

18 November 2009

Dear Richard Underwood,

We have recently received a note from James Muldoon concerning an investigatory visit made to Poland by the elders of Carey Baptist Church. Prior to this visit, and at Mr Muldoon's specific request, we had written to him suggesting a list of questions to assist in probing the status of Malcolm Clegg.

In his taciturn post-visit communication, in which he does not even mention the questions he himself had requested, Mr Muldoon writes that, 'we were most encouraged by the work there', and 'As a church, we continue to support Malcolm and I am satisfied that he is not ecumenical; he is quite happy to affirm the FIEC Statement on Ecumenism.'

We have provided you before with a considerable body of evidence from Mr Clegg's own lectures, from the website and promotional videos of his seminary, and from secular and Islamic media coverage, of his deep involvement and long-standing commitment to a most thoroughgoing form of ecumenism. In this light, some of which we summarise below, we wonder how many professed evangelicals you can name in Western Europe more deeply involved in or committed to ecumenism?

In [one of the video clips](#) to which we drew your attention, the current Rector of EST, Wojciech Szczerba, is reported as saying that 'ecumenism is the motto which unites the students of our school', while [in another the Rector declares](#) that the seminary Board is 'a body which is ecumenical in character'. Until the seminary recently hid the page, [the seminary's website](#) declared that 'EST prides itself on its highly qualified, international and interdenominational faculty composed of educators, laymen and clergy from many churches, including Lutheran, Baptist, Episcopal, Anglican, Catholic and Evangelical Free'. [In a third film](#), the Rector, speaking in English, can even be heard to say that evangelicalism is a movement which is present in all denominations, including the Roman Catholic church, while the former, and founding, Rector, under whom Mr Clegg served for many years, said in an interview: 'It is with pleasure and hope that I view joint efforts at seeking the unity of evangelical Christians and Catholics', and supported continuation of the 'imperative quest and pursuit of unity' with the Roman Catholic church [1]. EST openly advocates ecumenism by name with Catholics, and has always done so, while film footage of the 2007 inauguration ceremony shows a senior Orthodox Archbishop (Rector of the starkly liberal Christian Theological Academy and President of the Polish Ecumenical Council of Churches) actually giving an address!

While we are astounded by Mr Clegg's claim to have spent several years 'in Catholic circles' and to have [started Catholic fellowships](#), the seminary's direct involvement in the organising, hosting of and participation in ecumenical dialogue with Islam [[EST Wrocław, 2009](#); [AGH Kraków, 2008](#)] and Mr Clegg's close [involvement and participation](#) in these efforts, leave us, quite frankly, speechless, if not in tears (Jeremiah 13:17).

In response to this evidence, and after 12 months of efforts on our part, Carey continues to make bald, wishful and downright evasive statements of denial. Mr Muldoon complains that we 'have not acted in the most helpful way in going into print', and that we 'could have sorted this out in a far more God-honouring way'. What more God-honouring way was open to us to address apostasy of this magnitude? It was as long ago as 20 November 2008 that one of us, Peter Nicholson, sent identical brief *e-mail* enquiries to both James Muldoon and Basil Howlett, but received no reply. On 25 November 2008, a further *e-mail* was sent, to a figure of some standing in the FIEC, asking for help in making contact. This *e-mail* was sent at 17:44. At 19:07 the same day, a brief reply was received from someone we assume to be a secretary at Carey. This reply answered the initial, basic enquiry but did not attempt to open up a dialogue. A further enquiry was sent almost immediately, but no further response was ever received. On 15 January 2009, Peter Nicholson telephoned Basil Howlett, who asked that some specific material be sent, and promised to look into the matter and to respond. A few minutes after the call ended, an *e-mail* with some extracts from Mr Clegg's lectures

was sent to Mr Howlett. Despite his promise made by telephone, Mr Howlett has never responded. It was over a month after the telephone call that Charles Soper first wrote to Mr Muldoon, and yet another month before Charles Soper received the briefest of replies, and that only after the personal intervention of a senior figure within the FIEC.

Furthermore, it ought to be obvious that the methods employed in this case, however dishonouring they may be adjudged at the day of our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, should not be misused as an excuse to ignore the protracted poisoning of Polish evangelicalism being perpetrated by a missionary of an FIEC church. If there is a member of the FIEC Council possessed with the wisdom of God in such matters, we will freely receive correction from him. On the other hand, if there are those within the FIEC, no matter who they might be, who have knowingly been supporting this shocking betrayal of both Biblical Christianity and FIEC policy, or, being in positions of leadership have proved too weak to deal with the matter, might we not expect deep repentance, marked by a stepping down from office in the FIEC, and a serious attempt at redress to the cause of the Gospel in Poland, as befits an institution of honour? It is increasingly transparent that there has been procrastination, and that what started as a sincere attempt to stand up for a small and hard-pressed group of the Lord's people looks more and more now like an insidious avoidance of exposure and loss of reputation.

We need hardly remind you that in the jargon of British evangelicalism, the adjective 'ecumenical' functions as a direct antonym of 'evangelical' [2], and once again we draw your attention to the FIEC Statement on Ecumenism, which embodies unqualified rejection of situations where churches 'unite in public acts of worship and outreach with those who question and deny the faith', specifically identifying 'liberals' and 'Roman Catholics' as those with whom evangelicals 'are worlds apart doctrinally'. Furthermore, the FIEC [Application for Prepared for Service form](#), Section 6.2, explicitly requires of prospective course members 'full sympathy' with and acceptance 'without reservation' of the Statement on Ecumenism. It was only on seeing *this*, that we rubbed our eyes and even changed our spectacles.

Will the FIEC investigate this serious challenge to the credibility of its own declaration, from a church whose own elders participated in framing the statement? We most urgently appeal to you to initiate such an investigation and to put an end to this pernicious seduction of Polish evangelicalism. One of us has spent over 15 years making efforts, albeit feeble ones, at furthering the cause of the Gospel in Poland. May it not be said of you, Mr Underwood, that because of your inaction the Lord's flock is carried away captive.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Peter Nicholson and Charles Soper

[1] Karel, Zygmunt P., *Deklaracja „Dominus Jesus”*. *Aby byli jedno*, Słowo Prawdy, 2000, No 10, p. 13.

[2] An interesting example, in the context of theological seminaries, and the seminary where Basil Howlett is a lecturer, are the remarks of Martyn Lloyd-Jones found in his address entitled 'A Protestant Evangelical College' (*Knowing the Times*, Banner of Truth Trust, 1989, p. 357).