

MAKING HISTORY TO GO: THE CASE OF THE IVORY COAST / UNITED METHODIST UNION OF 2004

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At the United Methodist General Conference of 2004, a union of the United Methodist Church and the Protestant Methodist Church of the Ivory Coast was approved. It would appear that the initiative had come, some years earlier, from the Ivory Coast; this fact does not in itself absolve the church in the United States from asking itself some urgent questions.

This moment is one of great opportunity for the United Methodist Church: if we receive the Protestant Methodist Church of the Ivory Coast as a sister Church, with its own theological integrity, this juncture can and ought to involve, for instance, a development in the doctrinal section of the Discipline in which for the first time the hitherto distinct (even if parallel) strands of world Methodist theology can be brought together in harmony. But, even if this is done, much spiritual benefit will be forfeited if the general body of the United Methodist Church cannot be encouraged to see in the Ivory Coast Church a Church of equal dignity. We need a wider vision of the Church Catholic, and of the Gospel which creates that Church and is carried by it.

Were the two Churches to be united, or are the Ivory Coast Methodists simply to fold into the United Methodist Church as a new—what?—episcopal area? (If an episcopal area, how is a single bishop expected to care for one million registered members?) **The first question to be asked comes at once: is this the union of two churches, or is it an annexation?** While the definitive plan is being developed, and when it is presented to the 2008 General Conference and the Ivory Coast Synod of that year, this is a question that must be posed if the historical record is to be full and candid. The issue is of more than annalistic interest, of course. Just because of their respective sizes, the larger church would be tempted to treat the smaller with unconscious but overwhelming

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institutional contempt. This would not be the first time such a thing has happened,¹ but that consideration does not resolve the more urgent theological and ethical question: Are we to judge the significance of a particular Christian community by reference to its numbers? Are there criteria of humility that can be applied to churches as they can to individuals? Historians, especially church historians, are uncomfortably aware of the tension between Bishop Mandell Creighton, who insisted on the facts alone, and sought to refrain from moral judgment on the protagonists of history, and Lord Acton, who insisted with equal fervor that the historian must judge the events, and their protagonists, which she or he is uncovering.²

The general conviction which impels this, and the other questions to be posed in this paper, is that church historians carry a responsibility at least to chronicle, but also to interpret and, in historical categories, to question, Church decisions *as they are made*—while openly admitting that all records and interpretations and judgments are themselves subject to cross-examination and judgment.

Because of the provisional character of the report brought to the floor of the General Conference, details of the preceding negotiations or of the eventual constitutional implications for the participating churches were not set out in detail. Of course, if this event is to be a mere annexation, then there would be no constitutional implications at all, or none worth mentioning, for the American-centered United Methodist Church, and the Church in the Ivory Coast would simply be gleichgeschaltet to conform to the current American model. It is reported that the Ivory Coast Church first raised the issue of a union four years previously, and there must have been detailed negotiations in the intervening time. **Question 2: will the records of those negotiations be made available at some stage for historical interpretation and theological/ethical evaluation? Comment: Mr Wesley's principle was that all such matters be carried out in the full light of day.**

What is implied for the doctrinal standards of the two churches? When a closer relationship was being contemplated between the Church of Scotland and the Scotland District of the Methodist Church, a proposed unitive Confession of Faith was quickly drafted, with the historic areas of tension all smoothed out (or painted over). The Faith and Order representatives in the negotiations expressed relief, only to be told by their colleagues that this was the easiest and least important aspect of church relations. Just what this feeling indicates about the inward condition of participating churches, one hardly dares to ask.

The Protestant Methodist Church of the Ivory Coast defines itself doctrinally in some measure in its own chosen title. Its British Methodist ancestry is apparent in the "*Préambule*," with certain substantial adaptations, for much of the material, especially in the doctrinal area, is from the "Deed of Union," the legal executive document which translated the Methodist Church Union Act of 1929 into the reality of the Methodist Church of Great Britain (1932). The first element in the Ivory Coast formulation, although derived from that British Methodist source, also glances at the World Council of Churches' foundational statement.³ Then, as in the British Methodist Deed of Union, the Ivory Coast Church claims the place, dignity and responsibilities of a body within the Church Catholic, but adds both a Christological assertion and an

explicit Trinitarian explication of the Church Universal and its calling to maintain the apostolic faith. As in the Deed of Union, “the fundamental principles” of the historic creeds (sc., the “Apostles” and the “Nicene” Creeds⁴) and of the Protestant Reformation are insisted upon, but not listed in detail. Then, as to the Church’s secondary character as a Methodist body, the calling of the Methodists, under the providence of God, to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world, is confessed, and accompanied by a pledge to follow this vocation. The message of the Protestant Methodist Church is based on the divine revelation contained in Holy Scripture. (In this careful formulation, one may detect the careful background work of Nathanael Burwash and Arthur Samuel Peake). This revelation is the Church’s supreme rule of faith and practice. The Church is ready to correct and reform itself in the light of this revelation, and (here an addition to the British formula) of the revelation continually given by the Holy Spirit. All who sincerely desire to be saved from their sin, and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and accept the obligation to serve in the Church and in the world, are accepted as members.

But what constitutional upheavals might be involved for the Ivory Coast Church? (This issue is more than administrative, for Church order reflects, sometimes distorts, our ecclesiologies). That Church became independent of the British Conference in 1985. It had hitherto been an Overseas District of the British Connexion, and therefore inherited the British pattern of ecclesiastical order, preserved (with adaptations) from Mr. Wesley’s day. The crucial ecclesiastical unit there was therefore the Circuit, a grouping of congregations under the collective care of a team of ordained ministers and Local Preachers. (“Le Circuit se compose d’une ou de plusieurs Eglises locales, desservies par un ou plusieurs pasteurs,” *Statuts*, Article 18). These are not circuits in the American sense: there is no assumption that each congregation and each pastor should be a detached unit, plowing its own self-determined furrow. What will happen to the Circuits in the Ivory Coast Church? That Church has since its establishment created Districts, and in so doing has clearly adapted its structure and administration in the intervening nineteen years to address its missional responsibilities, exactly as it foresaw in the 1985 *Statuts* (“Eglises locales groupées en circuits, missions et, au besoin, en districts. ”, Article 8); and that process will no doubt continue. **Question 3: will the historic Methodist principles of Church Order still be applicable in this situation? What part have those principles played in the union negotiations?**

The Ivory Coast Church, l’Église Protestante Méthodiste de Côte d’Ivoire, declared itself in 1985 to be an “Église autonome” (*Statuts*, “*Préambule*,” para. 1). It is therefore entirely in its power to unite with another church (Article 45). The moment of the covenanting between the former parent Church and the new autonomous Church, in the Representative Session of the British Conference of 1984, was a solemn one. **Question 4: what will be the solemnity by which the two autonomous churches are eventually united in the acts, respectively, of the Conference of the Protestant Methodist Church of the Ivory Coast and the United Methodist General Conference? And in these proceedings, to what extent will the two Churches acknowledge their respective authenticity and autonomy?**

The apparent simplicity of the decision made in principle at the General Conference suggests that there was an element of urgency, perhaps to meet some pressing missional need.

At the 1984 British Conference, every member had in her or his hands a booklet: *Statuts relatifs à la pratique et disciplines constitutionnelles de l'Eglise Protestante Méthodiste de Côte d'Ivoire. Statutes relating to the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church in the Ivory Coast* (pp. 24, no place or printer). The sub-title of the *Statuts* was obviously derived from the British Conference's *Constitutional Practice and Discipline* as it had existed since 1951, edited by Spencer and Finch. At this juncture, the definitive text was the French one, this language being the unitive and governmental tongue of the Ivory Coast, and the negotiations were conducted, even when at a distance, in both French and English. Any communications generated within the British negotiating committee were, even if phrased by the responsible drafters in English, translated into French both for communication to the Ivory Coast colleagues and for prior examination, so that the implications for all parties could be explicit and acceptable.

One of the most carefully articulated decisions which formed the 1984/1985 *Statuts* concerned membership. (A general statement as to membership occurs in the doctrinal self-definition of the Protestant Methodist Church of the Ivory Coast, in the *Preamble*; this will concern us further on). The members of the Church were defined as those who are baptized within this Church and such persons, baptized in any other Christian Church, are admitted into its number ("ceux qu'elle a reconnus pour siens par le baptême ou qui, baptisés dans une autre Eglise, ont été admis dans son sein," Article 5). Voting powers are restricted to "membres actifs" who have attained their age of legal majority; such "active members" are further defined as those who have confirmed their baptism, received in infancy, by personal confession, or have been baptized in adult years upon their personal confession. This definition of membership had clearly emerged from intense thought and study in the Ivorian missional and ecumenical context; it represented a move away from the general tenor of the British Methodist Church's statements—but not from the language of Mr. Wesley's own adaptation of the baptismal liturgy.⁽⁵⁾ In general, this line of thought marches with the moves made recently within the United Methodist Church to define membership in terms of baptism. To go back from this point would require considerable theological examination. **Question 5: what was or will be agreed in this union as to the relation of membership to baptism? What was or will be the process of theological alignment devoted to this issue? How does this topic impinge upon the United Methodist Church's own self-examination on the definition of membership, and the teaching about baptism?**

The criteria for the acceptance of members, according to the Ivory Coast Statutes, combines the list in the 1932 British Deed of Union (in our parallel presentation below, marked as *...*) with the new formulation adopted by the British Conference in 1970 (marked here as †.. †).⁶ The result retains the earlier centrality of individual salvation from sin and Hell together with the later emphasis on faith that serves.

Even more distinctive in 1984/85 was the decision of the Ivory Coast Church as to the disciplinary powers of the Church—at least by implication, of the Church

Universal, and not simply in one particular church. Article 41 “En aucune circonstance les organes disciplinaires ne prononcent l’expulsion de l’Eglise. Par contre, selon la gravité du cas, l’organe disciplinaire peut: - exiger de l’individu fautif la démission des fonctions qu’il occupe; - prononcer le retrait de son droit de vote dans les assemblées et de toute possibilité d’être réélu.” “Under no circumstances do the disciplinary bodies pronounce expulsion from the Church. On the other hand: according to the gravity of the case, the disciplinary body may, (1) require of the person who is at fault the surrender of those offices which that person holds; (2) decree the withdrawal of that person’s right to vote in Church meetings, and to deny any possibility of that person being re-elected.” (My translation differs from that in the printed booklet, for the sake of inclusiveness). The “disciplinary bodies” (Article 40), are, in the case of members, the Circuit Quarterly Meetings and Conference-appointed committees of appeal. Article 41 also provides for trial and sanction of ministers and probationers under charges: the sanctions consist of suspension from the exercise of ministry, provision being made for restoration upon proven genuine conversion. The principle that members cannot be expelled has its basis in a particular covenantal understanding of baptism. “The gifts and call of God are without repentance,” or, Moffatt’s reading, “God does not go back on his calling or his gifts” (Romans 11:29). The implications of such an interpretation (soteriological, sacramental) for the members’ carrying of one another’s burdens, including the burden of one another’s sins, in fulfillment of the law given by Christ, and of the law of Christ’s own nature and life, are immense. **Question 6: Has this decision in principle made by the Church of the Ivory Coast been changed since 1985? If it has not been rescinded or amended in the intervening years, will it stand after this union? Will the United Methodist Church re-examine its own disciplinary policies and procedures in the light of this union?**

As to its statement of faith, and doctrinal standards, something has been noted here already. The Ivory Coast Church retained, by with substantial changes the doctrinal clauses of the British Deed of Union. The changes and retentions become clear only when the two texts are set side by side.

DEED OF UNION (1932)

The doctrinal standards of The Methodist Church are as follows:

STATUTS (1984/85)

Attendus que les doctrines de L’Eglise Protestante de COTE D’IVOIRE sont les suivantes: L’Eglise Protestante Méthodiste de COTE D’IVOIRE confesse le Seigneur JESUS-CHRIST comme Seigneur et Sauveur selon les Ecritures et s’efforce de répondre à sa vocation au sein de l’Eglise universelle pour la gloire du seul

The Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place in the Holy Catholic Church which is the Body of Christ.

It rejoices in the inheritance of the Apostolic Faith and loyally accepts the fundamental principles of the historic creeds and of the Protestant Reformation.

It ever remembers that in the Providence of God Methodism was raised up to spread Scriptural Holiness through the land by the proclamation of the Evangelical Faith.

and declares its unflinching resolve to be true to its Divinely appointed Mission.

The Doctrines of the Evangelical Faith which Methodism has held from the beginning

and still holds are based upon the Divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The Methodist Church acknowledges this revelation as the supreme rule of faith and practice.

These Evangelical Doctrines to which the Preachers of the Methodist Church both Ministers and Laymen are pledged are

Dieu, Père Fils et Saint-Esprit.

Elle se réjouit d'appartenir à la Sainte Eglise Universelle qui est le Corps du CHRIST

et d'être héritière de la foi apostolique. Elle accepte loyalement les principes fondamentaux des confessions de foi historiques et de la Réforme Protestante.

Elle se souvient que Dieu, selon son dessein providentiel, a suscité le Méthodisme pour répandre à travers le monde la sainteté selon les Ecritures par le moyen de la proclamation de la foi évangélique; elle se déclare fermement résolue à rester fidèle à sa mission divine.

Les doctrines que l'Eglise Méthodiste prêche depuis le réveil évangélique du XVIIIème siècle et qu'elle prêche toujours sont fondées sur la révélation de Dieu telle qu'elle est contenue dans les Saintes Ecritures. L'Eglise Protestante Méthodiste reconnaît cette révélation comme la règle suprême de la foi et de la conduite. Elle est prête à se corriger et à se réformer conformément à l'Enseignement des Ecritures et à la révélation que continue à en donner le Saint Esprit.

contained in Wesley's Notes on the New Testament and the first four volumes of his sermons.

The Notes on the New Testament and the 44 Sermons are not intended to impose a system of formal or speculative theology on Methodist Preachers, but to set up standards of preaching and belief which should secure loyalty to the fundamental truths of the Gospel of Redemption and ensure the continued witness of the Church to the realities of the Christian experience of salvation.

[*All persons are welcomed into the membership of the Methodist Church who sincerely desire to be saved from their sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and evidence the same in life and conduct and who seek to have fellowship with Christ Himself and His People by taking up the duties and privileges of The Methodist Church.*

†All those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and accept the Obligation to serve him in the life of the Church and the world are welcome as full members of the Methodist Church. If not already baptized those seeking membership will be baptized before being received as full members.†]

Christ's Ministers in the Church are Stewards in the household of God and Shepherds of His flock. Some are called and ordained to this sole occupation and have a principal and directing part in these great duties but

L'Eglise Protestante
Méthodiste accueille comme
membres tous ceux qui désirent
sincèrement être sauvés de leur
péché, confessent JESUS-CHRIST,
comme Seigneur et Sauveur et
acceptent l'obligation de le servir
dans l'Eglise et dans le monde.

Le Ministère pastoral dans l'Eglise
Protestante Méthodiste est confié

they hold no priesthood differing in kind from that which is common to all the Lord's people and they have no exclusive title to the preaching of the gospel or the care of souls. These ministries are shared by them with others to whom also the Spirit divides His gifts severally as He wills.

It is the universal conviction of the Methodist people that the office of the Christian Ministry depends upon the call of God who bestows the gifts of the Spirit the grace and the fruit which indicate those whom He has chosen.

Those whom the Methodist Church recognises as called of God and therefore receives into its Ministry shall be ordained by the imposition of hands as expressive of the Church's recognition of the Minister's personal call.

{† .shall be ordained. .by the laying-on of hands at a service conducted by the President or by his deputy, assisted by other ministers.‡}

à ceux que CHRIST appelle, qu'il munit des dons et des grâces nécessaires pour ce travail et que l'Eglise reconnaît comme ainsi appelés et munis.

Ces personnes ont une responsabilité particulière en ce qui concerne les soins à apporter au troupeau du CHRIST et la discipline à lui faire observer. Mais elles n'ont pas de sacerdoce essentiellement différent de celui de tout le peuple de Dieu. Elles sont consacrées au Ministère Pastoral par la prière et l'imposition des mains

au nom du Seigneur JESUS-CHRIST, l'Unique Chef de l'Eglise,

par quelques personnes déjà consacrées à ce ministère, qui représentent l'ensemble des membres.

The Methodist Church holds the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, and consequently believes that no priesthood exists which belongs exclusively to a particular order or class of men but in the exercise of its corporate life and worship special qualifications for the discharge of special duties are required and thus the principle of representative selection is recognised.

The Preachers itinerant and lay are examined tested and approved before they are authorised to minister in holy things. For the sake of Church Order and not because of any priestly virtue inherent in the office the Ministers of The Methodist Church are set apart by ordination to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments.

The Methodist Church recognises two sacraments namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper as of Divine Appointment and of perpetual obligation of which it is the privilege and duty of Members of The Methodist Church to avail themselves.

L'Eglise Protestante Méthodiste reconnaît deux sacrements qui sont ordonnés par Dieu et qui constituent un devoir perpétuel de l'Eglise: le Baptême et la Sainte-Cène.

The changes made by the Ivory Coast Church were significant. **[Question 7: Were these changes primarily the work of the British missionaries still serving the Ivory Coast Church, or were they at least equally the work of indigenous colleagues? To what subsequent thought has this basis been subjected in the Ivory Coast, in the light of local experience and study and of the interim development in the ecumenical situation?]** The resultant text calls for consideration of several interesting theological issues, in addition to those already noted.

Some aspects of the doctrine of baptism and of the Church's authority over the baptized have been noticed already. Some other matters are: the interpretation of the authority of the Scriptural revelation; the self-definition of Methodist doctrinal stewardship; the criteria for the acceptance of members; the interpretation of ordination.

The Deed of Union speaks of “the Evangelical Faith,” the natural reading of which is, “the Christian Gospel, interpreted and in and from the Bible, specifically the New Testament, according to the consensus of Protestant churches.” The French text, perhaps by accident, seems to define “the Evangelical Faith” rather in terms of the teachings central to the (eighteenth century and subsequent) Evangelical Revival. This change may have been intended to replace the specific reference to the Standard Sermons and the Notes, which are entrenched in the British Deed of Union. Question 8: how will these changes be squared with the “established standards of doctrine” professed by the United Methodist Church?

What are the criteria for recognizing the further guidance of the Holy Spirit? The “en” (“of it”) in the text seems to refer to the revelation contained in the Scriptures; this reading protects against admission of “revelations” which may lead away from this norm. The substitution of “contained” (“contenue”) for “recorded” may be purely stylistic, but it is nonetheless debatable: the revelation “recorded” is a sequence of historical events which created and develop a covenant relationship, in which growth and correction and amplification all have essential roles. How these statements may be reconciled with any notion of a “Quadrilateral” (to say nothing of a fictitious “Wesleyan Quadrilateral”) is an issue for investigation elsewhere.

The Ivory Coast text carefully reorders the British passages about ministry and ordination, not to weaken the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers there maintained, but rather (I suggest) to integrate it better with the doctrine of the Church, and to smooth out some of the obsessive and repetitive defensiveness of the British wording. We must remember that in Britain of the 1930’s the Anglo-Catholic attack on “non-episcopal” ministries was still very vocal, and the Free Church response was still very neurasthenic. The appeal to the theology of ministry put forward by F. W. Robertson of Brighton (whose authorship had apparently been forgotten) seemed to offer the only way to counter this onslaught. The Ivorean drafters omitted the astoundingly unqualified claim that “no priesthood exists which belongs exclusively to a particular order or class of men” (how this might relate to Hebrews was not explicated!), and is content to retain the assurance that the sacerdotium of the ordained is not essentially different from that of all of God’s people. The one point at which the Ivorean text seems to extend the British statement is that the ordained pastors who ordain “represent the totality of the members” (“qui représentent l’ensemble des membres.”) The subject of the universal royal priesthood of the faithful has no place in United Methodism’s Articles of Religion or its Confession of Faith, and the integration of these and the confessional platform of the Ivory Coast Church might in itself be an important step. This would make explicit the growing endorsement within United Methodism’s official statements, and in representative individual theologians’ works, of the general principle of the universal priesthood of believers.⁸

The definition of Ivory Coast Protestant Methodism’s membership is in terms of baptism: those whom that Church has itself baptized or the baptized of other Christian traditions who wish to continue their Christian discipleship in Methodist company. (The criteria for valid baptism are not addressed.) How this definition may be related to the fiasco of the 2000 General Conference’s *ultra vires* legislation on this

issue will be a fascinating process (if it takes place). In the last analysis, the criteria for Church membership must be founded on the incarnation and the atonement, before any requirements for human response.

Question 9: if these issues are still to be negotiated or discussed, where will this be done? And who will be involved? And how will the two Churches' members be offered information and participation?

Who is this author, who presumes to pose these questions?

I was a member of the Faith and Order Committee of the British Conference during the abortive negotiations with the Church of Scotland, and one of the Faith and Order Committee representatives, in the 1983/4 working party of the British Conference's Transfer of Authority Committee,⁹ collaborating with our Ivorean colleagues as they formulated their Church's constitution. A full verbal report was made to the British Conference, but we did not publish an account of the process, as everyone seemed content without question. *Nostra culpa*, I must say.

NOTES

1. When the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church united in 1939 to form The Methodist Church, the Methodist Protestants, of course, accepted episcopacy and conceived and used in the two larger churches. In the area of dogma, the Articles inherited by the two larger churches were agreed as part of the unchangeable standards of doctrine; the Methodist Protestant article on sanctification, *the only item specifically addressed to the Methodist (or Wesleyan) doctrinal platform, on the topic noted by Mr. Wesley as "the grand depositum,"* was not included in the canonical Articles, but printed at the end as a historical monument, of unspecified status or authority. The result is uncertainty about the degree of seriousness attributed to the smallest of the three uniting churches, or to the allegedly unchangeable standards, or to doctrine itself. To remain on the more mundane level of mutual respect: the (admittedly editorial, unofficial) heading of the report in the *Daily Christian Advocate*, Vol. 5, p. 2342 (Saturday, May 8, 2004), "Autonomous Protestant Methodist Church of Cote d'Ivoire gains U. M. status," carries unfortunate overtones.

2. On the debate between Creighton ("I try to put myself in their place") and Acton: [Louise Creighton], *Life and Letters of Mandell Creighton, D. D. Oxon. and Camb. sometime Bishop of London*, [1904], 2 volumes in one edn., London, etc., Longman, Green and Co., 1913, Vol. I, Ch. XIII (pp. 368-378).

3. This formulation has been the subject of discussion: cf. Nels S. F. Ferré, "Is the Basis of the World Council Heretical?", *Expository Times* LXXIV / 3 (December 1962), pp. 66-68, and response by Ernest A. Payne, "Are Professor Ferré's Strictures Justified" *Expository Times* LXXXIV / 4 (January 1963), pp. 100-102; and Walter J. Hollenweger, "The 'What' and the 'How': Content and Communication of the One Message: a consideration of the Basis of Faith, as formulated by the World Council of Churches," *Expository Times* LXXXVI / 11 (August 1975), pp. 324-328; "Part I. The Christological Formula," LXXXVI / 12 (September 1965), pp. 356-359; "Part II. Orthodoxy or Mission?"

4. On the putative identity of "the historic creeds" in this context, cf. A. Raymond George, "Foundation Documents of the Faith, IX. Methodist Statements," *Expository Times* 91 / 9 (June 1980), pp. 260-263.

5. Cf. James F. White, ed. and intro., *John Wesley's Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America* [Methodist Bicentennial Commemorative Reprint; Quarterly Review Reprint Series], n. p. United Methodist Publishing House and United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry

1984, p. 130 and p. 143: "...that he/they may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy Church, and be made a *lively member / lively members of the same.*"

6. As in *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church. Prepared by Order of The Methodist Conference by Harold Spencer, B. A., and Edwin Finch*, London, Methodist Publishing House 1951, p. 268 (Deed of Union, sub-para. 33 [a]); revised edn. to the Conference of 1968, ed. J. Bernard Sheldon, London, Methodist Publishing House 1968, p. 290. For the 1970 text: *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church*, Volume 2 (Peterborough, Methodist Publishing House, 7th edn 1989), p. 230 / 30 (Deed of Union, still sub-para. 33 [a]). In subsequent editions, now issued in loose-leaf form, the pagination will vary.

7. *Constitutional Practice and Discipline* (as preceding note), 1951, pp. 266-267; also in 1968 edn., pp. 288-289; 1989 edn., pp. 229/30-230/31 (Para. 30 in each of these editions). Paragraphs 31 and 32 preclude alteration of doctrinal clauses in the Deed of Union or in the Model Deed for the ownership of church property.

8. Cf. the recent Ordinal, and such works as Dennis M. Campbell, *The Yoke of Obedience: The Meaning of Ordination in Methodism*, Nashville TN, Abingdon Press 1988, esp. Ch. II, "The Ministry of the Whole People of God." It must be said that the concepts of the ministry of all Christians and the priesthood of all believers are not identical, and both require further and continuing strict theological elucidation.

9. For proof of these statements as to appointment to the Committee for the Transfer of Authority to Overseas Districts, and its business before the Conference, see: *The Methodist Church: The Methodist Conference. Plymouth. 1982* [Agenda, Representative Session, p. 192: "The Ivory Coast Synod has renewed its request for autonomy and its comments are awaited on constitutional proposals which have been forwarded to the District," and list of appointed members; *The Methodist Church. The Minutes of the Annual Conference held in Middlesbrough June 1983*, p. 27: list of appointed members; pp. 237-8, the stations in the Ivory Coast District; *The Methodist Church. The Methodist Conference....Wolverhampton ...1984*: [Agenda], Representative Session, pp. 82-3: "Discussions about the autonomy of the Ivory Coast District have taken place this year. A full report and the wording of resolution 1 will be presented to the Conference," list of appointed members; *The Methodist Church. The Minutes...Wolverhampton. 1984*, p. 27: "(1). Ivory Coast autonomy" (no text given; clearly, a verbal report was to be given); list of appointed members; *The Methodist Church. The Methodist Conference. Birmingham...1985*: [Agenda], Representative Session, p. 225: "The Conference declares that the Methodist Church in Ivory Coast has since the 9th February 1985 by virtue of the provisions of clause 2 of the Deed of Union relating to the constitutional successors of Overseas Districts, been one of the 'other autonomous Conferences' as defined in the Deed of Union and Standing Orders;" pp. 226-7: list of appointed members of The Committee for the Transfer of Authority to Overseas Districts; *Minutes...Birmingham ...1985*, p. 26: list of appointed members of the Committee; p. 52: **Ivory Coast**: Eglise Protestante Methodiste, and its Chairman, listed under Officers of Autonomous Conferences and United Churches.