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WORLD news

INTERNATIONAL

The worldwide Anglican Communion—70 million Christians in 164 nations—began disintegrating Nov. 3, the day after the Episcopal Church, the U.S. branch of Anglicanism, consecrated openly gay and openly noncelibate Gene Robinson as the bishop of its New Hampshire diocese.

National Anglican churches in Kenya, Uganda, Egypt and Nigeria either declared themselves no longer in full union with the Diocese of New Hampshire, no longer in full union with the entire U.S. Episcopal Church or unwilling to recognize Robinson's bishopric.

"The devil has clearly entered the church," said Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi, head of the Anglican Church of Kenya. "God cannot be mocked."

Archbishop Peter Akinola, head of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), stated: "The overwhelming majority of the Primates of the Global South cannot and will not recognize the office or ministry of Canon Gene Robinson as a bishop. We deplore the act of those bishops who have taken part in the consecration, which has now divided the church in violation of their obligation to guard the faith and unity of the church."

About 17 million of the world's 70 million Anglicans live in Nigeria.

Bishop Mouner Hanna Anis, head of the Episcopal Church of Egypt and North Africa, declared: "Those who participated in the consecration of this gay bishop are considered among the violators of the teachings of the Holy Book, and therefore they have become dissociated with Jesus' church. Homosexuality is a clear sin."

Southern Cone of America Anglican leader Bishop Gregory Venables warned: "The United States have declared independence. I think the chances of consensus are very slim."

Members of Parliament from Poland's ruling party have proposed legislation recognizing same-sex partnerships, which the church opposes.

UNITED KINGDOM

The first woman appointed to Britain's highest court, a section of the House of Lords known as the Law Lords, supports extending marriage rights to same-sex couples.

"My present view is that there is a strong case for introducing a legal commitment between people who are unable to marry, principally gay and lesbian partners," Lady Hale told *The Independent*. The 12 law lords are the court of final appeal for the full United Kingdom on points of law in civil cases and for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in criminal cases.

Britain's BSkyB network has postponed a reality series it taped in which six suitors courted a woman they did not know was a preop transsexual, the British Broadcasting Corp. reported Oct. 31. The male contestants, claiming they were "traumatized" and "devastated" by the experience, threatened to sue to stop broadcast of the series, *There's Something About Miriam*, which was taped several months ago on Ibiza.

The men allege breach of contract, deceit, personal injury and sexual assault. They kissed and cuddled with Miriam during the taping.

"Six of them went onto this reality TV show on the understanding they'd have to do various tasks to win the affection of a very beautiful woman," the contestants' lawyer told Reuters. "After they'd been encouraged to have sexual contact, they found that she was a he. They all found it extremely traumatic."

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand's Advertising Standards Complaints Board has dismissed complaints against a billboard for Fagg's coffee that called it "the great straight coffee" and said it is "not as Ponsonby as the name suggests." Ponsonby is Auckland's gay district.

The board said the billboard did not cause serious or widespread offense. According to a Fagg's spokesman, the ad is not contrasting "straight" with "gay" but rather "straight" with "pretentious."

"The tagline for Fagg's, 'the great straight coffee,' is simply that—we are a straightforward, straight-up-and-down coffee—a coffee consumers know they can trust for its quality but also for its simplicity and down-to-earth approach," marketing manager James Ford told GayNZ.com. "The Ponsonby headline is also a reflection of the above logic. Ponsonby is well-known as being the cafe capital of NZ but is also known for being sometimes a bit pretentious. We are suggesting that Fagg's coffee is certainly of a quality that you would expect to get at a Ponsonby cafe, yet you can enjoy it in a more relaxed setting—at home or somewhere other than Ponsonby."

NZGay.com writer Chris Banks commented: "But Ponsonby is well-known among people—

coffee drinkers or not—to have very gay connotations. Linking Ponsonby with a coffee called Fagg's, and then labeling it a 'straight' coffee...are we expected to believe this is all just some strange coincidence?"



Polish Cardinal Józef Glemp (right) believes homosexuality is "incompatible with human nature." At left is Monsignor Juliusz Paetz, who was outed in February 2002 and resigned a month later for sexually harassing seminarians and priests.

POLAND

Cardinal Józef Glemp, head of the Roman Catholic church in Poland, is grossed out by gays, he said Oct. 21.

"It is something very depressing for me, as it is something incompatible with human nature," he told reporters. "I just can't stand men kissing. Maybe I'm old-fashioned."

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IN THE CITY

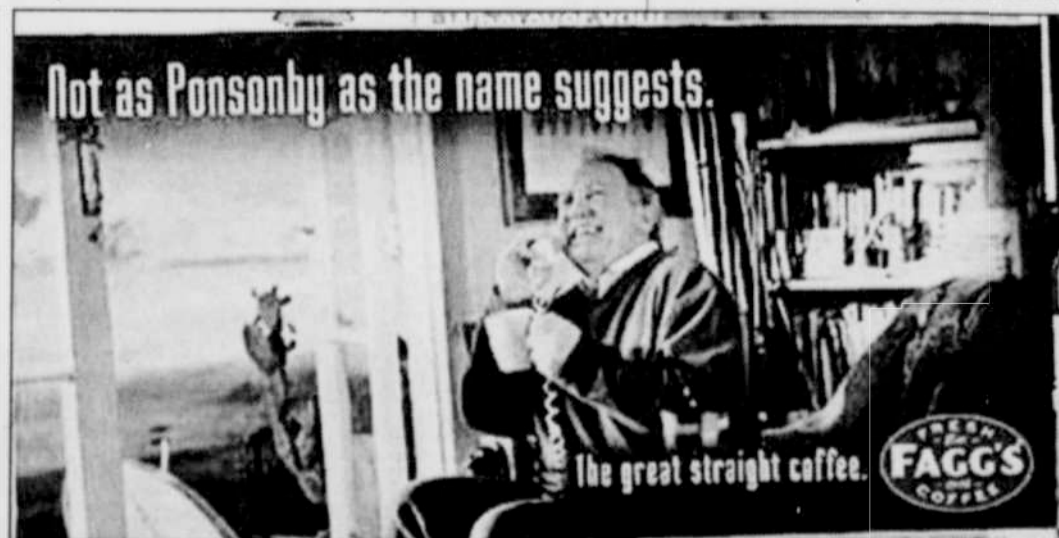
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Fagg's coffee claims this billboard refers to "pretentious" people, not queers