



Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil

Bispo Primaz

Dom Orlando Santos de Oliveira

Sede Provincial: Av. Eng. Ludolfo Boehl, 256 – Cx. Postal 11.510 – Teresópolis

90879 – 970 - Porto Alegre – RS – Brasil

Fone/Fax: 55 51 3318.6200

e-mail: osoliveira@ieab.org.br

Declaration of Archbishop of Brazilian Church to the Primate of Southern Cone

Translated by Mario Ribas

To

The Most Revd. Gregory Venables

Primate Bishop of the Anglican Province of Southern Cone

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Porto Alegre, 12th of October, 2005.

Dear brother bishop

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

I am deeply disappointed by your letter in which you recognised and take under your supervision the deposed bishop and a group of deposed clergy that once belonged to the Diocese of Recife. I am saddened by this attitude, which was taken after we had several opportunities, personally and by telephone, to explain you the truth about this matter. In one occasion, I handed you several documents that clarify the factual truths. I also have given these information to the archbishop of Canterbury, to the General Secretary, as well as to the “Reference Panel”.

It seems to me that it had been made clear that these facts, related to the Anglican Province of Brazil, were things that preceded Minneapolis, and that only developed or reinforced what already was happening. And, therefore matters that neither concerns the “Reference Panel” nor any other commission. Again I affirm that these matters, are of disciplinary concerns, that are anchored in the General Canons of our Province, and not, as it has been propagated throughout the Anglican Communion, that it is a “Holy War between evangelicals and liberals”. This kind of treatment is offensive towards our intelligence and the veracity of these facts. The accusation of persecution towards “evangelicals and orthodox (?)” is a version that had been passionately built and fed by the deposed bishop, and supported by some groups that are inside or parallel of the Anglican Communion.

We do not rejoice with the present reality of the Anglican Communion. Let alone with the attitude of some provinces, groups, networks and individuals that are involved in this crisis and divisions, crossing provincial, diocesan and parishes borders in a totally aggressive and disrespectful attitude towards our autonomy as a Province. Unfortunately, as once said his grace, Dr. Rowan Williams in his book **Writing in the Dust**: “*Any really outrageous human action tests to the limit our careful theological principles about God’s refusal to interfere with created freedom. That God has made a world into which he doesn’t casually step in to solve problems is fairly central to a lot of Christian faith. He has made the world so that evil choices can’t just be frustrated or aborted (where would he stop, for goodness sake? He’d have to be intervening every instant of human history) but have to be confronted, suffered, taken forward, healed in the complex process of human history, always in collaboration with what we do and say and pray*”.



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We are not disrespecting the Primate Bishops, the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Reference Panel, as your grace has improperly stated, because to exercise the legitimate discipline contained in our Canons, we do not need external institutions. One thing that part of the Anglican Communion do not understand, or “intentionally does not want to understand”, is that these matters, here in Brazil, are matters that are subject for canonical discipline for someone that has disrespected the ecclesiastical laws, and under these same laws, there are those who are legally constituted to care for its observance and for the unity of the Brazilian Province. The deposed bishop, Robinson Cavalcanti, has been removed from the ordained ministry not by a summary action of the Primate Bishop, but by a long canonical process and work of a investigation commission; he was condemned by the Superior Ecclesiastical Court, that is constituted by thee bishops canonically elected by the Provincial Synod and unanimously confirmed by the Bishops’ Chamber. During the trial process, in any moment the defendant neither made use of his right of defence, nor has he contested the contents of the denunciations against him, but, he did concentrate himself to contest, according to him, some formal problems of this court case.

We do follow the Anglican Tradition that intentionally seems not to be of the interest of many nowadays, which is to recognise the right of each province to act according to their canon laws to maintain their discipline, since they avoid that their canons laws would affect the life of and decisions of other provinces. Your action, yes, has been of interference in the Brazilian jurisdiction without any previous contact with its Primate Bishop, as you had once personally given your word to me. We are saddened as well as rebut this action from your side.

On behalf and by request of the Bishops’ Chamber, and Clergy and Laity Chamber of the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil, we officially protest and repudiate this action of intrusion in our jurisdiction. During all this time of crisis, we have respected the positions and decisions of the Province of the Southern Cone and other provinces of the Anglican Communion. As your grace once well said, these actions have “sown confusion and pain”, so has been your intrusion in Brazil.

Many the Lord Almighty have mercy and give light to the Church and all its people.

In Christ our Lord

The Most Revd. Orlando Santos de Oliveira
Primate of Brasil