

TRANSADVOCATE

“J’Accuse”

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Abstract

“J’Accuse” One of the more recent developments in the struggle for Gay and Lesbian Rights has been the overt opposition of the African Anglican Church, the so-called “Global South” toward our ambitions. Conervative Episcopal Bishop after Bishop in the United States seem to be harking to the enticing rhetoric of the “African Mission” or “Anglican [...]

Article

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One of the more recent developments in the struggle for Gay and Lesbian Rights has been the overt opposition of the African Anglican Church, the so-called “Global South” toward our ambitions. Conervative Episcopal Bishop after Bishop in the United States seem to be harking to the enticing rhetoric of the “African Mission” or “Anglican Global Communion,” an anti-gay and anti-Canterbury movement in the Anglican Church and moving toward recognizing Archbishop Peter Akinola of Nigeria as their spiritual leader.

The anti-gay Anglican leadership of Africa is in the process of being enshrined as more scripturally correct and more genuinely moral than the Anglicans of America who elected gay Bishop Gene Robinson or the Canadian Anglicans who bless and recognize same-sex unions. The African Bishops have gone as far as to refuse to receive communion with Robinson or the Canadian Primate. Now they travel to the United States to offer American Bishops an alternative to the moral leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The difficulty with the idea of moral leadership by the African Anglican Bishops is that it would be anything but moral. American Episcopalian Anglicans who embrace the statements of Archbishop Akinola overlook all but the anti-gay posture that he and his colleagues represent.

These men, the Bishops of the “African Mission” are by and large supporters of dictators. They condone capital punishment for gays and Lesbians. They have stood silently by or quietly lent legitimacy to the perpetrators of genocide, rape and torture in Africa. The Bishops of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh, who are engaging in a dangerous flirtation with the so-called “African Mission” to the United States by the African Bishops seeking to seize

the spiritual leadership of Anglicanism from Canterbury, are by that action also embracing opposition to democracy, opposition to dissent, annihilation of gays and Lesbians through state-sanctioned murder, the wholesale genocides carried out by the African leaders who depend upon the silence or the support of the Bishops in those nations to continue horrendous crimes against humanity.

The Roman Catholic Church still finds itself embarrassed by and apologetic for the effects of the Concordat with Nazi Germany and the Lateran Treaty with Mussolini. The Lutheran Church must bear the weight of the guilt it carries for surrendering to the spiritual leadership of a "Reich Bishop" appointed by Hitler. These "deals with the devil" were carried out before the extent of the evil nature of the men that those Churches dealt with were generally known.

There can be no such escape for the American Bishops of the Episcopal Church who either legitimize the "Anglican Mission" from Africa or schismatically embrace it and state to their flocks by that action that their Christianity includes genocide, torture, murder of homosexuals and stands in opposition to dissent, discussion and democracy. The crimes, by action or by silent assent, committed by the men that they now offer to their flocks as spiritual leaders are known, documented and publicized in Anglican magazines, papers and web logs. That most impressive humanitarian and Christian leader, Bishop Desmond Tutu has expressed gentle warnings and admonitions.

I am not an Anglican. Many would argue that I have no right to take up my pen in opposition to matters of the Episcopal Church and that I should mind my own business. Were the actions of the American Bishops solely a spiritual matter of opposing homosexuality and gay rights, I would agree and just shake my head sadly at events. But in looking to the African Bishops for moral leadership the Episcopal Primates in the US who legitimize these men simultaneously help to sanction their crimes, thereby not only affecting me but the entire population of the world.

To the American Anglican leaders supporting the African Mission or the Anglican Global Communion, I stand up as Emile Zola did over a century ago, point my finger and shout "J'Accuse!" Your reckless and thoughtless embrace of their leadership makes you accessories after the fact to their crimes in the past and accomplices to any state sanctioned murders of gays or lesbians in their nations in the future. "J'Accuse!" You align yourself with the supporters of genocides, the enablers of the atrocities committed by tyrants like Robert Mugabe. "J'Accuse!" You have forgotten the warning of Bishop Desmond Tutu that each of you ought to have forever before you; "There is no neutrality in a situation of injustice and oppression. If you say you are neutral, you are a liar, for you have already taken sides with the powerful. Our God is not a neutral God. We have a God who does take sides. . . ."

Finally, you embrace the use of your Church as a weapon in opposition to the

rights and dignity of all of mankind. You substitute the finality of the firing squad, the sword and the noose for the forgiveness of Christ. Your actions do not simply declare opposition to gay and Lesbian rights; they declare war upon humanity. Be warned by the testimony of history that those who make war upon humanity are in the end always defeated by humanity.

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