sought to stop the damage done to homosexuals by encouraging them to form good, godly lives with good, godly and permanent relationships.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, indicating he would vote for the Bishop of Chester's amendment, said there was a feeling that the church had gone soft on the moral cohesion of the nation. The message they had to convey and sometimes had failed to convey, was that the commandments of God were given for them to enjoy. Jesus taught the only right way of sex was in marriage. Sexual bonding of people outside marriage relationship left sexual of what God had ordained.

He could not accept the extreme claim that homosexual acts were simply alternative lifestyles to Christian marriage. He did not and could not deny that homosexuals are to be condemned in the biblical and Christian tradition. It was their duty to teach the Christian faith to their children and not to confuse them with options.

But while there were both homosexual and heterosexual people whose conduct was undisciplined, self-centred and out of control, questions arose over the response to homosexuals who were seeking to behave responsibly towards other people, who were not sleeping around, not meeting children, not breaking up other people's marriages and families.

In the face of much cruel prejudice, he wanted to insist that to be homosexual by nature was to be a full human being. So serious a matter ought not to be dealt with by a single word within a compromise motion, particularly when a report was under careful preparation.

Dr Runcie spoke of the danger that they would treat this whole matter as a choice between two lobbies. Lobbies did not live having to face up to complexities.

"Lobbies have their place, but the Church of England cannot be taken over by them. There is no escape from the need for reasoned, persistent, patient work on the issue. The attempt to shortcut proper Christian work, leading to carefully prepared legislative statements which hold true in our tradition, is foolish. Nothing will be solved by the Church of England being railroaded down this or that lobby route."

The danger of driving people out was that it would have the



The Rev Tony Hilton (left) and the Rev Richard Kicker, general secretary of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, an organisation which strongly opposed Mr Hilton's motion.

effect of undermining the serious pastoral practice of discipline. There were times when a priest did fall grievously into sin and had to be disciplined or deprived of his office. But there were few things in his ministry that had brought such joy as the rehabilitation of a priest, especially when he had been expelled by the synod, and then support of his congregation.

Clergy behaviour was best left to their fathers in God within the present terms of the law. "They were in no position to cast stones. In this earthly hierarchy of Christ's Church there were many mansions and all of them were made of glass."

The Bishop of Chester (the Right Rev Richard Baughen) said that his amendment, which was eventually carried with one change, was an endeavour to balance a more accurately biblical content with a greater gentleness of expression. It asserted the biblical and traditional teaching on chastity and fidelity.

By adding "traditional" they defined the biblical interpretation to mean sexual intercourse between a man and woman in marriage. His amendment specified homosexual genital acts rather than just homosexual acts. The force of it was not that people were simply doing what was natural in them but that they had exchanged God's intention in nature for what was unnatural. They fell far short of God's ideal. Biologically, homosexual genital acts were always a lie, a deception.

If exemplary morals was a condition of office, where did it start and stop? Let him who was perfect in this cast the first stone. "If we passed the main motion today all the bishops and clergy would need to resign

tomorrow morning", he added amid laughter.

By emphasising holiness in his amendment, they would affirm the many genuine homosexual-orientated people who did live for the Lord without genital acts, often with great courage and who gave so much love and care and support to the church's life.

"And we affirm the vast majority of clergy, single and married, who seek to live lives of holiness and devotion and yet

● **Nothing will be solved by being railroaded down this or that lobby route** ●

have felt polluted by the deluge of accusation and innuendo in some sections of the Press in recent weeks."

The Rev David Holloway (Newcastle) said that as a result of all the confusion over this issue, they were having the bishops' selectors recommending men for training who were active in homosexual partnerships. That was revealed in *The Sunday Times* last Sunday, it had checked that it was true and the previous night in synod it was also confirmed. That was extremely serious.

If they passed the Bishop of Chester's amendment, it would be used to justify the status quo. Men or women, active in gay relationships, would present themselves for ordination.

As practising homosexual clergy had been admitted into the ministry, scandals had been caused in the wider community. Changes of a "homosexual mind" in the church, even in high places, were being made. A

Criticism of paper's 'lurid sex coverage'

Strong criticism of *The People* and other newspapers flowed through the synod debate on homosexuality, particularly from the 20 Rev Eric Kemp, Bishop of Chichester, who indicated that he would not sponsor for ordination any person whose lifestyle he knew to be inconsistent with Christian teaching.

He could not vote for the main motion from Mr Hilton as it had already stimulated something tantamount to persecution of the clergy.

Revelations in a tabloid Sunday newspaper purported to describe lurid interviews with several priests represented as engaging in homosexual practices. These he spoke also for the Bishop of Sheffield.

A priest from his diocese was among those mentioned as well as one from Chichester.

He added: "We have both issued statements expressing our confidence in our respective bishops and accepting their assurances that they do not engage in the practices of which they are accused and that the article contains a distorted account of what happened."

Both of them were disturbed by the method used to obtain the material on which the article was based. A priest visited various clergy accompanied by a young layman representing himself as being in urgent need of pastoral counselling because of their homosexual condition and practices.

Conspiring was given and certainly in one case given explicitly in confidence. The responses were severely injured.

Synod would appreciate, he said, what damage this did to the whole area of pastoral relationships both in confessional and pastoral counselling. It was totally destructive of confidentiality.

The frequent public discussion of homosexuality had already seriously impaired the idea of friendship and had created the suspicion that any two persons who shared a house must be engaged in an immoral relationship.

Synod should do nothing further to promote the concept of friendship or encourage inquiring and persecution. The Rev Tony Hilton, whose private member's motion had initiated the day's debate, could be condemned what *The People* did and, it was unforgivable

Synod takes soft line on gays

By Walter Schwarz,
Religious Affairs
Correspondent

The Church of England's general synod yesterday rejected a proposal from a cragging Essex vicar that homosexual clergymen should be sacked and that "fornication, adultery and homosexual acts are sinful in all circumstances."

But the vote in favour of a milder motion — 403 to eight with 13 abstentions — came after much heart searching on whether homosexual genital acts were sinful. A proposal to apply "appropriate discipline" to sexually offending clergy was approved by lay members but rejected by the separate houses of clergy and bishops.

A consensus emerged that

the Church should stand for chastity and that homosexual genital acts fall short of that ideal. The Bishop of Chester, the Right Rev. Michael Baulgon, expressed the majority view when he said such acts were sinful but less so than greed or theft.

Bishop's gambit, page 6

His successful amendment affirmed biblical teaching on chastity, declaring also that fornication and adultery were sins against this ideal.

But instead of calling for the removal of homosexual priests, the amendment said that "all Christians are called to be exemplary in all spheres of mo-

rality, including sexual morality, and that holiness of life is particularly required of Christian leaders."

This was the second victory in two days for liberal views against the increasingly vociferous demands — recently supported by Mrs Thatcher — that the Church should give a clearer moral lead on homosexuality. On Tuesday the synod had voted for a compassionate rather than a judgmental approach to Aids victims.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, said: "To be alongside the sinner without going along with the sin has always been one of the great pastoral difficulties of the Church; and if critics today

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AND DID THOSE FEET?: A stenographer gives her toes a breather while the Archbishop of Canterbury listens to the Synod debate. Picture by Kenneth Saunders

Synod takes a soft line on gays

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think we have been too silent about sin in our efforts not to turn away from the sinner they may well be right. We can only plead that Jesus incurred criticism on the same grounds."

The closest division was on the proposal from the Rev David Holloway of Newcastle that "appropriate discipline among the clergy should be exercised in cases of sexual immorality." When this was defeated in a show of hands, Mr Holloway's supporters insisted on a division by Houses.

The result showed lay members ready to exert such discipline (136 votes to 84), but the clergy voted against (82 to 138) and the great majority of the bishops abstained (five voted in favour, 14 against).

Putting his case for condemnation and discipline of gay priests, the Essex vicar, the Rev Tony Higon, said: "I believe bishops know about such things but are, in many cases, avoiding the cost of discipline. This will no longer do. Some of those who call for us to support committed, faithful homosexual relationships are hypocritically involved in many relationships themselves."

The Rev Malcolm Johnson of St Botolph's Church in the City of London, which hosts the offices of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, called for "definite encouragement... of stability, commitment and permanence in all human relationships" without condemning homosexuals.

Mr Johnson, whose amendment was defeated by 325 to 46, said Mr Higon's motion "obviously wants to combat promiscuity, but as it denies good, stable relationships it will have the opposite effect."