

THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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9th May, 1979.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
10, Downing Street,
London S.W. 1.

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Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of this Council, I send you greetings and good wishes, both for yourself and for your government. The member churches of the Council recognize that your administration takes office at a difficult time for the people of these islands. The hard choices which we face often appear as issues which divide us. The new pluralism, which has come about not only as a result of immigration but also because of our new affluence, strains our sympathy for each other, often to breaking point. We need the power of Christ to reconcile us and make us one, without in any way obscuring the necessary changes and the new decisions to be made.

The churches are currently engaged in a Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism, seeking to learn from success and failure so that we may serve all our people by drawing them into God's grace and love. The project Britain Today and Tomorrow has led us to probe very carefully issues connected with work, power and identity. The publication of the book "Britain Today and Tomorrow" by Trevor Beeson marked one stage in this process. Our aim is to assist the people of our country to look at our future in the context of the world at large and of Europe, in particular.

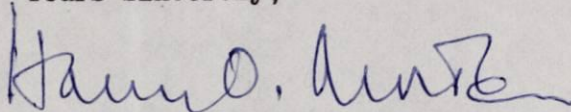
Meanwhile, the churches continue to strive for unity among all Christ's people. We are very hopeful that the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales will come into membership of the Council. We believe that this will greatly strengthen the Council and enable that church to play a wider role amongst the British people.

The churches have a tradition of dialogue with the departments of State. We shall continue to discharge that ministry. We would welcome the possibility of a more informal contact with your government when some leaders of the churches might have an opportunity for conversation with yourself and some of your colleagues. If you think this would be helpful, perhaps one of your staff could be in touch with me to discuss the best way of arranging such an occasion.

In the past, a dinner has been held in the Palace of Westminster when the churches have felicitated the new government. I suspect that this is a little formal and that we might be better served today by a rather different occasion.

I can assure you that you and your colleagues have been prayed for in most congregations on Sunday last. I know that you can count on the prayers of many people throughout your term of office. May God give you his strength and grace.

Yours sincerely,



The Rev. Harry O. Morton
General Secretary

c.c. The Archbishop of Canterbury
The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Greet