

Deepening Downgrade In The FIEC

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In this further article, our friends provide more evidence of how far the FIEC and associated bodies have gone in departing from orthodoxy and godly separation. We call upon those involved to address these facts, and not side-step the issue by criticising the alleged “spirit” or “tone” of the writers. If these things are not true, let them be refuted. If they are true, let them take immediate steps to repent of their temporising and take necessary action for the Gospel’s sake - Ed

In the July-September 2009 issue of the *Quarterly*, a report documented the deeply ecumenical and heterodox teaching of a missionary to Poland, Malcolm Clegg. He was sent and nurtured by Carey Baptist Church, Reading, and his main ministry is based at the Evangelical School of Theology (EST) in Wroclaw. Carey BC has also been the home church for some eminent officers in the FIEC and Affinity, whose tenure as elders has coincided both with long periods of Malcolm Clegg’s commission, and the publication of the FIEC Council’s emphatic and unanimous renunciation of ecumenism. The profound incongruity of these two positions was noted.

The present authors desire to see the affair resolved properly and peaceably, and have sought to do so first privately. They are also mindful of the strong temptations to pride, and of the hypercritical and uncaring spirit that often accompanies such an enquiry. Nevertheless, the reactions both from the FIEC and Affinity officers involved, past and present, and Carey BC, have been revealing, lackadaisical and most unsatisfactory. Seeking to facilitate the ultimate, perfect union in holiness of all true believers for which our Great High Priest five times interceded, a short update both on subsequent reactions and developments seems appropriate.

Carey

The elders of the church visited Mr. Clegg on 12 October 2009 in Poland, 10 months after the original charges were made, ostensibly as an investigation. Before the visit, Carey’s preaching elder wrote that he believed the matter amounted entirely to a “misunderstanding,” but still has not been prepared to explain what has been misunderstood, or how. At the elder’s request, we proposed a list of questions for them to investigate. At the time of writing, the church has given no response to these questions, but has expressed satisfaction that Mr. Clegg is “not ecumenical,” and claims he would be “happy to affirm the FIEC Statement on Ecumenism.” No evidence at all has yet been supplied to support this astonishing claim, given the manifold documentary evidence to the contrary from multiple sources, including the envoy’s own lectures, the website and promotional videos of his own seminary, and the faculty staff with whom he works.

FIEC and Affinity

In correspondence, the FIEC General Secretary, currently also Chair of Affinity’s Council, has described the title of the *BLQ* article as “scurrilous,” but without directly investigating its charges. Unlike previous events, such as the ecumenical incident on 10 June 2000 involving the Above Bar church in Southampton, which the *BLQ* brought to light, the FIEC has now chosen to defer investigation. The then Pastor at Carey BC, recently retired as FIEC President, and later Affinity’s Director, wrote on 13 November 2002, “... except the charge against Above Bar, which is serious, and needs to be investigated,” and a direct investigation by the FIEC ensued. In the much more serious case of his own fellowship’s 25-year practice, however, the entire examination has till now been delegated to the local church in question. The General Secretary reiterated the view of Carey’s elder that the apparently egregious examples of ecumenism and antinomianism “have been taken out of context and misrepresented,” and seemed content with this position. To date, he has not clarified what has been taken out of context or how it has been represented inaccurately, despite request.

One senior brother has defended the inaction of the eldership at Carey and the FIEC by suggesting that this matter is one of secondary separation. Whilst the present authors are of the opinion that the censure of an evangelical minister involved in ecumenism is Biblical, even detractors should see that this issue is more basic and much more serious. The question is whether a church commissioning and sending a missionary bears responsibility for his ministry.

Wider ecumenism

On 3 June this year, EST hosted a conference¹ whose aim was “to introduce the people of Wroclaw to Arab and Muslim culture.”² The conference featured Muslim imam, Ali Abi Issa, Director of the Wroclaw Muslim Cultural and Educational Centre, who welcomed the participants, and later gave a lecture explaining the virtues of sharia law.³ At a similar conference, held at Wroclaw University on 24 June 2006, Malcolm Clegg gave a keynote address entitled “Building bridges between Christianity and Islam.”⁴

Other problems at Wroclaw, and a link to WEST and HTC

Dr. Piotr Lorek is the Academic Dean at EST, Wroclaw. He obtained a theology degree at the Highland Theological College and a PhD under the partial supervision of WEST, formerly Bryntirion. Videos on his blog show him performing rock music for “evangelism,” and one song, “Pustka,” seems to contain an allusion to casual sex, a charge he has not denied. In response to challenge, he employed a highly plastic hermeneutic. This raises grave alarm about the quality of training he has acquired and confers. Then again, given the FIEC’s own Autumn 2009 *Together* magazine’s shameless promotion of a “Christian” girl band, a rapper, a freestyle dance group, a “Christian” illusionist and a Jazz club cafe for “outreach,” it is clear Dr. Lorek is not alone in his desire to broaden Christ’s narrow gate and embrace the world.

Meanwhile, another Polish graduate of both EST and HTC, Mateusz Wichary, issued a major position statement earlier this year saying that we have nothing to fear from ecumenism.⁵ Mr Wichary is a member of the Board of a newly formed interdenominational alliance called RDE (Together for the Gospel).⁶ Another leading figure in RDE, Jacek Duda,⁷ is an enthusiastic supporter of EST,⁸ and three years ago preached at a Roman Catholic mass during a week of ecumenical celebration.⁹ Mr Duda is a Polish denominational leader receiving support from the Slavic Gospel Association.¹⁰ The SGA General Director claimed that the foregoing information was “incorrect” and that Mr Duda, amongst others, is “definitely opposed to ecumenism,” but declined to specifically defend these assertions. We also note that the keynote speaker at a recent conference organised by RDE was a former President and current Council Member of the FIEC.¹¹

Appeal

We appeal to the wider Christian public for careful examination of the apostasy described before and the disgraces we set out now, and for those involved in the bodies concerned to petition for brisk and decisive Biblical correction of, or separation from, the infected parties. The affair has been documented and updated at www.strateias.org/wroclaw.htm.

¹ http://www.islam.info.pl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=399&Itemid=8

² *As-Salam*, No 2 (17) 2009/1430, p. 21.

³ <http://forum.protestanci.info/download.php?id=166> – this shows page 23 of the Muslim social and cultural quarterly *As-Salam*, No 2 (17) 2009/1430, and contains a report of the imam’s lecture. The chapel and pulpit at EST are instantly recognisable in the photographs. One wonders why no mention of the conference is to be found on the EST website.

⁴ <http://www.psz.pl/tekst-3006/Wroclaw-Dni-Kultury-Muzulmanskiej-konferencja-symposium-wyklad>

⁵ <http://dlajezusa.pl/dj/content/view/1242/99/>

⁶ <http://www.razemdlawangelii.pl/rada-rde>

⁷ <http://www.razemdlawangelii.pl/nasi-partnerzy>

⁸ http://www.tangle.com/view_video?viewkey=e1106a6b5a135d8a7c9f – Mr Duda is clearly visible (00:47–00:55).

⁹ <http://www.kosciol.pl/article.php/20060112104352979>

¹⁰ http://www.sga.org.uk/news_headlines/poland.html

¹¹ <http://www.razemdlawangelii.pl/multimedia/333-ewangeliczne-fundamenty-jednosci>