

Kevin Annett and the United Church

October 2018

Recently two United Church of Canada clergy received threatening, unsigned letters in the mail making outrageous and imaginary claims about their involvement in crimes. A copy of at least one of these letters was also seen posted in a public place in Nanaimo, giving rise to the concern for the physical safety of these clergy and their families, as well as for their reputations.

The letters are designed like a "Wanted" poster. Each has an image, taken from congregational websites, of the clergy. They are designed to sound legal and official, citing "court verdicts," "arrest warrants," "peace officers," an "international tribunal," and "the full force of the law."

In fact, there have been no crimes committed by these clergy, there is no "court verdict", there is no "international tribunal", and there are no "peace officers" seeking to arrest these clergy.

All of this simply springs from the imagination of one person: Kevin Annett.

Kevin Annett is a former United Church minister. In 1995, after the turbulent breakdown of two of his ministries in less than five years and noticing other troubling behaviours by Annett, the church asked that he undergo a psychiatric examination, which he did not do. In 1997 he was removed as a minister of the church because he was found to be wholly unsuitable to serve as a minister. Since that time he has, on numerous occasions, made totally false and slanderous statements about the church and particularly about anyone associated with his removal, including the two clergy named in the posters.

United Church members are not the only ones who have been slandered by Kevin Annett for imaginative reasons. His personal web site (<http://itccs.org>) is full of similar fabricated accusations and claims:

- A warrant (in the name of the same "international organization") for the arrest of Pope Francis;
- The Pope used a "body double" in his Dublin visits while he tried to evade "arrest" by Annett's imaginary court;
- The Pope, an indigenous Canadian Anglican bishop, and the head of the World Council of Churches are "a trio of child killers", part of a mysterious "Ninth Circle" cult, the existence of which only Annett knows anything about;
- The announcement of the abolishment of the Roman Catholic Church ("as of this day, the institution and entity of the Church of Rome, its officers, clergy, adjunct and derivative bodies and corporate entirety, is now and forever abolished and disestablished as a corporate and a spiritual body. All people and powers formerly under its authority and influence and owing it allegiance are now and forever emancipated and freed from such obligatory servitude");
- The establishment of a "grand Jury" in Ireland to investigate, among other things, "the widespread corruption of the Irish judiciary and Gardai police, and their involvement in this campaign of terror, murder and child trafficking";
- In 2013, that "Pope Benedict, Joseph Ratzinger, former Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Elizabeth Windsor 'Queen of England', and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper" were all convicted (in Annett's court) of "criminal conspiracy and genocide" and "sentenced in absentia to 25 years in prison and the forfeit of all the wealth and property of their estates and institutions";
- The "conviction" and issuing of an "arrest warrant" for Queen Elizabeth for "crimes against humanity";

- That Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands ordered and paid for “the murder, torture, rape and killing of children” in the presence of major Dutch politicians and other known world leaders whom Annett names;
- The “discovery” of “a west coast sacrificial cult involving the ritual rape and murder of children” which includes Supreme Court judges and major United Church leaders, with headquarters in the Vancouver Club;
- The total rejection of Canadian governance and law, and the establishment of “The Republic of Kanata” which includes:
 - The abolition of Crown jurisdiction and authority, its courts and its statutes;
 - the canceling of all federal and provincial taxes and payments;
 - the establishing of sovereign common law courts of record as the sole *de jure* legal system;
 - the establishing of trained citizen militias to replace and absorb the standing army and police;
 - the expropriation of all banks, surplus wealth and land;
 - the expropriation of all medical services, transportation and surplus housing;
 - the abolition of all income taxes, rents and mortgages;
 - the naming of himself as “special advisor” to the Republic, as well as the “Convenor of District One (West Coast)” (in fact, he is the only person named on the web page introducing the Republic).

Annett’s web site is full of such fantasies and conspiracy theories, some his own, some invented by others.

Annett also has a talent for self-promotion. Reading his website, one is led to believe that world leaders have made major actions and decisions, faked illnesses, used body doubles, changed itineraries, activated secret police... all due to Annett’s letters and website denunciations. He claims “our protests forced” the apology by Canada for residential schools in 2008. He even claims Pope Benedict resigned in 2013 because of an imminent “arrest warrant” Annett was about to issue.

Those who wonder about the truthfulness of the recent posters targeting the two United Church clergy are encouraged to visit Annett’s web site to determine for themselves whether Annett is credible or not.

Annett is able to attract attention because he hides behind a single truth: that the Canadian Indian residential school system was abusive, unjust and destructive of indigenous culture. The church has confessed its complicity in that system in many different ways over the past decades. The federal government has as well. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has deeply investigated that system and has called on society to make amends and take steps to build a better relationship. Annett holds himself out to be the sole, heroic person truthfully exposing this history, tells fantastical stories about his “discoveries” at school sites, and wildly exaggerates (his favorite claim is that 50,000 children died in the schools – 1 in every 3 children – while the Truth and Reconciliation Commission found 3,200). No indigenous organization supports Annett; instead, he regularly attacks them, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission itself.

All of this could be ignored – simply the internet scribbles of someone with a fertile imagination, a hatred of the church, and numerous personal grudges to avenge – if personal, public attacks were not also made. Annett’s website speaks for itself; a solitary poster in a public place might look convincing.

To be clear: if these posters are noticed, people should be aware that there is absolutely no truth behind them, that those named have not committed the atrocities attributed to them, and that there is

absolutely no legal legitimacy to them. They are solely the product of one person with a personal grudge against those named in the posters.

The world has become a much more dangerous place in the years since Annett started his campaign against church, indigenous and world leaders in 1997. Annett himself has not engaged in any violent activity of which we are aware. However, in light of recent pipe bomb attacks in New York and the killings in a synagogue in Pittsburgh, both motivated by extreme, hateful rhetoric, we fear that others might take it upon themselves to act as the "citizen militia" Annett has called for and take violent action against innocent people.

Very public figures like the Pope, Queen and Prime Minister all have protection from vigilante threats, but local clergy do not. It is clear Annett intends to harm the individuals named on his posters, but we cannot believe he intends physical violence against them. We ask Kevin Annett to exercise restraint in his public statements and to avoid his vicious, false attacks on individuals.

The Formal Hearing report which recommended Kevin Annett's removal as a minister of the church:

<https://bc.united-church.ca/pages/responses-to-claims-made-by-kevin-annett/formal-hearing-panel-decision>

Other statements regarding Kevin Annett made by the church over the years:

<https://bc.united-church.ca/?s=annett>

See also:

<https://thetyee.ca/Views/2008/04/30/TruthAndAbuse>

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/pope-benedict-resignation>

<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/hunting-license>

Several other non-church web sites also expose Kevin Annett. A Google search will turn up numerous sites, most written by Annett himself, but some written by other individuals and groups who have their own reasons oppose his claims and threats.