

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

attempts to establish "mental structures" for various conditions.

The most remarkable re-formulation of religious values in a modern context involves Soka Gakkai. Not content to be a passive element in a technocratic society, it has formed a political wing, the Komeito, or "Clean Government" party. More remarkable still has been its success. Highly organized among the working classes, and serving as an ombudsman for the disadvantaged, Komeito is now the third largest party in the Japanese Parliament. There are 30 Komeito members in the House of Representatives, 24 in the House of Councilors (Senate), and more than 3,000 local Komeito officeholders nationwide. For the New Religions, observes Solomon, the sacred belongs "at the core as well as the circumference of an industrial society."

*Roman Catholics
and Anglicans*

"Anglicans and Roman Catholics on Authority in the Church" by Herbert J. Ryan, in *America* (Mar. 5, 1977), 106 W. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10019.

A theological "study document" drafted in Venice by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission has been widely understood as signifying the impending union of the Anglican and Roman Catholic communities under the primacy of the Pope. Despite "widespread misrepresentation" in the press, Ryan, a Jesuit and commission member, believes that the so-called Venice Statement could provide the basis for a "much-needed dialogue" on questions in which divergence between the two churches seems to be increasing.

When the document was released last January, press reports indicated variously that: (1) the statement was an "official document" of both the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches; (2) Anglicans were prepared to accept the Pope as universal primate; and (3) the Archbishop of Canterbury would become a patriarch in the manner of the Eastern rite of the Catholic Church. *Time* headlined its account "Power to the Pope." The *Times* of London reported that commission members "found a convergence of belief to their surprise."

Actually, says Ryan, the assembled theologians found the *Times* article surprising. Although they reached agreement on Church authority, the "authority" is Christ's. The theologians developed no new structure to resolve the major differences between the Roman Church and the 23 autonomous Anglican Churches in Britain, the United States, and elsewhere; instead, the commission stressed the model of *koinonia*—communion of men with God and one another. Universal primacy is discussed in the Venice Statement in connection with the *episcopate*, or oversight function of bishops in promoting *koinonia*. But the Statement says only that in "any future union," a much weakened, collegial authority "should be held by the See of Rome." Although the Venice Statement makes clear that both communions share elements of a common tradition, on issues, Ryan writes, they "appear to be moving further apart."