The Sociological Issues Raised by a Possible Union of the United and Anglican Churches of Canada

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BEFORE DEALING SPECIFICALLY with the problems of a sociological nature which are likely to be encountered in a union of the United and Anglican churches of Canada, it will be a useful procedure to consider first, at a theoretical level, the union of any two social groups, be they religious or not. We shall deliberately examine a general model in order to see the issues involved in the process of unification as such.

At the outset it has to be assumed that the two bodies both possess common goals or very similar goals, and that the new body which will emerge will have much the same goal as that of the individual bodies. It is axiomatic that no two bodies would contemplate merging unless they had a great deal in common, though it is possible to conceive that neither group will spell out with precision its *raison d'être*. Each may acknowledge it intuitively. Nevertheless, the groups have to be of similar or complementary kinds. No one can conceive the merging of a Boy Scouts association with a trade union! Where goals are identical there would seem to be at first sight a greater chance of successful merging than between bodies where there is less correspondence in the matter of aims or purposes.

In addition to what is little more than a basic assumption in the matter of common objectives, the two following factors may be said to be of considerable importance in bringing about a successful merging of two social entities:

(i) A basic drive on the part of both bodies to become united. A drive which is to be found at every social level of the group is more likely to produce a successful union than if it is found to exist merely at one level, for example, at the most authoritative level.

(ii) A willingness on the part of both bodies to be adaptable immediately prior to the act of merging, and also subsequently.

These factors are self-evident. It is difficult to see how the merging of two bodies can occur without their presence. The one possible exception is when an outside force is brought to bear on the two bodies, as in the case of state intervention, or of pressure from business corporations. But at the same time it has to be realized that one of the bodies might well exert pressure on the other in order to bring about a union, and this particular problem is not

uncommon. Apart from these considerations, however, the most powerful factor is the impetus or drive shown by both of them towards union, which in itself springs from a basic desire for such a state.

If, as we have suggested, the drive for unity is in itself the most important factor in bringing together two independent bodies, we may well ask what the conditions are which give rise to a strengthening of such impetus towards unity. We put forward three such conditions:

(i) The realization that the merging of the two bodies will be instrumental in producing a desirable advantage, usually of a practical kind, *e.g.* greater profits, larger membership, more efficiency, reduction of costs, increase of status in society, the creation of a more powerful entity to face some third body or bodies which are in competition with the two merging bodies.

(ii) The threat of new external social conditions, as a result of which either or each of the bodies finds itself in a weakened position.

(iii) A reinterpretation or re-examination of goals, which may occur simultaneously in both bodies and so bring them together.

In trying to measure forces which cannot easily be quantified—and certainly the factors just listed cannot be readily quantified—it is sometimes profitable to try to estimate the nature of the forces which directly oppose those in which there is primary interest. Not only is it desirable to examine forces which might give rise to union, it is sometimes better to gauge them in the light of those forces which militate against union. Why is it that a potential drive for union fails to materialize? What factors are at work which hinder a would-be union? We can list at least eight such factors:

(i) An acknowledgment that certain practices or attitudes or ideals exist in one group and are in opposition to, or cannot be reconciled with, those of the other group. Mutual agreement is felt to be unobtainable; a compromise is thought to satisfy no one. Further, members of one body do not wish to abandon their practices or attitudes or ideals, or have them modified for the sake of union. Hence, for such members union can only be secondary in value to the practices, attitudes, and ideals of the group.

(ii) Basic fears which stem from the belief that the resultant body will not be the integration of two autonomous bodies, but that it will take a form which will not in fact give full place to the contributions or qualities possessed by one group, which are thought to be integral elements of the new merging body. The main fear in this connection is that one body will be absorbed by the other so that the members of one group feel, or are likely to feel, that they have been "operated" on by the other group, who in turn remain unaffected by the union. The greater or the more powerful body takes up into itself the smaller and less powerful, with the result that the outcome is a mere extension of the greater or more powerful body. Faced with this possibility people often prefer to remain independent rather than be submerged in ways they find undesirable.

(iii) The realization that the new body might be less efficient than two separate small bodies. It might be bureaucratically top-heavy. In this light, union is seen to be but another example of "Parkinson's Law."

(iv) The belief that the new body will be so large that personal relationships realized in the smaller bodies will be vitiated. This point follows on closely with that which has just been mentioned above. The concern in the new body will be so centred on bureaucratic problems and interests that personal relationships will be of secondary importance.

(v) The realization that the new body might create difficult and undesirable relations with other similar, or even dissimilar bodies, *e.g.* the state or other business organizations.

(vi) Deliberate attempts on the part of a third party to prevent the merger for the reason that the new united body will be a threat to the existence of the third party.

(vii) The realization that only certain sections or groups within the two bodies wish for union. It is not difficult to see, for example, that those members of the two bodies who are decision-makers, who hold responsibility for the government of the bodies, desire to bring about a merger, while on the other hand people at "lower" levels have no such wish to see union. Often the reaction of those who are not decision-makers is one of indifference or even opposition. In either case it is safe to assume that such reactions from the rank-and-file would ruin a possible union, though this would depend obviously upon the nature of the bodies concerned, and the ultimate control that the decision-makers have over ordinary members. The desirability of carrying everyone into union is more evident in bodies which are of a voluntary nature, for example, a community association, than in bodies which are less characterized by a voluntary quality, such as police forces. The process of merging involves decisions by those in responsibility in the two bodies about whether or not to proceed with the union when rank-and-file members are either indifferent or opposed to a possible merger. Discussions and the dissemination of ideas are the usual ways by which an indifferent or hostile rank-and-file is encouraged to change its outlook.

(viii) The realization that in the new group hostility might occur between members at various social levels. The new group will inevitably bring about new relations between sets of people who before were unrelated. Hostility can, and often does, arise owing to various types of backgrounds from which members are drawn. Thus, it can be engendered by differences in social class, differences in ethnic background, differences in language, differences in salary, differences in working conditions, and so forth. Possible differences will be felt most acutely where people who before were not institutionally related are now related within close proximity to one another. For example, hostility is more likely to be felt where unions are local and where they involve people of different social status, but on the other hand, if such people remain geographically isolated, though they are in fact within the same

body, tensions are likely to be less. Tensions, however, may become apparent at high-level or regional meetings.

The successful merging or union of two autonomous social groups depends on a great number of factors. We have referred only to some of the more important ones. In particular kinds of unions, others might be more significant. For the moment it is suggested that this is an adequate working model.

IN THE LIGHT of this generalized analysis we turn to the United and Anglican churches, which have in the recent past displayed at certain levels a vigorous interest in the possibility of union. On two occasions, in 1908 and 1920, Anglicans considered joining the talks which were slowly leading to the formation, in 1925, of the United Church. But the initial concern never matured. In 1943 efforts were made by leaders of the United and Anglican churches to take up the cause of unity again and more seriously, and after a somewhat quiescent period the two Committees of Ten (one United Church and the other Anglican) published, in the middle of 1965, the document, *The Principles of Union between the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada.* It was accepted by the General Synod of the Anglican Church in August of the same year and by the General Council of the United Church in September 1966. The *Principles* form the basis on which it is hoped it will be possible to formulate an acceptable scheme which will unite the two churches. There can be little doubt that the speed with which agreement has been reached by the two Committees of Ten and the suddenness with which the document appeared before the public has been brought about by the rapid increase of enthusiasm in ecumenical affairs over the past half-dozen years. Nor can it be overlooked that much of it has come from the way in which the Vatican Council has been conducted, from the imaginative reforms that have taken place at that Council and the great interest shown in Rome in ecumenical matters. To the outsider it would appear that the committees have been stung into action by what has been going on in the world at large and by the fact that efforts in Canada towards church unity were lagging behind similar movements in other countries. Do these influences account for the sudden breakthrough? One would like to know how difficulties, previously insurmountable, have suddenly been overcome. How is it that the theologically impossible now becomes possible? It is probably true to say that, in contrast to the union of 1925, the immediate and present pressure for the merging of the Anglican and United churches comes from the authoritative levels of the two churches and not from local churches. In the negotiations leading to the 1925 union, it was the local churches, particularly on the prairies, which formed the spearhead of the movement, and which were often themselves the result of local unions. Now, in the drive for the union of the United and Anglican churches, it is the Toronto-based theologians and church leaders who are setting the pace. The two Anglicans who presented

the *Principles of Union* at the General Synod in Vancouver were professors of the same college in Toronto. The problem is now one of communication from "above" to "below." In the 1925 movement the problem of communication was mainly in the reverse direction. This contrast has important sociological implications.

The purpose of this paper, however, is not to explain how the Anglican and United churches have reached their state of *rapprochement*, but rather to examine some aspects of the task that confronts them in their renewed aspiration to bring about union. Further, it is our assumption that a good many of the problems in growing together, and perhaps eventual living together, are of a non-theological kind. The paper avoids as far as possible all references to theological issues and assumes that all such issues can be successfully solved, or at least largely solved, by study and negotiation. An examination of other churches has shown that, even if there is doctrinal agreement, there is no guarantee that unity will take place or that the road to integration will be a smooth one. Doctrine is by no means the only thing that keeps the churches apart.[1] The point is that churches are institutions, sociological as well as theological, and therefore, in the growing together of churches, sociological factors can be as difficult to overcome or circumnavigate as factors of a doctrinal kind. Some people prefer the term non-theological or institutional to sociological. But predilections for certain terms aside, those who realize the existence of such non-theological forces admit that they are many and varied.

At the moment of examining what we shall refer to as sociological factors, we are faced with the difficulty that very little factual evidence exists which can be of use in relating the United and Anglican churches to the abstract model which was presented at the beginning of the paper. There is a complete dearth of surveys which have had as their object an assessment of any of the sociological problems of the projected union, even such an elementary consideration as whether or not church members at large desire union. All that can be attempted here is to draw on evidence from various sources which has some bearing on church union. This, it is hoped, will in part clarify a few of the issues raised in the abstract model, but at the same time it will be part of the exercise to suggest certain sociological issues which are worthy of special attention in the future and which cannot be analysed unless specific research projects are addressed to them.

Rather than take the various factors which are raised by the model in the order in which they were presented, I have selected factors on which there is some available information.

Of the forces which might be said to militate against a drive for union, probably none is more powerful than the fear of absorption—the fear that one body will swallow up the other (the second point in the model). This fear is strongest when a small body unites with a much larger one; to give

[1]Cf. N. Ehrenstrom and W. G. Muelder (eds.), *Institutionalism and Church Unity* (New York: Association Press, 1963).

an extreme case, when a church of 500 members unites with one of 500,000 members. While the constitution may contain safeguards of the rights of the smaller body, the power of numerical size can never be completely neutralized. We cannot deal with the constitution of the proposed church, since its drafting is a long way off, but we can consider the problem of size, judged at least by present figures. All relevant statistics relating to the United and Anglican churches are given in Table I. In the main they are based on the year 1961 and, in some cases, on 1951.

TABLE I

A Table of Comparison:
Membership and Composition of the United and Anglican Churches

	Year	United Church	Anglican Church
Figures based on census returns			
Population	1961	3.7 million	2.4 million
	1951	2.9 million	2.0 million
Increase 1961/1951		28%	14.5%
Church population as % of Canadian population		20%	13%
Age-structure	1961	same as Canada	same as Canada (slightly old)
Rural/urban proportions	1961	same as Canada	same as Canada (slightly more urban)
Ethnic origin	1961	80% British Isles	84% British Isles
Provinces of relative strength	1961	Ontario B.C. Prairies	Ontario B.C. N.W.T.
Figures based on church returns			
Persons on church rolls	1961	2.6 million	1.4 million
Members	1961	1.0 million	669,000
	1951	834,000	490,000
Increase 1961/1951		24%	37%
Easter communicants	1961	?	476,500
Sunday school members	1961	757,000	292,000
	1951	551,000	246,000
Increase 1961/1951		37.5%	19%
Baptisms	1961	64,000	45,000
Marriages	1961	28,000	12,000
Burials	1961	31,000	20,000
Clergy		3,300	2,500

The United Church of Canada is the largest church in the country except for the Roman Catholic Church. In 1961 its population according to the census was 3.7 million, while the Anglican Church, the third largest church in Canada, had a population of 2.4 million. The population of the United Church has grown by 28 per cent over the past decade compared with a growth of 14.5 per cent for Anglicans. For the country as a whole, the growth has been 30 per cent. At the present time the United Church population is a fifth of Canada's population; that of the Anglican Church, 13 per cent. But the census population is one thing, and actual church affiliation another. In 1961 there were 2.6 million persons on United Church rolls and for Anglicans, 1.4 million. (There would be persons of other

denominations on each church's rolls.) These figures do not mean a great deal. What is more important is active membership, and in the United Church this means people over 17 or 18 years of age, connected with the church, who have been made members. In 1961 there were 1.0 million such people representing a 24 per cent increase over 1951, and forming 9 per cent of the total adult population of Canada.[2] The Anglican Church has no precise definition of membership; this is something that will have to be agreed upon in the proposed union. The nearest comparable classification to membership in the United Church is communicant membership, but statistics for this group are not very carefully kept. In 1961 it was reckoned that there were 669,000 communicant members, representing 6 per cent of the adult population of Canada (an increase of 37 per cent over 1951). The number of Easter communicants in the Anglican Church—a figure that is more accurately kept—was 476,500 in 1961. The United Church has no such measurement of active membership. Sunday school returns in both churches have fluctuated considerably over the years. In 1961 there were about 760,000 United Church Sunday school members and just under 300,000 Anglican members. For every three baptisms performed in the United Church (64,000 in 1961), two were conducted in the Anglican Church. For burials the ratio was much the same. However, in the matter of weddings the position is different. For every two weddings in the United Church (28,000 in 1961), one took place in the Anglican Church. The relatively high proportion of marriages conducted by United Church ministers is one factor which leads some people to conclude that the United Church is Canada's "established" Protestant church. But interestingly enough, there are, relatively speaking, more "in-group" marriages in the United Church than in the Anglican Church—that is, on a percentage basis more bridegrooms choose brides of the same denomination as themselves in the United Church than in the Anglican Church.[3] Where the two churches come closest together is with regard to the number of clergy—3,300 ministers in the United Church in 1961, which includes retired ministers, while the comparable Anglican figure is 2,500. One ramification of this fact is that there are more active members per minister in the United Church than in the Anglican Church.

What kinds of conclusions can be drawn from these statistics? One thing is quite clear, judged at least by such over-all figures—namely, that there is little justification for fear of absorption on the part of the smaller body. It is true that the Anglican Church does not have the following the United Church has—the ratio for the figures, Anglican to United Church, is roughly 2:3—but it is highly unlikely that any two uniting bodies would be equally matched. The differences are not serious; in this respect, at least, the circum-

[2] *I.e.*, those 15 years of age and over.

[3] Cf. *1961 Census of Canada, General Review, Religious Denominations*, Bulletin 7.1–11 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965). From Table XII it will be seen that 62 per cent of United Church bridegrooms married United Church brides, while 50 per cent of Anglican bridegrooms married Anglican brides.

stances of the negotiations are singularly fortunate. How will future figures look—say at the time when union may take place? It is difficult to foresee. There is evidence that the United Church is growing at a faster rate than the Anglican Church, but any judgment depends very much on the criterion of classification, *e.g.* census population, or membership, or some other way of establishing practising affiliation. Again, the question of future changes in following does not appear to be a serious or fear-provoking problem, inasmuch as the numerical ratio between the churches is not likely to change.

If we look behind national figures and focus our attention on those for provinces, some similarity again emerges in comparing the two churches. Employing census material and the church's percentage level of population in each province, it is to be seen that the provinces in which the United Church is strong are Ontario, British Columbia, and the prairie provinces (Table I). For the Anglican Church the strong provinces are Ontario, British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories, and it is also well represented in the prairie provinces.

It has been stated that the drive towards union could be impaired by a realization that the uniting bodies contained social elements within them which might come into conflict if the churches became one (the eighth point in the model). Differences with regard to language, racial background, and social class could well make for difficulty in the creation of a new body, subject though it might be to Christian concepts of community and brotherhood. Unfortunately very little is known about the social composition of the two churches, though limited observations are possible from census returns. Nothing is known from research carried out by the churches themselves. According to the 1961 census figures, the age-structure in both churches is similar and in both cases approximates to that of Canada, though it is true to say that Anglican age-structure is slightly older than that of the country and the United Church age-structure almost identical with the country's. It would seem that there is little likelihood of young congregations having to link up with much older ones. In the matter of the location of population according to a rural-urban division, there is one difference (which need not, however, be taken too seriously). The United Church is proportionately more rural than Canada itself and the Anglican Church more urban than the country. Indeed, at the present time the Anglican Church is the most urban of all the major Canadian churches. However, it would be hardly true to say that the United Church is any less urban in its outlook and outreach than the Anglican Church. The most serious stumbling block to community integration is generally ethnic background and with it, language. But in this both churches are particularly well balanced. In the United Church 80 per cent are of British origin, according to the census returns of 1961, and in the Anglican Church 84 per cent. Both churches are basically Anglo-Saxon in outlook with a way of life that identifies them with English-speaking Canada. Relatively speaking, the United Church does draw unto itself immigrants of a slightly wider

ethnic background than does the Anglican Church. One might refer to the number of persons of Netherlands and Scandinavian background who have become members of the United Church.[4] Also, in Winnipeg, for example, the United Church has a few congregations drawn from national or linguistic minorities—Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian—which tend to have very limited followings. The Anglicans have no corresponding churches.

The class-structure or social stratification of the two churches is an aspect of their institutional life on which accurate information would be most valuable. Occupational structure is closely related to class-structure or social stratification, but even about this there is virtually no information.[5] To cover all three terms fairly loosely, and in order to avoid technical differences between them, we shall refer to the social structure of the two churches.

It has been considered by some that in previous decades there was a noticeable difference in the social structure of the Anglican and United churches, or more accurately between the Anglican and certain of the "Free" churches which helped to form the United Church. W. E. Mann, writing about the sociological influences which helped to bring into existence the United Church in 1925, has stated:

> Nontheological factors doubtless played an important role in depressing Anglican and Baptist interest in early union proposals. For instance, Anglican congregations were often separated from Methodists by a higher social standing, especially in central Canada.[6]

One would like to know much about the social structure of the Anglicans in the 1920s and precisely how it differed from that of the Methodists. Despite what Mann says, the differences were perhaps less marked than those between Anglicans and Methodists in England at the same period, where more documented evidence is available. However, one thing does seem quite clear—namely, that what has happened subsequently in both Canada and England has been a movement which has brought the social structures of the two churches more into line with each other. Mann notes that, since the time of union, the United Church has tended to move in the direction of respectability and one suspects, therefore, that its social structure now approximates to that of the Anglican Church in Canada.[7] A similar tendency has been observed in England in the Church of England and the Methodist Church over the same period.[8] Nor should it be forgotten that, when the United Church of Canada came into existence, the Methodists

[4]Cf. *1951 Census of Canada*, Vol. X (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1953), pp. 167f.

[5]Some interesting material, however, has recently appeared in John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), though the book does not deal with the social structure of the churches as such.

[6]W. E. Mann, "The Canadian Church Union, 1925," in Ehrenstrom and Muelder (eds.), *Institutionalism and Church Unity*, p. 174.

[7]Cf. *ibid.*, p. 191. S. D. Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948), makes the same point.

[8]Cf. W. S. F. Pickering, "The Present Position of the Anglican and Methodist Churches in the Light of Available Statistics," in W. S. F. Pickering (ed.), *Anglican-Methodist Relations: Some Institutional Factors* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961), p. 24.

were a very large body, which entered union with a membership of over a million people (according to the federal census returns). Anglicans and Presbyterians were probably very close in social structure at the time of the union. It was estimated that about two-thirds of the Presbyterians came into union. In 1921 the federal census reported 1.5 million Presbyterians in Canada. If the United Church now has a social structure which is more "middle-class" than in former years, that would appear to be less the result of the effects of union itself than of the growing affluence of Canada—especially of those sections of its people which have close affiliation with the churches, and more particularly with churches which are not Roman Catholic or sectarian.

In view of the lack of empirical evidence, it seems possible to argue as follows. Generally speaking, local United and Anglican churches are planted in very similar geographical areas. We have seen that this may be deduced from the number of Anglican and United church members in each province; where one group is strong, the other also tends to be strong. In smaller units of population, it is likely that the same pattern pertains. In one city at least, it has been observed that the buildings, Anglican and United, are to be found in roughly similar zones.[9] In other words, both churches tend to erect their places of worship in localities which possess much the same kind of social standing. They both tend to concentrate their buildings in English-speaking areas, usually avoiding pronounced "ethnic" zones. There is also material to suggest—and not surprisingly—that, where United and Anglican churches are located in the same geographical area, the social structure of the two churches is virtually identical.[10] Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to deduce that by and large the social structure of the two churches across Canada is very much the same. What is required is evidence, as widely sampled as possible, to disprove the hypothesis. It is the contention of this author that such evidence will be hard to find.

One aspect of social structure which needs to be discussed is a problem of particular significance for Canadians, although it is also important in other Commonwealth countries. It has to do with the attitude of people towards Great Britain. Many citizens of Canada have a high regard for Britain, and this is to be seen, not only among recent immigrants from that country, but also among those born in Canada whose forebears came from Great Britain,[11] and even among Canadians of other ethnic backgrounds as

[9]Cf. W. S. F. Pickering, *A Brief Geographical and Statistical Survey of the Churches in Winnipeg in 1962* (mimeographed report, 1964).

[10]Cf. W. S. F. Pickering and J. E. W. Jackson, *St. Andrew's and St. George's, Winnipeg—Two Churches different only in Denomination* (mimeographed report, 1964). In terms of occupation and income of adult males, very little dissimilarity was noted between the congregations of the two churches.

[11]For much of its history the Anglican Church of Canada has relied heavily on recruitment in England for its clergy. Since the 1930's the flow has tended to lessen. English-born clergymen are more than well represented in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic*, p. 515, reports that in 1952 ten of the twenty-six diocesan bishops had been born in England. Quite recently a clergyman born and educated in the British Isles, who had had very little parochial experience in Canada, was elected bishop of a diocese in Eastern Canada.

well. But among those who have such a high regard for Britain are some who have even stronger emotions for the "mother country." They constantly look towards the British Isles more in devotion than criticism, though criticism may often exist. Such emotional attraction for things English often conflicts with the notion of an independent Canada which has come of age and is ready to cut immature ties and bonds. This emotional attachment to the "mother country" is a characteristic, it is believed, particularly strong among Anglicans—of whom, it will be recalled, over eight out of every ten claim British origin. While such an emotional attachment is rooted partly in strong kinship relations, the role of the Anglican Church is also important. To be an Anglican is to have pro-British feelings reinforced. Anglicans belong to a church which is the established church in England, where, despite its many often-acknowledged faults, it is the religious representative of the English establishment. Anglicans look to Canterbury and to the Church of England as offering an ideal, be it in terms of doctrine, liturgy, old-world parish churches, or cathedral singing, which should be emulated, if possible, or if not, at least admired. The outlook of Anglicans, therefore, is not as completely "Canadian" as some might wish to see. Those who want Canada to be entirely independent of the mother country or who wish their country to be a republic must inevitably notice that strong opposition is likely to come from Anglicans. Again, those who would like the Anglican Church of Canada to be more independent of Canterbury *de facto* as well as *de jure*—and at the moment it is constitutionally related to Canterbury in a somewhat loose fashion—understand that the present attitude of numbers of Anglicans stands opposed to their own.

Emotional ties with England are less marked in the United Church than in the Anglican Church; at least, that appears to be the case to someone outside the United Church. The nature and constitution of that church encourage an attitude of independence, not only by reason of its name, but also by virtue of the fact that it has no parent body in England or, for that matter, anywhere else in the world. It stands entirely by itself, appealing only to a universal Protestant or Reformed tradition, which is transnational. By contrast, Anglicans are tied to an ideal outside their country—admittedly a world-wide ideal, the Anglican Communion, but with a geographical focal point, Canterbury; moreover, it is found almost exclusively in the English-speaking world and in countries which were once within the British Empire. The United Church is Canadian in a sense that the Anglican Church is not.

In considering church union, two questions emerge. The first is this: Are Anglicans in Canada willing to be members of a "new" church—the "United-Anglican Church"— which will be parted from Canterbury? The process of severing has occurred where Anglicans in other countries have helped form "new" churches, for example, the Church of South India. The "new" church in this country would have to be "Canadian" in a way that the Anglican Church is not at the present and in a way that the United

Church is. There is an allied problem which is mainly theological, though it is not without its sociological implications. Will the "new" church in its form and content be emptied of a particular Anglican form, while retaining, for example, elements which might be said to be essentially "Catholic," "early church," "Reformed"? Which of these bases of reference is chosen is beside the point. None is equivalent to what is meant by Anglican. What is important is whether Anglicans would be happy or willing to drop their Canterbury ideals and outlook and be prepared to be members of a "new" church, independent of other churches. Will union mean death to the Anglican Church in Canada, death to the United Church (for if there is integration there will be death here) and the emergence of a "new" church, in which members will be prepared, if necessary, to abolish certain institutional forms, perhaps gradually, in the hope of resurrected life?

The second question is more sociological in character: does the English outlook, with its mother-country longings, which is noticeable among Anglicans, constitute an important factor within the concept of social class in Canada? To put the question more pointedly: Do Anglicans consider themselves to be "one-up" or "superior" or "different" by virtue of being Anglican? And if this sense of superiority does exist, where is it to be found? Does it occur in the glossy homesteads of the young up-and-coming Canadian executives? Is it absent in a small town? Perhaps, on the contrary, it is absent in suburbia but strong in the country towns. Is it among the old rather than among the young? Once again, we just do not know. It would be very valuable to find out how far Anglicans would admit that they feel in some way superior to United Church people, and also how far they would be willing to see their church, at least for an interim period, cut off from Canterbury. It would also, of course, be useful to ask whether it is Anglicans alone who feel superior. Is it not possible to argue that in some ways United Church members have sentiments of superiority over Anglicans? Could their sense of superiority be an emotional reaction to what they see as the attitude of Anglicans? Or is it based on some church tradition—for example, excellence of preaching? It is obvious that those people who feel a sense of superiority, coupled with sentiments of aggression, whether their allegiance is United Church or Anglican, will be most likely to oppose the union of the churches.

Since the membership figures of the two churches have been given in Table I, it will not be out of place to speculate about the size and composition of the church which might be expected to arise out of union. The figures of such a church are given in Table II. They are based on 1961 returns and on the assumption that all members of the Anglican and United churches will become members of the "New Church." (We have assumed this name without giving, we hope, any theological offence.) The absolute figures included in such a speculative tabulation do not have much meaning, since one cannot expect the union of the churches to take place much before 1975, even if negotiations proceed smoothly. However, the percentages

TABLE II

"The New Church": Membership and Composition

(This table is based on 1961 figures and assumes that all members of the United and Anglican churches will enter into union.)

Population according to census returns	6.1 million
Church population as % of total population	33% (Roman Catholic Church 46%)
Provinces where the "New Church" would be the strongest denomination of the province	*% of province's population*
Newfoundland	50
Nova Scotia	40
Ontario	44
Manitoba	43
Saskatchewan	42
Alberta	43
B.C.	54
Yukon	48
N.W.T.	47
Provinces where the Roman Catholic Church would still be the strongest denomination	
P.E.I.	46
N.B.	51
Quebec	88
Persons on church rolls	4.0 million
Adult members	1.7 million
Sunday school members	1.0 million
Baptisms	110,000
Marriages	40,000
Burials	51,000
Clergy	5,800

derived from such figures are of value on the assumption that the rate of growth of both churches will be much the same. If the "New Church" came into existence tomorrow it would have a population of six million, reperesenting a third of the Canadian population. It would still be smaller than the Roman Catholic Church, which today possesses the religious allegiance of 46 per cent of the country's population. Persons on the rolls of the "New Church" would amount to four million, adult members to just under two million, and Sunday school members to about one million. The clergy (including those who are retired) would number just under 6,000. (For other details see Table II.) In most provinces the "New Church" would be the strongest of all churches, according to census returns—especially in British Columbia (54 per cent) and Newfoundland (50 per cent). The Roman Catholic Church would be the strongest church only in the provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Without a shadow of doubt such a body as the "New Church" would be most powerful, and as a result a very interesting situation would arise. In Canada, nine out of every ten people would be either Roman Catholic or "New Church." The creation of the "New Church" would bring about a religious situation in Canada completely different from that in the United States, Canada's near neighbour, which is very far from having a virtually two-church situation.

(To be sure, the religious position in Canada even at the present time is markedly different from that of the United States; the membership of three churches makes up nine-tenths of the Canadian population.)

All that has been attempted in this paper has been the presentation of an abstract model of the union of two social groups which possess common goals. The model is intended to help in the analysis of problems which might arise as a result of a union of the United and Anglican churches. Only some of the points raised by the model have been dealt with—and these often superficially. New factual information, which at the moment we do not have, is necessary, if all the points raised by the model are to be treated systematically. There is a great need for such information at a time when negotiations between the churches are gathering momentum. Some of the tensions and difficulties which have occurred in schemes of union in other countries, both before and after the act of union, might never have happened if time and resources had been available to make careful studies of institutional or sociological factors involved in union.

Such sociological information as we have been able to present in dealing with certain questions raised by the model leads to one conclusion. No two major churches in Canada are, sociologically speaking, more suited for union than the United and Anglican churches. If union cannot be successfully achieved between these two bodies, it is difficult to see how it can be achieved between any other churches. The two churches stand close together in terms of membership, geographical distribution, social structure, and other demographic criteria. All the findings of a recent book on social class and power in Canada which refer to religion show that there is far more similarity in the social composition of the Anglican and United Churches than, say, in that of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.[12] The only fear of absorption on the part of the Anglicans which could arise would thus be based on constitutional or theological premises alone. But this is not to say that tensions of a non-theological kind would be absent either in the period leading to union or in the period following union. We have suggested, on the basis of limited evidence only, that one of the points of tension for Anglicans will be their emotional commitment to Britain, and more especially to Canterbury. This difficulty need not be insurmountable, but it has to be honestly faced.

From such a cursory glance as we have been able to make, it would seem that the real problems of a sociological kind which face the union of the churches are likely to occur at the local level and not at the level of highest authority or even at a middle-range level. We need knowledge of the problems which might well occur at every level. Nonetheless, for reasons which have already been suggested, information which concerns congregations and parish churches is the most necessary at the present time. Two particular areas call for empirical analysis:

(i) The way in which members of the congregations of the two churches

[12]Cf. Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic.*

view a possible union. How far do they welcome union? To what extent are they hostile to it? How indifferent are they to it? What, on either side, do they want to carry over into the "New Church" from the old?

(ii) What problems are likely to be involved, after union, in the closing of one local church—say, an Anglican church—and at the same time keeping another local church—in this case, the United church—open? How easy is it going to be for congregations to combine? What will be the problems of liturgical, pastoral, and sociological assimilation? What degree of attachment do church members have to a particular building or congregation?

The nature of our inquiry in this paper precludes discussion of theological issues. They are, of course, of primary importance. But sociological issues follow close on their heels, and among such issues those of the parish church or congregation are most demanding. It may well be said that the success or failure of the "New Church" will depend on its acceptance or rejection at the local level. How far are the present negotiators aware of this fact, and how far are they willing to take account of it?