

# Following the Money

By Jim Naughton



When the General Convention of the Episcopal Church meets next month in Columbus, Ohio, a small network of theologically conservative organizations will be on hand to warn deputies that they must repent of their liberal attitudes on homosexuality or face serious consequences. The groups represent a small minority of church members, but relationships with wealthy American donors and powerful African bishops have made them key players in the fight for the future of the Anglican Communion.

## Investing in Upheaval

Millions of dollars contributed by a handful of donors have allowed a small network of theologically conservative individuals and organizations to mount a global campaign that has destabilized the Episcopal Church and may break up the Anglican Communion.

The donors include five secular foundations that have contributed heavily to politically conservative advocacy groups, publications and think tanks, and one individual, savings and loan heir Howard F. Ahmanson, Jr., who has given millions of dollars to conservative causes and candidates.

Contributions from Ahmanson and the Bradley, Coors, Olin, Scaife and Smith-Richardson family foundations have frequently accounted for more than half of the operating budgets of the American Anglican Council and the Institute on Religion and Democracy, according to an examination of forms filed with the Internal Revenue Service and an analysis of statements made by both donors and recipients.

The AAC and the IRD have worked together in opposing the Episcopal Church's consecration of a gay bishop with a male partner, its practice of ordaining non-celibate homosexuals to the priesthood, and its willingness to permit the blessing of same-sex relationships. Their campaign has entailed extensive international travel, heavily subsidized conferences and the employment of a professional staff and consultants to coordinate and publicize their efforts.

Most recently the groups have organized several of their international allies to pressure the Most Rev. Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of

Canterbury, to remove the Episcopal Church from the Communion, and to replace it with a significantly smaller and more conservative Church that would be headed by bishops with longstanding ties to the AAC.

Ahmanson also helps sustain organizations in the United Kingdom and elsewhere that support removing the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada from the Anglican Communion unless they change their policies regarding same-sex relationships.

The full extent of his contributions cannot be determined because most are made through his private foundation, Fieldstead and Company, whose records are not open to public scrutiny. And neither the AAC nor the IRD discloses the names of its most significant contributors or the amounts of their donations.

As a result, Anglicans have no full accounting of how much money is being spent, and for what purposes, in the struggle for control of their Communion.

### THE FOUNDATIONS

Since the 1970s, charitable foundations established by families with politically conservative views have donated billions of dollars to what the National Committee on Responsive Philanthropy, a watchdog group, has called "an extraordinary effort to reshape politics and public policy priorities at the national, state and local level."<sup>1</sup>

Five foundations are of special note for the magnitude of their donations to political and religious organizations. They are: the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation; the Adolph Coors Foundation; the John M. Olin Foundation, which ceased operations last year; the Smith-Richardson Trust and the Scaife Family Foundations. Much of the foundations' largesse supports institutions and individuals active in public policy, including think

tanks such as the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute and the Hoover Institute and individuals such as William Bennett, Charles Murray (*The Bell Curve*) and Dinesh D'Souza (*The End of Racism*).

However, the foundations' activities also extend into the nation's churches—particularly its mainline Protestant churches. The foundations have provided millions of dollars to the IRD<sup>2</sup> which, in a fundraising appeal in 2000, said it sought to "restructure the permanent governing structure" of "theologically flawed" Protestant denominations and to "discredit and diminish the Religious Left's influence."<sup>3</sup>

The IRD was established in 1981 by neo-conservative intellectuals hoping to counter the liberal public policy agendas of the National and World Councils of Christian Churches. Its founders, including Michael Novak, a Catholic theologian and Richard John Neuhaus, then a Lutheran minister and now a Catholic priest, were particularly concerned about the role of mainline and Roman Catholic leaders in the civil wars that ravaged Central America in the late 1970s and 1980s.<sup>4</sup> They were sharply critical of liberation theology, the Marxist-influenced school of thought developed by Central and South American theologians, and waged an aggressive media campaign in support of the Reagan administration's policies in Nicaragua, El Salvador and elsewhere, alleging links between liberal church leaders and Marxist guerrillas.

Peter Steinfels, then executive editor of the independent Catholic magazine *Commonweal*, wrote in a 1982 article that the IRD advanced "a distinct political agenda while claiming only a broad Christian concern."<sup>5</sup> Steinfels said the IRD asserted that churches should "cherish diversity and disagreement about the means to social justice" while manufacturing "an arsenal of vague and damaging allegations almost certain to cast aspersions on a broad band of church leadership."

1 "Moving a Public Policy Agenda," published by the National Committee on Responsive Philanthropy, Washington, D. C., 1997. Excerpted by cursor.org at <http://www.mediatransparency.org/conservativephilanthropy.php>

2 Online at <http://www.mediatransparency.org/recipientprofile.php?recipientID=174>

3 "Reforming America's Churches Project 2001-2004," by the Institute on Religion and Democracy, 2000, Washington, D. C.

4 "New Church Group Assails Support for Left," by Charles Austin, *The New York Times*, November 15, 1981.

5 All quotes are from "NeoConservative Theology" by Peter Steinfels, *democracy*, April 1982.



In one well-publicized instance in the 1980s, Diane Knippers, then an IRD staff member, and later its president, distributed information critical of the Nicaraguan Council of Protestant Churches (Consejo de Iglesias Pro-alianza Denominacional, or CEPAD), a disaster relief organization founded after the devastating 1972 earthquake and sponsored by the mainline American Baptist Church.<sup>6</sup>

CEPAD ran a network of medical clinics for the poor, as well as a successful literacy campaign, according to Fred Clark, an editor of *Prism*, the magazine of Evangelicals for Social Action. "That literacy work had won the admiration and support of Nicaragua's president, Daniel Ortega, and his Sandinista regime. Ortega's praise of CEPAD gave Knippers what she saw as an opening," Clark wrote in a 2003 account.

Although the evangelical churches did not support the Sandinistas, Clark wrote, "Knippers portrayed CEPAD -- and therefore the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society -- as 'guilty' by association." She wrote of CEPAD as a communist front, part of a supposed Soviet beachhead in Nicaragua. No one in this country paid much attention, but the contras did. CEPAD's clinics became targets for their paramilitary terrorists.<sup>7</sup>

The ensuing controversy was followed closely by mainstream evangelical publications such as *Christianity Today*. In the end, Clark writes, "CEPAD was vindicated and IRD suffered a devastating embarrassment. They were, rightly, perceived as an unreliable source of information - closed-minded ideologues who were willing to attack others on the basis of irresponsibly flimsy evidence."<sup>8</sup>

Still, Knippers, who died in 2005, and the institute remained a favorite of conservative foundations. Since 1985, the IRD has received 72 grants worth more than \$4,679,000 from the Bradley, Coors, Olin, Scaife and Smith-Richardson family foundations.<sup>9</sup>

After the Cold War, the IRD turned its attention from the mainline churches' activities in Central America to the churches' internal affairs. In its Reforming America's Churches

Project, 2001-2004, the IRD invited donors to help it in "restructuring" the democratic governance of churches to which those donors might not belong.

To challenge the elected leadership of the Episcopal Church, the IRD instituted an in-house effort called Episcopal Action. More significant, it nurtured an alliance with Howard F. Ahmanson Jr.

## HOWARD F. AHMANSON JR.

Unlike the leaders of the secular foundations that donate to the IRD, Ahmanson and his wife, Roberta, a former religion reporter for the *Orange County Register*, are deeply involved in current Episcopal and Anglican controversies. For the last ten years, Ahmanson has significantly-and, for much

## THE ORGANIZATIONS

FOUNDATION	FOUNDED	MISSION	LEADER
 American Anglican Council (AAC)	1996	The American Anglican Council is a network of individuals (laity, deacons, priests and bishops), parishes and specialized ministries who affirm Biblical authority and Christian orthodoxy within the Anglican Communion.	The Rev. Canon David C. Anderson, president.
 Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD)	1981	Its Reforming America's Churches program was initiated in 2001 to "restructure the permanent governing structure" of "theologically flawed" mainline Protestant churches.	James Tonkovich, president.
 International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT)	1980	INFEMIT came into being when evangelical mission theologians from Africa, Asia, and Latin America recognized the need to develop an international network which they owned and shaped.	Canon Vinay Samuel, executive director.

## THE DONOR



### HOWARD F. AHMANSON, JR.

■ Supports the American Anglican Council, INFEMIT USA and the Institute on Religion and Democracy.

■ Has also supported: the Chalcedon Foundation, the Discovery Institute, the George C. Marshall Institute and ballot initiatives opposing gay marriage and affirmative action.

■ His gifts to the IRD include, but aren't limited to: \$528,000 in 1991-92; \$460,000 in 2001; more than \$150,000 in 2002-2003.

■ His gifts to the AAC include \$515,000 in 2000 and \$462,408 in 2001.

## THE FOUNDATIONS

■ The Bradley, Coors, Olin, Scaife and Smith-Richardson family foundations Have made 72 grants worth \$4,679,000 to the Institute on Religion and Democracy from 1985 to 2004.

■ The foundations have also supported the American Enterprise Institute, *American Spectator* magazine, authors Charles Murray, (*The Bell Curve*) and Dinesh D'Souza (*The End of Racism*), the Free Congress Research and Education Foundation and the Heritage Foundation, among others.

of that time, secretly-underwritten internal opposition to the Episcopal Church's policies on homosexuality.

Ahmanson and his teenaged son David are members of St. James, Newport Beach, one of three parishes in the Diocese of Los Angeles that declared itself part of the Anglican Church of Uganda because of differences with its bishop, the Rt. Rev. J. Jon Bruno. Bruno voted to confirm Gene Robinson, who lives with his male partner, as Bishop of New Hampshire, and supports the blessing of same sex relationships.

Previously, Ahmanson was a disciple of the Rev. Rousas John Rushdoony, the father of Christian Reconstructionism. Rushdoony died in 2001 with the Ahmansons at his bedside. <sup>9</sup> He advocated basing the American

legal system on biblical laws, including stoning adulterers and homosexuals.<sup>10</sup>

Ahmanson, who suffers from Tourette's syndrome, rarely grants interviews with the media, but he and his wife cooperated with the *Register* on a five-part profile that appeared in August 2004.<sup>11</sup> "I think what upsets people is that Rushdoony seemed to think--and I'm not sure about this--that a godly society would stone people for the same thing that people in ancient Israel were stoned," Ahmanson was quoted as saying. "I no longer consider that essential."<sup>12</sup>

"It would still be a little hard to say that if one stumbled on a country that was doing that, that it is inherently immoral, to stone people for these things," he added. "But I don't think it's at all a necessity."<sup>13</sup>

Ahmanson emerged as a political force

in his home state of California in the early 1990s. Research conducted for *The Los Angeles Times* found that he and his wife had contributed \$3.9 million to Republican candidates in state and local races and \$82,750 in federal races between 1991 and 1995.<sup>14</sup> They also contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to ballot initiatives that banned gay marriage and affirmative action.<sup>15</sup> Campaign finance records indicate that the couple continues to contribute heavily to Republican candidates nationwide.<sup>16</sup>

Ahmanson is a member of the secretive Council for National Policy, an elite group of politically conservative national leaders who meet several times a year to coordinate their efforts on a common agenda. According to a *New York Times* report, the dates and locations of the group's meetings are kept secret, as is its membership. Participants in the group's discussions promise not to reveal their content.<sup>17</sup> Members in recent years have included Gary Bauer, Tom DeLay, James Dobson, Bob Jones, III, of Bob Jones University, Tim LaHaye, author of the *Left Behind* series, Grover Norquist, Oliver North, Ralph Reed, Pat Robertson and Phyllis Schlafly.<sup>18</sup>

Ahmanson also supports several think tanks. He was a major benefactor and former board member of Rushdoony's Chalcedon Foundation. He also contributes heavily to the Discovery Institute, the intellectual flagship of the Intelligent Design movement,<sup>19</sup> and the George C. Marshall Institute, which disputes research indicating that human activity contributes to global warming.<sup>20</sup>

In what may be his only published article, Ahmanson advanced a Scriptural case for opposing minimum wage laws.<sup>21</sup>

Ahmanson's views are considered controversial enough that two Republican candidates, Linda Lingle, now governor of Hawaii<sup>22</sup> and Virginia Congressman Frank R. Wolf have returned his contributions to their campaigns.<sup>23</sup>

The Institute on Religion and Democracy and the American Anglican Council have shown no such reluctance.

Ahmanson gave the IRD more than \$528,000 in 1991-92. In 2001, after a five-week vacation in Turkey with Knippers and her husband, the Ahmansons became the principal supporters of the IRD's Reforming America's Churches project. Howard Ahmanson made five gifts totaling \$460,000 to the institute that year. In addition, Roberta Ahmanson agreed to join the IRD's board.<sup>24</sup>

In 2003, Knippers told the Washington Post that Ahmanson continued to give the IRD an average of \$75,000 a year.<sup>25</sup>

From 2001 to 2004, the IRD spent more than \$2.1 million on its church reform project, \$449,182 of it on activities related to the Episcopal Church.<sup>26</sup>

While Ahmanson was cementing his relationship with the IRD, he was also building up the American Anglican Council.

6 "IRD and the CEPAD Affair" by Fred Clark, November 24, 2003. Online at: [http://slacktivist.typepad.com/slacktivist/2003/11/ird\\_and\\_the\\_cepad.html](http://slacktivist.typepad.com/slacktivist/2003/11/ird_and_the_cepad.html)

7 *ibid.*

8 <http://www.mediatransparency.org/recipientgrants.php?recipientID=174>

9 "Avenge an angel of the religious right by Max Blumenthal, *Salon*, January 6, 2004. Online at <http://dir.salon.com/story/news/feature/2004/01/06/ahmanson/index.html?pn=4>

10 "The Strength of their Convictions" by Peter Larsen, *Orange County Register*, August 10, 2004. Online at: [http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/10/sections/news/news/article\\_197272.php](http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/10/sections/news/news/article_197272.php)

11 The series is online at: [ocregister.com/ahmanson](http://ocregister.com/ahmanson)

12 Larsen. Online at: [http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/10/sections/news/news/article\\_197272.php](http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/10/sections/news/news/article_197272.php) part 3]

13 *ibid.*

14 "Rich source of GOP funds" by Gebe Martinez and Eric Bailey, *The Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 1996

15 Blumenthal

16 Searches for 2000-2006 may be conducted at <http://www.campaignmoney.com/>

17 "Club of the Most Powerful Gathers in Strictest Privacy" by David Kirkpatrick, *The New York Times*, August 28, 2004. Online at <http://www.nytimes.com/Dominionism/CNPMeetsBeforeGOPConventionKirkpatrick.html>.] More informa-

tion online at: <http://www.publiceye.org/ifas/cnp/index.html>

18 [http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Council\\_for\\_National\\_Policy](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Council_for_National_Policy)

19 "Giving Generously to their Causes," *Orange County Register*, Sunday August 8, 2004. Online at [http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/08/sections/news/article\\_193704.php](http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/08/sections/news/article_193704.php)

20 "Enemy at the Gates" by Mike Holderness, *New Scientist*, October 8, 2005. Online at <http://www.newscientist.com/channel/being-human/mg18825201.300.html> and "Oil firms fund climate change 'denial'" by David Adams, *The Guardian*, January 27, 2005. Online at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/life/science/story/0,12996,1399585,00.html>

21 "Three New Testament Roots of Economic Liberty," by Howard F. Ahmanson, *Religion & Liberty*, (from the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty) January/February, 1997 Online at: <http://www.acton.org/publicat/randl/article.php?id=219>

22 Larsen [http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/08/sections/news/focus\\_in\\_depth/article\\_193470.php](http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/08/sections/news/focus_in_depth/article_193470.php), part 1).

23 Larsen [http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/08/sections/news/focus\\_in\\_depth/article\\_193470.php](http://www.ocregister.com/oct2004/08/08/sections/news/focus_in_depth/article_193470.php), part 1).

24 <http://www.leesburg2day.com/current.cfm?catid=31&newsid=9531>

25 Blumenthal

26 "Conservatives Funding Opposition, Priest Says," by Alan Cooperman, *The Washington Post*, October 24, 2003, page A-3.

26 IRS Forms 990. During this period the IRD spent \$1,489,677 on efforts within the United Methodist Church.



## AHMANSON AND THE AMERICAN ANGLICAN COUNCIL

The AAC was founded in 1996 to oppose Episcopal Church policies including the ordination of sexually active gay clergy and the blessing of same-sex relationships. Knippers and two veterans of the Reagan administration's Justice Department, Richard Campinelli and James Wootton, were its incorporators.

Initially based in Dallas, the AAC moved to Washington in 1999, and shared office with the IRD until 2005. Knippers was the AAC's first treasurer and a longtime member of its board. Bishop James Stanton of Dallas, founding chairman of the AAC, served on the IRD's board.

Ahmanson's relationship with the AAC began in 1997, when he passed a gift through the AAC to the Ekklesia Society, which had been founded the previous year by the Rev. Canon Bill Atwood to foster international alliances within the Anglican Communion.<sup>27</sup> The donation helped underwrite the Anglican Witness and Life Conference in Dallas, at which conservative leaders from across the Communion began work on an agenda that eventually included the creation of a strong, centralized form of church governance, an evangelical approach to Biblical interpretation and the defense of traditional teachings on human sexuality.<sup>28</sup>

One year later, they achieved one of their most important goals when the 1998 Lambeth Conference passed Resolution 1.10, declaring that same-sex relationships were incompatible with Scripture.

From the outset, the AAC relied heavily on donations from wealthy individuals. Of its \$565,647 in revenues in 1997, \$67,000 came from membership dues, while more than \$497,000 came in large donations from unnamed individuals, according to data the AAC provided to the Internal Revenue Service. Of that total, \$230,000 came from one person. That funding pattern is still in evidence.<sup>29</sup>

In 1998, the AAC reported \$443,765 in revenues, less than \$38,000 of it from dues. In 1999, membership dues accounted for less than \$23,000 of the \$496,000 that the council received in revenues. Some \$265,000-53 percent-came in two large gifts, possibly from the same donor.

The organization intensified its efforts to cultivate Ahmanson as a donor in the summer of 2000 at the suggestion of Bruce Chapman, another veteran of the Reagan administration, who was then vice president of the AAC.

"Fundraising is a critical topic," Chapman wrote in a memo to other board members. "But that topic itself is going to be affected directly by whether we have a clear, compelling forward strategy. I know that the Ahmansons are only going to be available to us if we have such a strategy and I think it would be wise to involve them directly in setting on it as the options clarify."<sup>30</sup>

Chapman was the founder and president of the Discovery Institute, and Ahmanson was the principal backer of its Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture.<sup>31</sup> In addition, the Rev. David C. Anderson, the AAC's president, was Ahmanson's rector at St. James', Newport Beach, and a family friend.<sup>32</sup> The Ahmansons assented to the

AAC's request, and the group's budget increased significantly.

In 2000, the AAC received just over \$1m in what IRS forms term "public support." Some \$7,000 came from membership dues, and \$515,000 from the Ahmansons.<sup>33</sup> The following year, the AAC stopped listing membership dues as a source of revenue. It received \$730,238 in revenues, \$462,408 in gifts from Ahmanson.<sup>34</sup>

In 2003 and 2004, the AAC had combined revenues of more than \$3.15 million, but stopped listing the amounts donated by major contributors.<sup>35</sup> Ahmanson's continued involvement is suggested by the fact that he placed the AAC fifth on a 2004 list of the 20 charities he has supported most generously.<sup>36</sup>

In 2003, the AAC spent \$248,000 on its presence at the Episcopal Church's General

Convention.<sup>37</sup> By contrast, Integrity, the gay and lesbian organization which was the AAC's principal adversary on sexuality issues, spent some \$60,000.<sup>38</sup>

By 2004, the AAC was a well-established advocacy group, not unlike others that flourished in Washington. It spent just under \$600,000 that year on employee compensation, \$124,000 on travel, and \$114,000 in printing and publications.<sup>39</sup>

It was also developing a global reach. Summarizing its expenditures for that year, the AAC says it spent more than \$361,000 on "advocacy and diplomatic efforts with international partners on issues surrounding Anglican communion." Three of those partners—the British evangelical organizations Anglican Mainstream (\$60,000), the Church Missionary Society (CMS) (\$27,000) and the Oxford Center for Mission Studies (\$7,000)—received gifts from the AAC during 2003-04.<sup>40</sup> A CMS official said the donation was for tsunami relief.

The AAC is not the only Ahmanson-funded organization that has aided conservative Anglicans in the United Kingdom. The International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT), which is based at the Oxford Center for Mission Studies (OCMS), pursues philanthropic activities beyond the scope of an advocacy organization.<sup>41</sup> However, it played a significant role in the Anglican controversy.

From 2000 to 2004, its American branch, INFEMIT USA, which, until recently, listed



The Rev. Canon David C. Anderson, president of the American Anglican Council, was Howard F. Ahmanson, Jr.'s rector at St. James', Newport Beach, which has broken away from the Episcopal Church and declared itself part of the Church of Uganda.

the conservative Ethics and Public Policy Institute as its U. S. mailing address, contributed \$357,414 to OCMS and \$262,000 to the Network for Anglican Mission and Evangelism, (NAME.)

NAME held an international conference in Africa in 2004 which produced papers justifying the actions of foreign bishops who had claimed Episcopal churches as their own, or announced plans to found a missionary church in the United States.<sup>42</sup>

According to IRS Forms 990, INFEMIT USA raised more than \$2.75 million from 2000-2003. More than \$2.6 million was contributed by an unnamed donor or handful of donors. It is not clear how much of this money was donated by Ahmanson, but he listed INFEMIT 14th on the list of charities to which he has given the most money.<sup>43</sup>

In a recent interview, Canon Vinay Samuel, executive director of INFEMIT and OCMS, said that while the organizations had once been deeply involved in the Anglican struggle over same sex relationships, "we've tried our best to distance ourselves from that battle" in the last two years.

In 2003, the organizations were "totally involved" in the successful campaign to stop the Rev. Jeffrey John, who had been appointed Bishop of Reading, from assuming the office, Samuel said. John is celibate gay man.

As the organizations became identified with inter-Anglican issues, donors of other denominations stopped contributing, he added. He said last year INFEMIT USA, which does not currently have a U. S. office, had raised approximately \$300,000. "We

have paid the price," he said.

Samuel said "not a cent" of the organizations' current budget is spent on inter-Anglican activities.

### THE NEXT STEP: GENERAL CONVENTION, 2006

When the General Convention of the Episcopal Church meets in Columbus next month it will do so in a politically charged atmosphere, created in some measure by conservative organizations supported by a small number of wealthy donors.

Filings made by several of these organizations give a partial accounting of the donations received and expenditures made by the AAC, INFEMIT and the IRD. But the groups do not observe the standards of transparency and accountability practiced by the Episcopal Church and its dioceses, whose budgets must be approved in public meetings by elected representatives. Nor are the groups or their donors required to give a fuller accounting of their transactions, as would be the case in secular U. S. politics.

In addition, two key conservative organizations, the Ekklesia Society and the Anglican Communion Network, are not required to file Forms 990 because they are classified as religious institutions.

As a result, the bishops and deputies to General Convention will be left to guess at the intentions and resources of the American conservatives and bishops from the developing world who are pressing the Church to change its course or pay a price. ■

27 "A Church at Risk: The Episcopal 'Renewal' Movement" by Lewis C. Daly, *IDS Insights* (Institute for Democracy Studies), December 2001. Page 9.

28 "Anglican bishops address issues of sexuality and international debt at Dallas meeting" by James Solheim, *Episcopal News Service*, October 16, 1997.

29 All of the following data is drawn from the American Anglican Council IRS 990 forms for the years 1997 through 2004. The forms do not contain donors names, however, they often contain information on large gifts.

30 Blumenthal

31 The center's aim, according to an internal document, was "the overthrow of materialism and its damning cultural legacies," and the development of a new scientific worldview "consonant with Christian and theistic convictions." "Discovery's Creation" by Roger Downey, *Seattle Weekly*, February 1, 2006. Online at: <http://www.seattleweekly.com/news/0605/discovery-darwin.php>. And "The Wedge," online at: <http://www.antievolution.org/features/wedge.html>

32 *ibid.*

33 IRS form 990, the American Anglican Council. Also, Blumenthal

34 IRS form 990. Also, Blumenthal

35 IRS form 990.

36 "Giving generously to their causes," *Orange County Register*, August 8, 2004. Online at: [http://www.ocregister.com/ocr/2004/08/08/sections/news/article\\_193704.php](http://www.ocregister.com/ocr/2004/08/08/sections/news/article_193704.php)

37 IRS Form 990

38 IRS Forms 990

39 IRS Form 990

40 IRS Form 990

41 IRS Forms 990 report donations to micro-lending charities.

42 <http://www.anglicanmission.net/news.asp>

43 "Giving generously to their causes"



# A Global Strategy

The Dromantine Retreat and Conference Center, a 19th Italianate mansion sits in stony isolation on a hill-top outside Newry, Northern Ireland. The center is home to a Catholic seminary, but it played host to a distinctively Protestant drama in February 2005. For five days, the Primates of the Anglican Communion assembled in its meagerly-furnished meeting rooms to determine whether the 77-million member body could be preserved despite bitter disagreements over homosexuality.

For the previous 15 months, the leaders of several conservative Episcopal organizations had been working secretly with their allies among the primates to remove the Episcopal Church from the Communion for consecrating a gay man with a male partner as bishop and permitting the blessing of same-sex relationships. Failing that, they aimed to establish a parallel American province for Episcopalians who differed with their Church on the nature of same-sex relationships.

At the Dromantine conference, the Americans and their international allies collaborated with an unprecedented openness, in an attempt to force Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to take a harder line against the Episcopal Church.

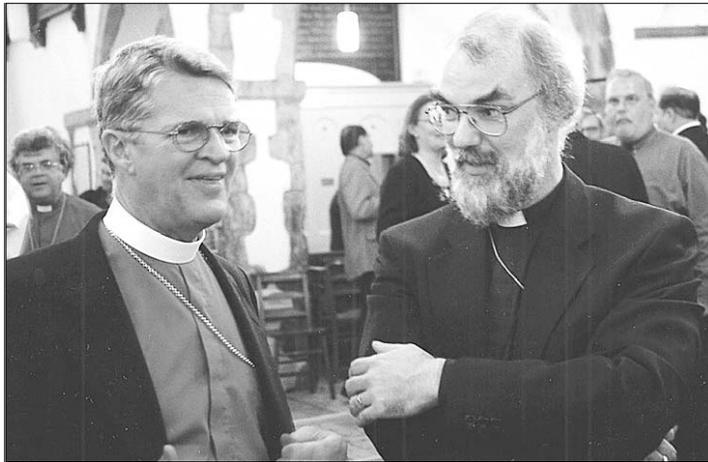
Among the primates who backed this effort were Peter Akinola of Nigeria, Henry Orombi of Uganda and Gregory Venables of Argentina. Working with them were the leaders of the American Anglican Council, the Anglican Communion Network, the Ekklesia Society and the Institute on Religion and Democracy.

Those groups, backed by five politically conservative U.S. foundations, and Howard F. Ahmanson, a benefactor of numerous conservative ballot initiatives, candidates and think tanks, had been cultivating relationships with evangelical leaders in the developing world since the mid-1990s. But at Dromantine, the Americans' role as the principal strategists for the movement against their church came into focus.

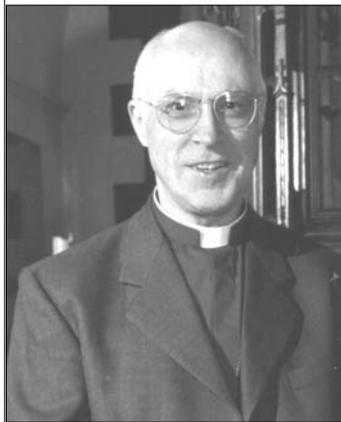
During the conference, American and British church activists took rooms in Newry and kept in contact with the primates, who were ostensibly meeting in private sessions. Among the activists were the Rev. Canon David Anderson, president of the AAC; the Rev. Canon Bill Atwood, general secretary of Ekklesia; Bishop Robert Duncan of Pittsburgh, moderator of the Anglican Communion Network, and Diane Knippers, president of the IRD.

"Conservative American and British activists, and the press corps, quickly found that Dromantine's security guards were not a formidable obstacle to gaining access to the Primates, and would kindly ... pass notes to Primates if asked," wrote the Rev. George Conger in the *Church of England Newspaper*. "Car traffic into Dromantine ... was busy throughout the week as conservative activists would take primates off-campus from the centre to dine and strategise."<sup>1</sup>

Inside the gates at Dromantine, the atmos-



Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold of the Episcopal Church chats with the Most. Rev. Rowan Williams, shortly after Williams was named Archbishop of Canterbury.



Evangelical leadership: Clockwise from top left: Archbishops Peter Akinola of Nigeria, Henry Luke Orombi of Uganda and Gregory Venables of Argentina and the Southern Cone.

**"Tell Rowan that if he will not recognize the Network, they will separate from him."**

Notes from a meeting of Network supporters in London November 11, 2003.

phere was unusually tense. Several primates who opposed the Episcopal Church's position on homosexual relationships had refused to attend the Eucharist with the church's primate, Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold.

Griswold became angry when the primates assembled for a meeting and found on their tables a document alleging various abuses of conservative Episcopal clergy and congregations by liberal bishops that Griswold said could only have been prepared by American activist.

"I spoke very frankly about where these pieces of paper came from, and why are these people down the road in constant communication with various of you, and whose agenda is this?" he later told Deborah Caldwell of Beliefnet. "Who is determining our agenda?"<sup>2</sup>

## THE AGENDA

Leaders of the conservative wing of the Church have worked since at least the 1990s to develop international alliances; those efforts first bore fruit at the 1998 Lambeth Conference, where the bishops in attendance passed a resolution declaring that physical intimacy between members of the same sex was incompatible with Scripture.

However, their efforts took on added significance during the crisis precipitated by the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire November 2, 2003.

The backlash against the Episcopal Church provided an opening for its adversaries to attempt to remove it from the Anglican Communion. The church's removal would have diminished its stature, and its membership, as 10 dioceses and several dozen parishes had expressed a desire to break with the church and remain within the communion. In addition, without the generally liberal voice of the Episcopal Church, the Communion would take on a more theologically conservative cast.

The crisis also created an opportunity for several influential primates in the developing world who wanted to move the Communion, composed of autonomous provinces, toward the centralized curial form of government advocated by the authors of the Ekklesia Society-sponsored publication *To Mend the Net*.<sup>3</sup>

American conservatives responded with a two-pronged strategy: pressuring Williams to expel the Episcopal Church and replace it with Duncan's Network, while arguing that crisis required the primates to exercise authority that the Communion had never granted them.

Conservative leaders agreed on their strategy at a meeting in London on November 20, 2003. In attendance were Duncan, several American conservatives and several primates sympathetic to their cause. According to Duncan's notes, those present secretly agreed that the primates who supported the Network would announce their support to Williams, urge him to recognize the Network as the true expression of Anglicanism in the United States, and "Tell Rowan that if he will not recognize the Network they will separate from him."<sup>4</sup>

Network leaders asked the primates to inform Williams that "in the present crisis the issue of boundaries is suspended," meaning that bishops could claim the right to

1 Behind the Scenes at the Primates Meeting, Part 2 by George Conger, *Church of England Newspaper*, March 4, 2005. Online at: [[http://www.churchnewspaper.com/englandonsunday/index.php?read=on&number\\_key=5758&title=Behind%20the%20scenes%20at%20the%20Primates%20Meeting.%20part%202](http://www.churchnewspaper.com/englandonsunday/index.php?read=on&number_key=5758&title=Behind%20the%20scenes%20at%20the%20Primates%20Meeting.%20part%202)]

2 "The Battle Rages On," interview by Deborah Caldwell, March 2005. Online at: [[http://www.beliefnet.com/story/162/story\\_16282\\_2.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story/162/story_16282_2.html)]

3 "Primates Consider Anglican 'Common Law,'" by Jan Nunley, Episcopal News Service, online at: [[www.episcopalchurch.org/ens.2001-59.html](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ens.2001-59.html)], March 9,

4 "Mainstream Meeting" memo, online at [<http://www.cesld.org/pdf/F-Mainstream112003.pdf>]. Point 4.



minister uninvited in one another's provinces and dioceses.

The Network also requested that the primates refuse to recognize any bishop who had participated in Robinson's consecration. This, in effect, would have rendered 13 American sees, including the Diocese of Washington, as vacant.

Network leaders also asked that Duncan be regarded as Griswold's equal at all international gatherings.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, Duncan's notes say: "We commit to the guerilla warfare of the next year."<sup>6</sup>

The notes came to light a year later, when two parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh sued Duncan and other diocesan officials, alleging that they planned to claim ownership of property held in trust for the national church. The suit was settled out of court in October 2005, but not before several memos and emails circulated among leaders of the AAC, the IRD and the Network appeared on the Web site of the Allegheny County (Pa.) prothonotary's office.<sup>7</sup>

The Network soon learned that Williams would not recognize it as an independent Anglican entity. Just three weeks after the London meeting, A. Hugo Blankenship, a Network lawyer, e-mailed Duncan saying that one of Williams's top aides, "simply won't listen to anything but our staying in ECUSA [the Episcopal Church, U. S. A.] .... We did not feel it wise to warn him how close ABC [the Archbishop of Canterbury] may be coming to losing the Communion, especially if a number of Primates or Provinces recognize the Network. I personally don't see much chance the ABC will recognize the Network at this time. Perhaps that changes if pressure within the Communion builds up."<sup>8</sup>

Duncan and the AAC maintained publicly that they were working to "realign" the Anglican Communion from within the Episcopal Church. But on January 14, 2004, *The Washington Post* published a story headlined, "Plan to Supplant Episcopal Church USA Is Revealed."<sup>9</sup>

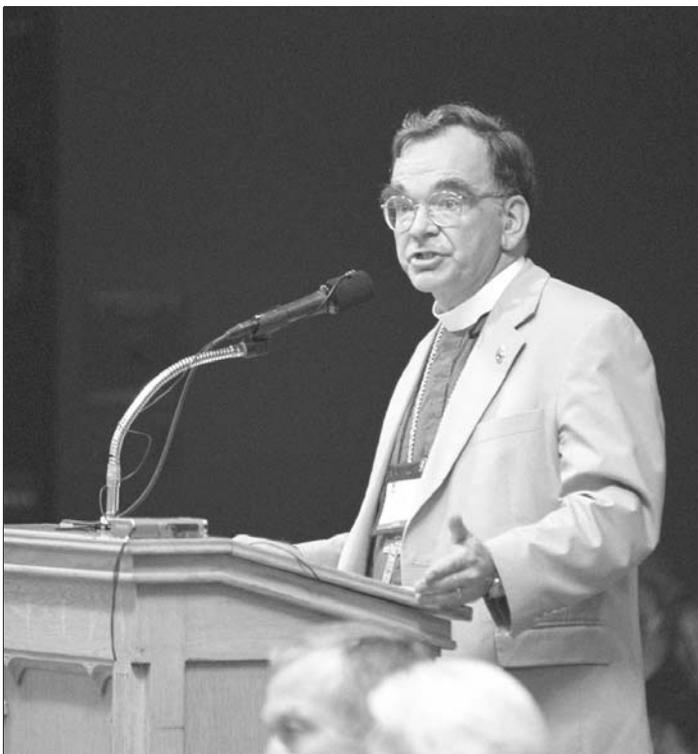
#### "ALTERNATIVE OVERSIGHT"

The article was based on a letter from the Rev. Geoff Chapman, rector of St. Stephen's, Sewickley—one of the larger parishes in Duncan's diocese—who said he was responding to an inquiry on behalf of the AAC and its "Bishops Committee on Adequate Episcopal Oversight."<sup>10</sup> The letter, dated December 28, 2003, was leaked to *Post* reporter Alan Cooperman.

In the letter, Chapman wrote that the AAC's "ultimate goal is a realignment of Anglicanism on North American soil" resulting in a "replacement jurisdiction."<sup>11</sup> He added that conservatives would "seek to retain ownership of our property as we move into this realignment."<sup>12</sup>

A parish interested in "alternative oversight" should declare its relationship with its diocesan Bishop "severely damaged" as a result of Robinson's consecration, Chapman wrote, and state that it now looked to "one of the Primates or an AAC orthodox Bishop for their 'primary pastoral leadership.'"<sup>13</sup>

Episcopal bishops who claimed authority over a parish in another bishop's diocese



The Rt. Rev. Robert Duncan, Bishop of Pittsburgh is the moderator of the Anglican Communion Network. In November 2005, he hosted a conference at which the Bishop of Bolivia ordained clergy to work within the boundaries of the Episcopal Church.

would be vulnerable to prosecution under canon law. However, Chapman wrote, "we do have non-geographical oversight available from 'offshore' Bishops, and retired Bishops."

If "adequate settlements" were not within reach by "some yet to be determined moment, probably in 2004," he added, "a faithful disobedience of canon law on a widespread basis may be necessary."<sup>14</sup>

Chapman's letter, which had also been leaked to Religion News Service and *The Guardian* in London, ignited controversy in the church. The AAC's opponents said it made conservatives' true intentions known, while its defenders argued that Chapman's letter represented the thoughts of only one man,<sup>15</sup> that there was nothing new in letter, that the AAC was interested only in alternative oversight for beleaguered conservative parishes, and that the affair was unworthy of the media attention it had received.<sup>16</sup>

One person who disagreed with this assessment was Judge Joseph M. James of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. In pre-trial proceedings in Calvary v. Duncan, he characterized the Chapman letter as the "smoking gun" that proved Duncan's intentions.<sup>17</sup>

The concept of "offshore oversight" for

conservative Episcopal parishes was developed further in a March 3, 2004, memo to "Ekklesia Society primates and bishops" and leaders of the Network by Canon Alison Barfoot. It was occasioned, Barfoot wrote, by conversations with Atwood, John Guernsey of the Network and Martyn Minns of the AAC.

Barfoot, formerly co-rector at Christ Church in Overland Park, Kansas, had recently been appointed an assistant to Orombi, primate of the province of Uganda. An ally of Duncan's, Orombi had broken off relations with the Episcopal Church in December 2003.<sup>18</sup>

In the memo, Barfoot outlined a three-step plan for removing parishes from the oversight of Episcopal bishops and placing them under the oversight of an "offshore" bishop who would then delegate his authority over that parish to the Network.<sup>19</sup> If a parish did not already have a relationship with an offshore bishop, Barfoot suggested, the Ekklesia Society could arrange a match.<sup>20</sup>

While primates such as Orombi and Venables were willing to allow their bishops to claim authority over Episcopal parishes and property, Akinola made a bolder stroke, announcing in early October 2004 that he planned to form his own church in the United States. During a press conference at Truro Church, with Minns, Truro's rec-

## RESPONSES

Alan Wisdom, vice president of the Institute on Religion and Democracy said the IRD did not typically disclose the names of its donors or the amount of their donations. He confirmed that Howard and Roberta Ahmanson were donors, however, and said that the institute was "proud to be associated with them."

Cynthia Brust, director of communications for the American Anglican Council said the AAC received roughly 62 percent of its support from individuals, 26 percent from foundations and 12 percent from parishes and that donations ranged from "\$25 checks from people on fixed incomes to foundation-sized grants."

"I don't release any information on donors publicly," she added.

The Ekklesia Society didn't respond to requests for an interview.

--Jim Naughton

tor at his side, Akinola explained that the Convocation of Nigerian Churches in North America was intended as a refuge for Nigerians immigrants in the United States, but added that Episcopalians who opposed the consecration of Gene Robinson would not be turned away.<sup>21</sup>

Akinola said that he had discussed his ideas for the convocation with Williams, and that Williams suggested he pursue it in partnership with the Network. But Williams quickly released a statement saying that he had never approved of the idea of convocation, but had suggested that Akinola pursue his pastoral aims through the Network.<sup>22</sup>

Into this chaotic atmosphere, the Windsor Report on Communion was released on October 18, 2004.

#### WINDSOR AND ITS AFTERMATH

The report had been written by the Lambeth Commission on Communion, which had been formed by Williams and the primates, at an emergency meeting a year earlier. Its membership was theologically and geographically diverse. Its charge was to point a path away from schism without revisiting the issue of sexual morality, but rather by focusing on issues of governance and authority.

In the days before the report was released, conservative newspapers and Web sites were alive with reports that the Episcopal Church and Anglican Church of Canada

5 Ibid. Points 11 and 18.

6 Ibid. Point F.

7 Information on *Calvary Episcopal Church, et. al. v. Duncan et. al.* is online at: [http://prothonotary.county.allegheny.pa.us/CaseDetails.asp?AnotherCaseID=TRUE&CaseID=GD-03-020941]. Memos by Duncan, Knippers and others have been removed, but are still available at [http://www.cesdl.org/pdf/F-Mainstream112003.pdf]

8 Email: "Re:Report from Meeting?" dated Dec. 9, 2003, entered in *Calvary v. Duncan*

9 "Plan to Supplant Episcopal Church USA Is Revealed" by Alan Cooperman, *The Washington Post*, January 14, 2004, page A-4.

10 Chapman memo online at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/shoulders/Episcopal.pdf]

11 Chapman, page 1.

12 Ibid.

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14 See statement of Bruce Mason in "Memo discloses AAC's strategy for replacing Episcopal Church" by Jan Nunley, January 14, 2004. Online at: [http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/3577\_26104\_ENG\_HTML.htm]

15 See [http://titusonine.classicalanglican.net/index.php?p=93] and [http://www.americananglican.org/site/apps/nl/content2.asp?c=ikLUK3M]pG&cb=675589&ct=854609] for the conservative response.

16 [http://prothonotary.county.allegheny.pa.us/WebMomCacheDir/vol135000008EE.pdf]. Page 26

17 "Draft proposal for Overseas AEO" by Alison Barfoot, March 3, 2004. Filed in *Calvary Episcopal Church, et. al. v. Duncan, et. al.*

18 Ibid, page 2.

19 Ibid. Several dozen Episcopal parishes have asserted that they are now under the jurisdiction of a foreign primate, but no Episcopal bishop has risked accepting pastoral responsibility for those parishes.

20 "Two controversial bishops come to D. C." by Jim Naughton, *Washington Window*, November 2004, page 7. Akinola's convocation has since been renamed the Convocation of Anglicans in North America.

21 "Canterbury says Akinola's convocation plan not approved by Williams", by Jan Nunley, *Episcopal News Service*, October 6, 2004. [http://www.episcopalchurch.org/3577\_51899\_ENG\_HTML.htm]



## THE COMMUNION

**The Instruments of Unity** or "Instruments of Communion" are: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates Meeting and the Anglican Consultative Council.

**The Archbishop of Canterbury:** Senior bishop of the Communion, he calls the once-a-decade Lambeth Conference, chairs the meeting of Primates, and is President of the Anglican Consultative Council. The Most Rev. Rowan Williams is the incumbent.

**The Lambeth Conference:** a gathering of bishops from the 38 member churches in the Communion, it meets every 10 years, and will next convene in 2008.

**The Primates Meeting:** a gathering, usually annual, of the 38 senior archbishops or presiding bishops of each of the 38 churches. It first met in 1979.

**The Anglican Consultative Council:** established in 1969, it provides consultation and guidance on policy issues, such as world mission and ecumenism. It has roughly 120 members, meets every three years, and is unique among the instruments in including clergy and laity.



The Most Rev. Robin Eames, the Irish Primate, speaks to the media outside Lambeth Palace during a meeting of the Primates. Eames was the chair of the Lambeth Commission on Communion which wrote *The Windsor Report*.

would have to either reverse their positions on homosexuality or force expulsion from the Communion. But the report proved a great disappointment to the Network and its allies.

The commission chastised the Episcopal Church and called for an expression of regret and a moratorium on the future consecration of gay bishops. But it also chided bishops and primates who had authorized or participated in boundary crossings, and asked that they, too, express regret, and refrain from such actions in the future. Crossing diocesan and provincial boundaries "goes not only against traditional and often-repeated Anglican practice (as reaffirmed most recently by, for example, resolutions at Lambeth 1988 and 1998), but also against some of the longest-standing regulations of the early undivided church," the report said.<sup>22</sup>

The commission also dealt a blow to the Network, recommending against the creation of a separate province within the United States.<sup>23</sup>

Akinola called the report condescending,<sup>24</sup> while Duncan declared that the process of realignment was "already well begun no mat-

ter what the report says."<sup>25</sup>

None of the Anglican Communion's instruments of unity [see sidebar] possess the canonical authority either to require compliance with the recommendations of the report, or to evaluate whether compliance had been achieved. But the Primates and the more broadly representative Anglican Consultative Council could attempt to shape the way it was interpreted.

The council is a body of some 80 members. It includes clergy and lay people, and is considered less theologically conservative than the Primates meeting. But the council did not meet until June 2005, while the primates met in Dromantine in February. Before that meeting, Akinola and the leaders of some of the larger African provinces had made it clear to Williams, Archbishop Robin Eames of Ireland, who had chaired the Lambeth Commission and others that if issues raised by the report were not resolved to their liking, they were willing to leave the Communion, thus radically reducing its membership and its global reach.

The African provinces, and those in other parts of the developing world are poor, and

have traditionally relied on aid from elsewhere in the Communion to survive. But conservative Episcopalians had begun to build the financial networks that they said could sustain the African churches if they left the Communion.

The tension-riddled Dromantine meeting produced a communiqué more to conservatives' liking than the Windsor Report. It reaffirmed the call for a moratorium on the consecration of gay bishops, softened the criticism of the border crossing primates—who nonetheless agreed not to "initiate" any new border crossings—and requested that the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada send their delegates to the next meeting of the consultative council as observers, rather than as voting members. The primates also asked that the two churches to explain to the council how they had arrived at their decisions regarding same-sex relationships.

On the night before the communiqué was presented at a press conference, a number of primates left the resort to attend a celebratory dinner hosted by Akinola<sup>26</sup> and paid for by the American con-

22 *The Windsor Report*, paragraph 29, 3

23 *Ibid*, paragraph 152.

24 "Statement on The Windsor Report 2004 from the Primate of All Nigeria." Online at: [<http://www.anglican-communication.org/acns/articles/39/00/acns3902.cfm>]

25 "Disappointed Anglican Conservatives Mull Options, Threaten Revolt," by Kevin Eckstrom, *Religion News Service in Christianity Today*, October 18. Online at [<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2004/142/22.0.html>]

26 "Anglican leaders divided and defiant after gays pact," by Stephen Bates, *The Guardian*, March 4, 2005. Online at: [[http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk\\_news/story/0,3604,1430275,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,3604,1430275,00.html)]

27 "Behind the Scenes at the Primates Meeting, Part 2" by George Conger, *Church of England Newspaper*, March 4, 2005.

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34 "A Church Asunder" by Peter J. Boyer, *The New Yorker*, April 17, 2006. Page 64.



servatives. Williams had striven to hold the meeting together, but he remonstrated with these primates when they returned.<sup>27</sup>

The United States and Canada accepted the Primates' requests, each withholding their three voting delegates in an attempt to demonstrate that they sought reconciliation within the Communion.<sup>28</sup> Conservatives used the numerical advantage this provided to get the council to affirm the Dromantine communiqué by a two vote margin with four abstentions.

The chair of the Anglican Consultative Council, Bishop John Paterson of Auckland, later apologized to the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church for the way it had been treated, and said that the primates, as one instrument of unity, should not have attempted to dictate terms to another.<sup>29</sup>

In the Windsor Report and the Dromantine communiqué, leaders of the Episcopal Church's response would be neither official nor complete until approved by its triennial General Convention. The Convention meets in Columbus, Ohio for two weeks beginning in mid-June. There it will consider a number of resolutions drafted in response to the report. Whether its response is deemed satisfactory by enough in the communion may deter-

mine whether Episcopal bishops are invited to the next meeting of the Lambeth Conference in 2008.

And whether Episcopal bishops are invited may determine whether their adversaries stage a boycott.

#### WHOSE PIPER? WHOSE TUNE?

Since conservative Episcopalians' highly visible role at Dromantine, leaders of the Communion have begun to ask whether they and their financial backers such as Howard F Ahmanson, Jr., are the real power behind a movement that claims to draw its strength from Africa and Asia.

In an interview last October, Eames said that he was "quite certain" that African bishops were being offered money to cut their ties with the Episcopal Church.

"Is it the might of finance that will influence a theological outlook, and then that outlook come to dominate the Communion?" he said. "It raises a serious question for me: what is the real nature of their faith and their Anglicanism? It is certainly different from mine."<sup>30</sup>

Akinola responded in an open letter to Eames on Oct. 16. "If you have any evidence of such financial inducements I challenge you, in the name of God, to reveal them or make a public apology to

your brother Primates in the Global South for this damaging and irresponsible smear," he wrote.

Eames replied a few days later, saying: "I categorically state I have never believed that any financial offer was accepted by any of those who represent the Global South on any other than terms of Christian outreach."

While Akinola was chastising Eames, however, Canon Akintunde Popoola, director of communications for the Church of Nigeria, was defending the practice that Eames had decried. On the popular Thinking Anglicans Web site, he wrote:

"For years, wealthy ECUSA churches like Trinity Wall Street bankroll churches in developing countries (and dare I say even the Communion) with no eyeballs raised. Some 'poor churches' feel it is immoral to collect money from those they do not agree with. Those that agree with the position of the poor are coming to their aid and some guys feel that is not moral.

"Before such statements are made, Leaders should consider what the poor are receiving and what they are missing. Which is greater?"<sup>31</sup>

In late October, a number of primates from the Global South released a letter that was sharply critical of Williams, who had recently addressed them at a conference in Cairo. Several of the primates sought to

distance themselves from the letter, and in the process, provided another glimpse of American advisors prodding southern primates to do their bidding.

In a message to the *Church Times*, Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane of South Africa, whose name did not appear on the letter, wrote that his delegate at the meeting, Bishop Johannes Seoka had "found himself excluded from meetings, including those at which the letter was discussed - despite the presence, it appeared, of others who were neither Primates nor, indeed, from the Global South."<sup>32</sup>

In November 2005, Duncan hosted a conference in Pittsburgh at which a bishop from Venables' province ordained clergy to work under his authority in the Dioceses of Maryland and Washington.<sup>33</sup> At the conference, Akinola told an audience of 2,500:

"Many of you have one leg in ECUSA and one leg in the Network. With that, my friends, comes disaster. While that remains, you can't have our support. Because, you see, as we speak here, we have all broken communion with ECUSA. If you want Global South to partner with you, you must let us know exactly where you stand. Are you ECUSA? Or are you Network? Which one?"<sup>34</sup>

## Timeline

# Sex and the Anglican Communion



The Most Rev. Rowan Williams was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury in February, 2003.

1964

The Episcopal Church (TEC) begins study of sexuality.

1968

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) meets for the first time.

1978

The Lambeth Conference calls for "deep and dispassionate" study of sexuality drawing on scripture, science and medicine and dialog with gays and lesbians.

1979

First Primates Meeting.

1988

Lambeth Conference asks each province to reassess its attitude toward gays and lesbians.

1998

#### Lambeth Conference

Acknowledges that there are different perspectives on homosexuality held by faithful Anglicans.

Affirms heterosexual monogamy as the only appropriate circumstance for sexual intercourse.

Describes homosexual practice as incompatible with scripture.

Says it cannot encourage same sex blessings or ordination of those in same sex relationships.

Asks Primates and Anglican Consultative Council to monitor work on studying sexuality.

1999

Diocese of New Westminster, (DNW) Canada authorizes development of public rites for same sex blessings.

2003

**August:** TEC General Convention consents to the election of Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire, and affirms that same sex blessings are within the "common life" of the Church.

**October:** Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, calls an emergency meeting of the Primates to respond to the TEC and DNW, and creates the Lambeth Commission on Communion to attempt to preserve the Communion.

2004

**March:** TEC House of Bishops develops plan to provide "delegated episcopal oversight" of parishes out of sympathy with their bishops.

**June:** Synod of Anglican Church of Canada affirms the "integrity and sanctity of adult same sex relationships."

**October:** Lambeth Commission on Communion releases The Windsor Report which: Describes the actions of TEC and DNW as a "breach of the bonds of affection."

Calls on TEC and DNW to express regret and to explain their actions.

Asks for a moratorium on consecrating bishops in same sex relationships

Charges the Instruments of Unity to develop the "listening process" called for in Lambeth 1998.

Affirms provincial integrity against unwelcome mission incursions.

2005

**February:** Primates receive The Windsor Report at Dromantine  
Call for a moratorium on public rites of same sex blessings  
Ask TEC and AC of Canada to withdraw voting representatives from June meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council.  
Ask TEC and AC of Canada explain their actions at June ACC meeting.

**March:** TEC House of Bishops' effects moratorium of consecration of all bishops



The Lambeth Commission on Communion, authors of *The Windsor Report*, outside Lambeth Palace.

until General Convention 2006 and expresses "deep regret for the pain that others have experienced with respect to our actions at the General Convention of 2003."

**April:** TEC Executive Council agrees to send delegates to ACC as "observers," rather than as voting members.

**June:** Anglican Consultative Council receives The Windsor Report  
Affirms primates' Dromantine communiqué  
Asks for "listening process" of provinces sharing their studies and resolutions regarding sexuality.

2006

June: TEC General Convention to convene in Columbus, Ohio to consider further responses to The Windsor Report and to consider consents on newly elected bishops.

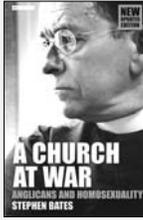
2007

Autumn: Invitations to be mailed for Lambeth Conference, 2008.

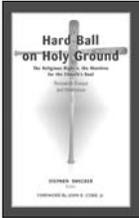
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## Opinion

# A question of relationships

This piece originally appeared in the *Washington Window*, April 2005.

By Albert Scariato

At its June meeting, the Anglican Consultative Council will hear presentations by theologians from the Episcopal Church USA and the Anglican Church of Canada explaining why churches believe there is no Scriptural or theological barrier to the consecration of a gay bishop or to the blessing of monogamous same-sex relationships.

It is fitting that these presentations will focus on "relationship," for embodied in that word is the very core of the current situation that no written document can ever hope to overcome. Christianity is above all else about incarnation. We make the audacious claim that God lived among us as a human being, Jesus, son of Mary. This one person, born of woman through the unhindered Spirit of God, is, we say, God's ultimate revelation to humanity.

Notations on paper or papyrus, no matter how old, venerated or insightful, can hope only to approximate the divine revelation we have in Jesus Christ. The Bible itself admonishes us that beyond its pages much remains to be learned. Indeed Jesus told his disciples that there were matters that they were unable to bear while he was still with them. God's Holy Spirit would, however, guide them ultimately into all truth (John 16:12).

Spanning the history of the church, the Holy Spirit has striven to guide the world, both outside and inside the church, into a more complete understanding of truth. A vital question in Jesus' time and in our own comes from Pilate's lips (John 18:38). "What is truth?" Accessing that truth has been the work that the church has been commissioned to explore, incorporate and proclaim. Never has so great a task been undertaken by mere mortals. Truth has within it the power to create freedom (John 8:32). Freedom itself represents the ultimate gift of our God. From Eden to Sinai to Calvary to the new Jerusalem, we hear a story of God leading

humanity from the bondage of self-seeking agendas to a place and time where God is all and in all. When the truth that rushes from God's being and is accepted and inhaled into God's vessels of love - each of us - the incarnation of the divine will dwell beyond the physical and temporal limits of what we now can perceive.

Sadly, it is most often difficult to recognize, let alone to accept, what is truth. Much of what has been revealed to the church and to the world over the years as being ultimately consonant with the Gospel was welcomed not with joy and hope, but rather with skepticism and disdain, or rejected - its messengers often sharing the fate of the one who

"preached peace to those who are far off and those who are near." A rehearsal of this litany would include but not be limited to the truth concerning: the complicity of the church in justifying the often harsh rule of temporal kingdoms, the torture inflicted by the inquisitors, the stifling of Galileo, the conscious encouragement and perpetuation of anti-Semitism, the reactions to the reformers, the use of Scripture to justify slavery, the repression of women, institutional racism, and the list goes on. We have read of it. We have heard it - over and over, council after council, convention after convention, document after document. Today we hear it as well as the bloodiest of centuries, the 20th, has given way to a new millennium in which we hope and pray that we can be led away from yet another stumbling block, sexuality, which keeps us away from the work of bringing the Gospel of peace to a world at war.

God's holy words, the Scriptures, are often manipulated today in an attempt to thwart God's ultimate word, Jesus, who ushered us into an era in which God's will is made known not in written word but in relationship. Divine will entered into relationship with and expressed solidarity with the human condition by seeing, hearing, knowing and coming down to rescue a group of desperate slaves (Exodus 3:7-8). Today, other groups are experiencing God's compassionate

response to their cries. Each of us has unique windows, our relationships with other people created in God's image, that reveal the love and truth of God that is revealed in Jesus Christ. Those interpersonal relationships, even with all their foibles and frailties, where we encounter love give us an approximation of the love that God has for each and every human being.

For gay and lesbian Christians, relationships with loved ones are the most vivid reminders of God's love. These relationships, no less than faithful, life-long heterosexual ones, reveal the "mystery of the union between Christ and the church" to men and women who by their very nature are attracted sexually and otherwise to members of their same sex. The business of the church is meant to be about finding God within the bonds of these relationships rather than determining by vague, rather primitive, psychologically twisted, and medically dubious standards that they are immoral.

Scripture has, is, and unfortunately may always be employed to defend the indefensible. Read sermons from the 1850s from Boston and Richmond. Compare and contrast. Where is God? Where is truth? Where is the word made flesh? The Emancipation Proclamation of a secular leader and the amending of a human document, The U.S. Constitution, settled the matter of slavery - not the churches who divided themselves over the issue, and not the bible that was used by slave-holders and abolitionists alike to support their positions.

Somehow the Episcopal Church and most of the Anglican Communion has come to realize correctly that in some instances divorce may be the path of healing in a relationship fraught with hurt and harm. Yet the Gospels speak more clearly on that matter than on the current issues of sexual relationship confronting the church. The

church, the institution of marriage, and society managed to stay intact when the teaching of Jesus in Mark 10:4-12 was reexamined and reinterpreted in the power of the Spirit of God that Jesus promised would lead us into all truth. How did the church come to this inter-

pretation? Was it because more people could empathize with the plight of a lifeless marriage than can understand the basis of same-sex attraction? One would hope that this is not the case. Yet, how can the rigid adherence to what is contrived by some to be the biblical prohibition on homosexuality be squared with the relaxed position of many of these same people on prohibitions of divorce? Questions of logic, bias, and subjection of the minority by the majority (the mighty versus the weak?) come to fore.

Ultimately, one has to face some simple truths. No biblical author addresses the contemporary model of two people of the same sex living with each other in a relationship of equals, faithful and caring. Biblical reference of supposed same-sex relationships is open to a wide range of interpretations. Sides on the present-day debate have staked out their claims. A two-fold truth emerges - the debate will not be settled this way, and in perseverating over this issue so long and so intractably, the church has been driven away from its commission to preach the Gospel.

At the core of the issue of human sexuality is the truth of the incarnation - that God took on humanity, and in so doing brings

humanity into the sacramental realm. One aspect of that humanity is that some are homosexual and others heterosexual. "God looked at everything he had made, and behold it was very good." May our eyes behold God's creation through divinely inspired eyes, ears, hearts and minds. Pen, ink, paper, and even, yes, computers are finite, limited. The Spirit that is at our threshold knows no limits. How then can we impose a boundary on what is boundless? As the Spirit presses against the walls of division and discord, truth will emerge - the truth that liberates - the truth that Jesus promised, that now is hard to bear, but which will lead us to what Anselm called "that than which no greater can be conceived."

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