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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST ENGLISH COLONIAL EPISCOPATE

ON MANY OCCASIONS before the American Revolution, considerable discussion had taken place in ecclesiastical circles concerning the merits of establishing Church of England bishoprics in America. At various times, unsuccessful requests had been submitted to the ministry of the day by both English prelates and American clergymen advocating the expediency of the measure. The Bishop of London, who traditionally exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the American colonies, was obviously too remote to ordain, confirm, and effectively supervise the colonial Church. Certainly the establishment of an episcopate in North America appeared the one satisfactory method of supplying the colonies with an adequate number of Anglican clergy. Native candidates for the ministry would no longer be discouraged from entering holy orders by the expense and hazards of travelling across the Atlantic for ordination.

In the pre-Revolutionary period, however, none of the proposals for the appointment of colonial bishops elicited a favourable response from the British government. Successive Whig ministries after 1714 distrusted schemes advocated by High Churchmen and Tories, and the welfare of the Church in America was not an issue that aroused the government from its generally lethargic attitude toward colonial affairs. By the 1750s, politicians had come to fear that an American episcopal establishment would both excite considerable discontent in the colonies with their large nonconformist population and spark latent dissensions amongst high-church and low-church parties in England. Despite this tradition of indifference, if not outright hostility, toward the measure, the imperial authorities agreed shortly after the loss of the American colonies to appoint a bishop for Nova Scotia, whose diocese included all British North America. What were the reasons for this marked change in the government's attitude? While the practical arguments in favour of the measure remained basically unaltered, events in America, imperial necessity, and representations from interested parties combined to bring about a reversal

of established policy. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the interplay of these influences and the successive stages in the progress towards the establishment of the first English colonial episcopate in 1787.

The American Revolution undoubtedly created a more favourable environment for the establishment of the bishopric. As a result of their American experience, imperial officials discerned the need for some reform of the existing system of administration in the remaining colonies of British North America. The remedy was thought to lie partly in a closer assimilation of colonial forms and institutions to their English counterparts. Future dissensions within the empire might be avoided if colonial societies were brought into greater conformity with the political and social pattern of the parent state. As Lieutenant-Governor John Simcoe of Upper Canada later argued, "the utmost attention should be paid that British customs, manners, and principles in the most trivial as well as serious matters should be promoted and inculcated to obtain their due ascendancy to assimilate the colony with the parent state and to bear insensibly all their habitual influence in the support of that British Constitution which has been so wisely extended to that country."¹

It was with this object in mind that officials in London began to envisage the English Church as the partner of government in the colonies and as an agency for cementing the loyalty of the inhabitants of British North America to the imperial connection. It was widely accepted that there was a close relationship between religion and politics, and recent experience in revolutionary New England seemed to suggest that political radicalism was the product of uncontrolled religious dissent.

For those who held that interdependence of Church and State was the essential basis of order and good government the American revolt came as a warning that the export of political institutions without their ecclesiastical counterpart could be a disastrous enterprise, depriving the monarchical system in the colonies of its principal sanction.²

Consequently, the function of the Church of England in the remaining colonies of North America was recognized as primarily political rather than spiritual in character: it would strengthen the principle of authority in government and that of hierarchy in society, and so act as a stabilizing influence against future excesses of radicalism or republicanism.

The most articulate exponent of this governmental view in the post-Revolutionary period was William Knox, formerly under-secretary at the

American Department between 1770 and 1782 and thereafter an unofficial adviser on colonial affairs to successive ministries, as well as an active member of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for nearly half a century. In several plans and memoranda he set forth the steps by which he believed the imperial government should strengthen the Church of England in British North America. Although some of his opinions and proposals were idiosyncratic or unduly authoritarian, his general views on the role of the Established Church in colonial administration were shared by many contemporary officials and politicians, and broadly reflect the attitude of the government of his day.

Knox's sentiments on the need for a re-invigorated ecclesiastical establishment in British North America evolved out of his concept of the role of colonies within the empire. His basic contention was that colonies would be useful to England only if they were intimately and permanently attached to the mother country. Every measure had therefore to be designed to preserve and strengthen this connection. Such a policy would offer a sharp contrast to the predominance of commercial motives which Knox discerned behind the foundation of the early American settlements and the absence of any deliberate intention to foster a lasting union between them and the mother country. The imperial government should profit from its predecessors' mistakes in America, and correct evils inherent in the structure of the former colonies by carefully revamping the constitutions of the remaining British possessions. In the pursuit of this objective, Knox was anxious to see the Church of England built up as an active and steadfast instrument of imperial administration. He was an avowed exponent of the view that the unrestricted growth of dissenting religions in the former American colonies had stimulated radical and mischievous political opinions. To prevent a recurrence of this situation in British North America, Knox vigorously advocated the legal establishment of the Church of England as "the most effectual means of excluding Republicans, and drawing the Episcopalians out of the Revolted Colonies into our own, and establishing an everlasting barrier between them". In particular, he urged the establishment of a colonial episcopate as the ecclesiastical keystone of his wider plan for securing Britain's position in North America.³

As a means of consolidating the Church's influence in the remaining colonies, the appointment of a resident bishop had clearly become a matter of expediency and good policy. At the same time, circumstances were said to be ideally suited to the implementation of the plan. The American Revolution had resulted in the settlement throughout the Maritime region

of a considerable number of Loyalists who were described by colonial officials as adherents to British forms in both Church and State. This influx of refugees not only justified the establishment of an episcopate and associated ecclesiastical measures, but ensured them of a favourable reception. Many Loyalists, for their part, expected active British attention to their welfare, and Anglican immigrants agitated for the government to provide for their spiritual needs.

Another reason for the change in policy was that between 1783 and 1787 the favourable environment created by the British government's reassessment of colonial policy and practice was exploited by a variety of interested and influential parties, both lay and ecclesiastical, who strongly urged the imperial authorities to establish an episcopate in the remaining North American colonies. The first individuals in the post-Revolutionary period to advocate such a measure were a group of Loyalist clergy in New York, including several ministers who later settled in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Canada. In March, 1783, they presented to Sir Guy Carleton, the British commander-in-chief at New York, their plan for the creation of a colonial bishopric in Nova Scotia which would serve as a rallying point for clerical refugees.⁴ Although many of the Anglican clergy who had once professed Tory sympathies were eventually able to reconcile themselves to the new American governments, the impending threat of voluntary exile or expulsion in 1783 encouraged them to recommend that a bishop with only ecclesiastical powers should be consecrated in England and sent to reside in Nova Scotia. The petitioners did not fail to place considerable emphasis on the need to strengthen the bonds of colonial allegiance by paying proper attention to the spiritual welfare of the inhabitants.

The clergy at New York were fortunate in securing the influential support of Carleton, who submitted their plan to the ministry of Lord North and argued forcibly in favour of the proposed episcopate. Carleton even asserted that had there been bishops in America, the leaders of the Revolution would not have secured such a favourable response to their propaganda. Provided due care was taken to choose a person of ability and conciliatory disposition for the bishopric in Nova Scotia, the appointment would be "greatly conducive to the permanent Loyalty and future tranquility of that Colony".⁵

The nature of the powers to be granted to the bishop was never in doubt. William Knox was certainly realistic enough to appreciate that, if the fullest advantages were to be gained from the measure, the bishop's powers would have to be purely spiritual and ecclesiastical in character. The granting of any temporal powers, he maintained, would only "create Jealousy and

Opposition, without adding to the Security of the Church".⁶ Even the bishop's ecclesiastical powers were to be restricted. Knox recommended, for example, that the bishop might suspend an individual minister after a majority decision in a trial before the diocesan and the whole body of the clergy, but that clerical appeals should be allowed to a court in England consisting of the prelates of Canterbury, York, and London. Moreover, he advocated a truly hierarchical organization for the colonial Church which would conform to English practice and would provide a system of supervision, discipline, and incentives for advancement. After the government decided that the first bishop would reside in Nova Scotia, Knox suggested that when a Canadian see was eventually erected, it should be the senior colonial episcopate, so that the Bishop of Nova Scotia "might look up to that see as a beneficial translation, and be thence incited to conduct himself with such propriety, and acquire such a habit of acquiescence with the views of Government in his subordinate situation, as might secure his promotion and preserve him in the same line of conduct when he became pre-eminent".⁷

A further consideration which prompted the British government to view the proposed measure sympathetically at this time was the absence of articulate opposition from settlers in Nova Scotia and elsewhere in British North America, as there had previously been from American colonists before the Revolution. Indeed, the authorities in London were repeatedly reassured by colonial officials and inhabitants that the majority of the Loyalist immigrants going to Nova Scotia were members of the Church of England, and that the broad mass of the laity was favourably disposed towards the proposed establishment. Carleton assured the government that the type of episcopate advocated by the Loyalist clergy was not likely to arouse hostility in the colonies, "divested, as it is, of Titles, Pomp and temporal Power".⁸ Nevertheless, Lord North requested more detailed information from Carleton concerning the disposition of the Loyalist laity in New York, and particularly the opinions of those who intended to emigrate to Nova Scotia. The strong resistance of dissenters in the middle and New England colonies, and even of Anglicans in the southern colonies, to similar proposals for a bishopric in America at an earlier date had clearly made the British government extremely cautious of exciting colonial opposition by the introduction of unpopular ecclesiastical measures.

In his reply to North's enquiry, Carleton maintained that by "far the greater part of the New Settlers, gone and going to that Province appear from good information to be Members of the Church of England, whose inclination in favour of this appointment seems not to admit of any doubt". More-

over, many of the refugees who had already been consulted on the subject of a colonial episcopate had declared that "it was what they both wished and expected as a measure not only just and reasonable in all respects, but of great importance in a political view".⁹ Carleton was convinced that an episcopate would be perfectly acceptable to a large majority of a colony that he assumed would consist chiefly of loyal exiles. At the same time, it seemed probable that dissenters who had adopted loyal political tenets would at least acquiesce in the proposed establishment. Subsequent events confirmed Carleton's prediction that protests against the episcopate would be negligible, but he wildly over-estimated the number of genuine Anglicans in the Loyalist population and he did not court the opinions of the pre-Loyalist settlers in Nova Scotia.

Nevertheless, many individuals in the colony, albeit Loyalist Anglicans, were in fact articulate in expressing their support for a colonial episcopate. The Reverend Jacob Bailey's correspondence abounds with arguments in its favour. He maintained that both laity and clergy considered an episcopate to be conducive and essential to the best interests of the Church, and he did not fail to refer with vexation to the presence of a Roman Catholic bishop in the British colony of Quebec.¹⁰ There was also considerable lay response in Nova Scotia to the measure, and Lord Sydney received an unsolicited opinion from John Halliburton, a Loyalist settled in Halifax, who was "thoroughly convinced of an Episcopal Appointment in that Country, being attended with the happiest Consequences to it, & to the Rights & Interests of the Crown".¹¹

A memorandum drawn up in 1783 by William Knox indicates that articulate colonial and English support for the establishment of an episcopate was largely responsible for the decision of Lord North in the summer of that year to sanction the measure.¹² As a result of various representations and the advocacy of the leading English prelates and of the S.P.G., the patron of the Church of England in America and long-time protagonist of colonial episcopacy, a distinctly favourable environment had gradually been created in government circles.¹³ Nevertheless, the Fox-North ministry fell before the measure could be carried into effect, and further official consideration of the question was postponed until 1786. In the interim, English ecclesiastics, if not the government, appeared more anxious to guarantee the preservation of the episcopal church in the United States than to strengthen its establishment in the remaining colonies of British North America. This preoccupation with the promotion of episcopacy in America led to the passage of legislation in 1786 enabling the Archbishop of Canterbury to consecrate bishops for dominions

outside the British empire and the consecration of two American bishops in February, 1787.

It is clear that these developments in the American Episcopal Church provided a powerful stimulus to the efforts of Churchmen interested in the establishment of a colonial episcopate. The government could not honourably refuse to grant its own colonists a favour which it had actually encouraged in the independent states. Jacob Bailey reflected the current mood when he exclaimed that the king's loyal subjects were denied privileges that were readily extended to "enemies and revolters".¹⁴ At the same time, the existence of bishops in the United States led William Knox and other conservatives to fear that republican clergymen ordained by the new American prelates might enter the British colonies. To counteract this threat, he maintained that "nothing but the Presence, Vigilance and prudent Exertions of a Bishop on the Spot, can give a Check to the Confusion and other numberless Evils which must inevitably ensue". Moreover, Knox pointed to an even greater danger. He dreaded the possibility that colonial youths might be educated and ordained in the seminaries of the United States because, "as the mode of education and the principles inculcated in the students in those colleges must be entirely Republican, the supplying the churches in the British Colonies with *such pastors* would be like garrisoning our strongest fortresses with troops of the enemy".¹⁵

The attention of the government was recaptured in the spring of 1786 by a representation concerning the colonial episcopate from Archbishop John Moore and Bishop Robert Lowth on behalf of the S.P.G. The prelates observed that Christians of every non-Anglican denomination in the British North American colonies enjoyed the full exercise of their own particular form of religious worship and were able to provide for a succession of ministers from amongst themselves. Without a bishop, however, the Church of England was denied this freedom and put under difficulties which threatened its very existence. Moreover, the S.P.G. had already done all it could for the increased population by opening new missions and employing Loyalist clergymen; further progress depended on the presence in the colonies of an ecclesiastical superior to guide and promote the development of the Church. The petitioners therefore implored the king to send a bishop to their struggling colonial Church.¹⁶

In the event, the petition secured government approval, and by an Order in Council of 18 August, 1786, the responsibility for advising the government on the establishment of an episcopate in Nova Scotia was delegated to the Privy Council Committee for Trade and Plantations, now reorganized under

the able presidency of Charles Jenkinson, created Lord Hawkesbury. The Committee included amongst its members both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, who were obviously in an excellent position to promote the scheme. It is clear that Hawkesbury was fully aware of Knox's sentiments concerning colonial episcopacy. In April, 1786, Knox had submitted to him "Proposals for promoting Religion & Literature in Canada, Nova Scotia & New Brunswick", which advocated the appointment of colonial bishops as an essential measure "on which the Peace and future Adherence of those Colonies to Great Britain, will very much depend".¹⁷ Since seven of the eight specific proposals relating to the appointment and powers of the first colonial bishop made by Knox in this paper were eventually incorporated in the recommendations of the Privy Council Committee, it can be assumed that Hawkesbury was in general agreement with Knox's scheme.

The new Committee for Trade discussed the episcopate at eight meetings between August, 1786, and May, 1787. The prelates' representation of May, 1786, and the Carleton-North correspondence of 1783 were examined. Carleton, now Lord Dorchester, reassured the members of the Committee that he still favoured the project and believed that it would be acceptable to the colonists. In December, 1786, the Committee referred its opinions, and the local statutes of the colonies, to the law officers of the crown to enable them to prepare a draft of the legal instrument for establishing the bishopric. Finally in May, 1787, the Privy Council Committee formally recommended that

. . . it may be adviseable for Your Majesty to comply with the request of the said John Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, and Robert Lord Bishop of London, by sending a proper Person, duly consecrated and appointed by Commission from Your Majesty, to the Province of Nova Scotia, to be Bishop of the said province and its' [*sic*] Dependencies; such Bishop to have Ecclesiastical Authority and Jurisdiction in the said province and its Dependencies, without civil Authority except what may be necessary for the discharge of his Jurisdiction in Clerum.¹⁸

The bishop's commission was a practical document which failed to reflect the considerations of imperial policy which had been instrumental in shaping the government's decision. The measure was simply attributed to a desire to satisfy the needs of Anglican inhabitants in the colonies and remedy deficiencies in the Church's incomplete constitution. The commission referred to the fact that, although the Church had been legally established in Nova Scotia in 1758, congregations "are not, without great difficulty supplied with ministers duly Ordained, and the people thereof are deprived of some offices

prescribed by the Liturgy and Usage of the Church of England, for want of a Bishop residing in the said Province". The commission did not confer any temporal powers on the bishop; it simply gave him the authority to ordain and supervise the clergy and confirm the laity of his diocese. After much discussion of the legal implications, the Committee for Trade decided to make the new bishop subordinate to the Archbishop of Canterbury but allow final appeals against the judgments of the bishop to the High Court of Chancery and not to an episcopal court as Knox had suggested. The bishop was authorized to give institution to benefices and grant licences to curates, but patronage, the right of presentation to benefices, and such civil matters as granting marriage licences and probate of wills were reserved to the lieutenant-governor. The commission was finally approved on the 1st August 1787, and the bishop was consecrated on the 9th.¹⁹

It seems clear that in the search during the mid-1780s for "a proper Person" to fill the new episcopal office one attribute was essential: the bishop had to be a Loyalist clergyman. The ecclesiastical authorities admitted the necessity for appointing a man experienced in colonial Church affairs; the leading American Loyalist clergy not only possessed the requisite experience but solicited the appointment of one of their number as a reward for their faithfulness to the British constitution. The obvious candidates for the position were Thomas Chandler of New Jersey, and Samuel Seabury and Charles Inglis of New York, though Samuel Peters of Connecticut and John Breynton of Nova Scotia both lobbied in London for the honour. Indeed, most leading Church of England clergymen from the middle and New England colonies openly expressed tacit interest in the appointment but, when pressed, candidly declared *nolo Episcopari*.

In 1784, Seabury was eliminated from the contest on his consecration as Bishop of Connecticut by the Scottish non-juring prelates. From the beginning, however, Chandler seems to have enjoyed a stronger claim to the appointment, together with widespread official and colonial support, and until 1786 his name continued to be the one most frequently mentioned. But the prelates in England feared that his poor health would be a serious handicap, and in these circumstances the Bishop of London recommended Irish-born Charles Inglis as a suitable alternative to Chandler. Inglis had long enjoyed the patronage of Lord Dorchester, had subsequently ingratiated himself with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and had done what he could to invite the support of the S.P.G. by attending most of the general meetings after his ar-

rival in London in 1784. Finally, in the summer of 1786, Chandler totally renounced his pretensions to the see and specifically recommended Inglis to the Archbishop of Canterbury.²⁰

No evidence survives concerning official discussions that might have taken place in London on the relative merits of the various candidates, but influential patronage undoubtedly determined the final choice. For over a year before the appointment was made, however, the Loyalist clergy in London, British North America, and the United States vociferously debated the claims of the more likely contenders for the preferment. Their discussions are interesting, because they throw some light on the attributes of the various candidates and on the attitude of the colonial clergy to the whole process whereby the bishop was appointed. After Chandler's withdrawal, the attention of the clergy was centred on Inglis and Peters, though Breynton was also mentioned. Because Breynton considered himself entitled to the dignity as rector of St. Paul's, Halifax, and the senior missionary in Nova Scotia, he was derided by the Loyalist clergy, who regarded themselves as far superior to any of the old settlers. According to Jacob Bailey of Annapolis Royal, Breynton's appointment would not only disgust the majority of the clergy, but greatly obstruct the progress of the Church in the Colonies. "A man admitted to this sacred character", Bailey declared in his denunciation of Breynton, "must be a firm loyalist, affable, generous, charitable and honest as well as pious, without any censure of dissimulation hypocrisy or double dealing policy—inflexibly attached to the church and yet friendly and obliging to the Dissenters."²¹

If most of the Loyalist clergy scoffed at Breynton's claims, they were deeply perturbed by the prospect of Inglis' appointment. John Doty of New York, who became missionary of Sorel in Lower Canada in 1784, expressed a preference to serve as a Hackney parson "rather than submit to *his* [Inglis'] Lawn sleeves", and declared that Inglis' vanity should "bring on him the sneer and contempt of every honest and good man". Most of Peters' correspondents expressed equally strong reservations about Inglis' suitability. Ebenezer Dibblee of Connecticut referred to Inglis' "*pride, croctiousness [sic] and haughtiness*", while Samuel Andrews, also from Connecticut and appointed to St. Andrews in New Brunswick, asserted that "nothing could throw a greater damp upon the Church here than to have Inglis come out a Bishop for it". Another former missionary in Connecticut, Richard Clarke of Gagetown, New Brunswick, claimed that there was no evidence of the widespread support for Inglis which English ecclesiastics appeared to take for granted:

three-quarters of the people living in his province were decidedly opposed to Inglis' candidature.²²

Meanwhile Samuel Peters received the warm support of Inglis' critics. Like most of the Loyalist clergy who settled in the British colonies, Peters was a New Englander, and possibly for this reason he was assured by his many correspondents of the almost unanimous support of the clergy of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Jacob Bailey, formerly of Massachusetts, was one of his supporters and believed that Peters had enough influential friends to ensure his appointment, though a penchant for "satirical Drollery" might prove an obstacle to his advancement.²³ Ranna Cossit, who moved from New Hampshire to Cape Breton in 1785, even suggested to the S.P.G. that Peters would be the best choice, though he tactfully added that the episcopate would be thankfully received, "borne by whomsoever the Parent State thinks Worthy".²⁴

At the same time, Samuel Peters was the only candidate who actively courted the opinions of the clergy with an eye to his own advancement. By 1786 he had already gone to considerable lengths to discredit Inglis, whom he saw as the principal obstacle to the fulfilment of his ambition. In 1784-85, under the pseudonym of "J. Viator", Peters waged a pamphlet war against his opponent in London, denouncing Inglis as an insincere Loyalist, a disreputable clergyman, and an unscrupulous member of the Fifty-Five Associated Loyalists, who had attempted unsuccessfully to speculate in lands in Nova Scotia after the Revolution.²⁵ Originally intended simply as an exposé of the infamous Fifty-Five, Peters' attacks were soon directed primarily at Inglis, with the design of undermining his good name in English circles. Peters' accusations particularly related to Inglis' dishonourable pastoral conduct in New York during the Revolution and his alleged readiness to profit from the unfortunate refugees who congregated there. The conclusions that Peters reached respecting Inglis' character convinced him that Inglis would make an extremely inept bishop, and the campaign was therefore inspired by a mixture of disinterested concern for the well-being of the Church and of personal ambition.

After the pamphlet assault had ostensibly failed to promote his claims, Peters concentrated his efforts on rallying the support of the colonial clergy, at first by informing them that if they did not act sharply an Englishman—a foreigner—would be appointed as their bishop. To prevent this "calamity", he suggested in April, 1786, that the missionaries should unobtrusively draw up a petition to the Archbishop of Canterbury stating the need for a resident bishop and asking for one "whose Address, Manners, Life, temper, & Knowledge of the People in this Country would make the People and Bishop happy

with one another".²⁶ Individual clergymen expressed a willingness to follow Peters' advice, but in New Brunswick there were several who complained that, since they could not easily hold a convention, they were undecided how to act in a concerted manner. Similarly in Nova Scotia, the clergy were uncertain what to do and were too widely scattered to devise a joint scheme.²⁷ Nothing therefore came of this stratagem, and in the spring of the following year Peters reproached the clergy for not recommending some fit person for bishop.²⁸ At first the missionaries were inclined to attribute Peters' unseemly agitation to his disappointment and chagrin at not being accepted by the authorities as the obvious candidate, and it was not until June, 1787, that they attempted to voice an opinion in the matter.

This long silence is tantalizing. It must be explained in terms of the isolation of the Maritime region, the scattered settlement of the clergymen, and the lack of a forceful leader in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to convene the clergy and produce a concerted manifesto. Moreover, the clergy in each colony were poorly informed concerning the disposition of their colleagues in the neighbouring province. A further consideration re-inforced the vacillation of Peters' supporters: if they openly declared themselves for Peters and publicized the fact, they might have to face disagreeable consequences in the event of someone else being appointed. Clearly several of the clergy who had fled from the American colonies, or were forced to leave after the war for financial reasons, placed their new positions and peaceful ministries before their concern for the outcome of the episcopal contest.²⁹

Even in the summer of 1787 it was largely Peters himself who was instrumental in setting on foot a petition which asserted the right of the local clergy to a voice in the nomination of their bishop. He worked through a distant cousin, Joseph Peters, who was postmaster in Halifax and who had for some years relied for the promotion of his career on Samuel's influence in England. For a variety of reasons, but principally because the plan had been initiated too late, Joseph Peters was unsuccessful in submitting to England a colonial nomination for bishop. Nevertheless, he attributed his failure to public apathy: "We have an indolent set of Christians to deal with," he complained, "and I am afraid the general disposition is such that if money and good living can be attained there would be little concern who is Bishop". All that Joseph Peters achieved was the distribution in the colonies of some of the printed petitions which the clergy and their churchwardens were encouraged to sign and transmit to the Archbishop of Canterbury.³⁰

Peters' abortive petition is interesting because it reflected a distinctively

North American approach to the question of ecclesiastical appointments that was fundamentally different from the imperial concept. The British government never doubted that the new position should be filled at its instigation and with the co-operation of the English ecclesiastics, because the appointment was clearly the prerogative of the crown. Peters argued, however, that the power of nominating the bishop should rest with the colonial clergy and their congregations.³¹ His motives were a mixture of self-interest, genuine concern for the future of the colonial Church, and familiarity with New England "congregationalism". It is more difficult to assess exactly how strongly the clergy themselves felt that any right was involved. A more persuasive consideration for many of them was that the appointment of Peters as bishop would place them in an excellent position to solicit favours. Even Inglis was willing to acknowledge Peters' generosity and devotion to his friends.³² Admittedly those clergy who did sign the petitions that were circulated by Joseph Peters feared that they were acting too late, and regretted that they had not voiced their opinions several months earlier. Yet it was not until late October or early November, 1787, that they heard that the appointment had already taken place in London without regard to their wishes.³³

Once the news of Inglis' consecration reached Nova Scotia, the ministers agreed that it was then too late to do anything further and the petition was dropped. Inglis subsequently learned of this movement and, well aware of Peters' malice, asserted in typical Hanoverian fashion that

... the appointment of Bishops to Sees within his dominions was one of the prerogatives which the Constitution vested in the King: that I like all English Bishops, had been nominated to this Bishoprick by his Majesty, and the Royal Prerogative of appointing Governors might as well be disputed as that of appointing Bishops; that I would be supported in the discharge of my duty and was determined, with the blessing of God, to proceed in it, without any regard to the secret and malignant efforts of any republicans, and that they would in the end find themselves in the situation of the viper that was biting a file.³⁴

Initial dissatisfaction with Inglis' appointment was not widely articulated, though Peters continued for some time to incite the clergy to disobedience before he turned his attention to soliciting appointment as bishop of Quebec. Most ministers felt that it would be discourteous and impolitic to show disrespect to the appointee of the government and the S.P.G. Instead they determined to "endure the disappointment with manly fortitude and Christian patience", and hope that Inglis, despite his past reputation, would "do honor

to his character, for the credit of religion and good of the Church".³⁵ It was also known that the bishop's powers were limited to such an extent that the S.P.G. and the English bishops were said to have made a fool of him. Since there existed no college, few vacant missions, and bishops in the United States, the clergy predicted that the Bishop of Nova Scotia would have few opportunities to interfere with the established routine of the colonial Church for many years to come.

The clergy correctly perceived the restricted nature of the diocesan's powers. Indeed, the bishopric which was established in Nova Scotia in 1787 represented an experiment in limited episcopacy. The bishop was not granted any temporal or civil authority; the government considered that purely ecclesiastical powers would enable him successfully to perform his primary task of strengthening the colonial Church by administering and supervising, ordaining and confirming. Diocesan and administrative duties were to devolve on the bishop alone, and no provision was made for the establishment of a truly hierarchical ecclesiastical system with archdeacons, dean, and chapter. Moreover, while the bishop would receive government support in his ill-defined but important task of promoting colonial allegiance to the imperial connection, he was left to accomplish this political role solely by his own spiritual exertions and those of the clergy he supervised.

The creation of an episcopate with limited powers reflected the desire of the British government to preserve colonial traditions and the rights of local officials. The bishop was not therefore endowed with any ecclesiastical patronage that had hitherto rested with the lieutenant-governor, the S.P.G., or Anglican congregations according to local statutes and precedents. Moreover, imperial officials did not want to invest the bishopric with any undue privileges which might alienate the goodwill of dissenters, who formed a large proportion of the population, and which might interfere with their freedom of worship and a statutory exemption from providing financial support for the Established Church that had always been scrupulously maintained. At the same time, the bishop's subservience and co-operation within the existing framework of imperial administration was guaranteed by the circumscribed nature of his powers. He was required to work closely with the civil authorities in England and the colony, as well as with the S.P.G., and was therefore of necessity the partner of government, not an ecclesiastical potentate. No matter how haphazard and unpopular the choice of Charles Inglis as bishop may have been, British officials appointed a church leader who possessed not only extensive American experience, which it was thought would render him

most widely acceptable to the colonial inhabitants, but also the loyal political tenets and Erastian sentiments expected of a reliable ecclesiastical ally. In the establishment of the first colonial bishopric, therefore, some allowance was made for both circumstances in Nova Scotia and imperial exigencies, and the bishop was not endowed with more than the minimum powers necessary to carry out his spiritual and administrative functions. Nevertheless, the colonial episcopate was at last a reality; what would be made of its powers and responsibilities depended on the character of the man who filled the episcopal office and the manner in which he interpreted his task.

NOTES

1. Simcoe to Dundas, [1791], quoted in R. Coupland, *The American Revolution and the British Empire* (London, 1930), p. 288.
2. V. T. Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire, 1763-1793*, vol. 2 (London, 1964), pp. 735-7.
3. W. Knox, *Extra Official State Papers . . .* (London, 1789), vol. 2, App. No. xiv, pp. 48-50.
4. "Plan for an Episcopate to be established in Nova Scotia", contained in a Letter signed by Eighteen Clergymen to Carleton, 24 Mar., 1783, Public Record Office, B.T.6/59.
5. Carleton to Townshend, 11 Apr., 1783, and Carleton to North, 26 Aug., 1783, *ibid.*
6. Knox, "Proposals for promoting Religion & Literature in Canada, Nova Scotia & New Brunswick", 3 Apr., 1786, pp. 5-6, Liverpool Papers, British Museum, Add. MSS. 38, 219, f. 60.
7. Knox to Pitt, 7 Aug., 1787, quoted in Knox, *Extra Official State Papers*, vol. 1, part 1, App. No. v, pp. 16-17.
8. Carleton to Townshend, 11 Apr., 1783, B.T. 6/59.
9. Extract, North to Carleton, 15 June, 1783, and Carleton to North, 26 Aug., 1783, *ibid.*
10. Bailey to Peters, 8 Nov., 1786, and Bailey to Dibblee, 12 Nov., 1786, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Bailey Letter Book, 1786-88, pp. 15-17, 25; Letter 56, P.A.N.S., Bailey Papers, vol. 10, pp. 459-60. See also Breynton to Peters, 22 Dec., 1783, New York Historical Society, Peters Papers, vol. 1, No. 101, and Wiswall to Peters, 14 May, 1785, *ibid.*, vol. 2, No. 39.
11. Halliburton to Nepean, [1783], P.R.O., C.O. 217/35, ff. 339-40.
12. Memorandum on Nova Scotia, [1783], C.O. 217/56, ff. 350-2. For authorship, see H. T. Manning, *British Colonial Government after the American Revolution 1782-1820* (New Haven, 1933), p. 36, n. 33. On the date of North's decision, Harlow, *op. cit.*, p. 736.

13. See, for example, the S.P.G. Anniversary Sermon preached by the Bishop of Bangor, 16 Feb., 1787, S.P.G. *Annual Report* for 1787.
14. Bailey to Peters, 7 Nov., 1786, Peters Papers, vol. 2, No. 117.
15. Knox, "Proposals", p. 4, Add. MSS. 38, 219, f. 59; Knox to Pitt, Aug., 1787, quoted in Knox, *Extra Official State Papers*, vol. 1, part 1, App. No. v, pp. 17-18.
16. Representation of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London to the King [26 May, 1786], B.T. 6/59.
17. Add. MSS. 38, 219, ff. 57-68.
18. Committee Minutes, 23 Aug., 1786, B.T. 5/3, ff. 228-9; 21 Nov. and 5 Dec., 1786, 9 Jan., 19 Mar., and 25 May, 1787, B.T. 5/4, ff. 40-50, 83, 105-6, 142-4. Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island were classed as dependencies of Nova Scotia. The Committee decided to give the colonial bishop jurisdiction also over Quebec, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland during the king's pleasure under a separate commission.
19. Various drafts of commission in B.T. 6/59, and copy in P.A.N.S., MSS. vol. 433; Instructions to Parr, Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, 25 Aug., 1787, P.A.N.S., MSS. vol. 433; Order in Council, 1 Aug., 1787, B.T. 6/59.
20. 29 Dec., 1785, 30 May, 7 June, and 31 July, 1786, P.A.N.S., Inglis Journals, 1785-1810.
21. Bailey to Peters, 30 Nov., 1786, Bailey Letter Book, 1786-88, pp. 41-42.
22. Doty to Peters, 3 Oct., 1786, Peters Papers, vol. 2, No. 108; Dibblee to Peters, 13 June, 1787, Andrews to Peters, 15 Oct., 1787, and Clarke to Peters, 27 Oct., 1787, *ibid.*, vol. 3, Nos. 31, 49, 53.
23. Bailey to Parker, 6 Mar., 1787, and Bailey to Peters, 11 May, 1787. Bailey Letter Book, 1786-88, pp. 102-3, 166.
24. Cossit to Morice, 18 Aug., 1787, P.A.N.S., Cossit Letter Book, 1785-89.
25. The controversy began with a letter in June 1784 in the *Morning Chronicle*. Then appeared Peters' *Vindication of Governor Parr and his Council . . .* (London, 1784). Inglis defended himself in *Remarks on a Late Pamphlet Entitled a Vindication of Governor Parr and his Council . . .* (London, 1784). Three more pamphlets followed, two from Peters and one from Inglis.
26. Peters to Bailey, 24 Apr., 1786, Bailey Papers, vol. 3.
27. Andrews to Peters, 27 Sept., 1786, and Bailey to Peters, 7 Nov., 1786, Peters Papers, vol. 2, Nos. 106, 117; Clark to Peters, 6 Apr., 1787, *ibid.*, vol. 3, No. 20.
28. Bailey to Clark, 20 May, 1787, Bailey Letter Book, 1786-88, pp. 178-9.
29. See, for example, Clark to Peters, 22 June, 1787, Peters Papers, vol. 3, No. 33.
30. J. Peters to Peters, 10 Jan., 31 July, and 7 Sept., 1787, *ibid.*, Nos. 3, 37, 42.
31. Peters to Bailey, 10 June, 1787, Bailey Papers, vol. 3.
32. Bailey to Peters, 15 Nov., 1788, Peters Papers, vol. 3, No. 119.

33. J. Peters to Peters, [Nov.] 1787, 6 Oct., 1787, and 31 Jan., 1788, Andrews to Peters, 22 Aug., 1787, Clark to Peters, 22 Sept., 1787, Clarke to Peters, 3 Nov., 1787, and A. Peters to Peters, 9 Nov., 1787, *ibid.*, Nos. 2, 46, 70, 40, 43, 55, 58.
34. 18 Oct., 1787, Inglis Journals, 1785-1810.
35. Bailey to Peters, 12 Nov., 1787, and Dibblee to Peters, 1 Mar., 1788; Peters Papers, vol. 3, Nos. 59, 73; Bailey to Clark, 29 Nov., 1787; Bailey Letter Book, 1786-88, pp. 285-6.

GOD BLESS YOU

John Newlove

What I like is this Atlantic.
Guns practise outside my window.

But, this ocean: here men have drowned.
You can see it in the grey waves.

Eyes roll in the troughs hands reach.
White flesh drapes the weeds.

This is water men die, not swim in.
God bless you, if you go in a bathing suit

to hell.