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The spectacular ignorance, bigotry, prejudice and fear-mongering of Myles Munroe

In a wild-eyed jeremiad cum response to an event for gays and lesbians set for Grand Bahama last weekend, Dr. Myles Munroe delivered his latest panic attack assailing gays and lesbians.

It was an overreaction steeped in a morass of fear and disdain for fellow-citizens. Increasingly, Munroe is sounding profoundly anti-democratic and theocratic, more committed to his version of a religious state.

He decried a private event by Bahamian citizens as a “defiant social act”. How undemocratic and uncivil. Islamic and other fundamentalists might find a kindred spirit in Theocrat Munroe. If Munroe had his way, perhaps he would have sent in the religious police.

What he labeled as insanity, and what others, including a certain talk show host were offended by was other citizens exercising their rights of freedom of association and free speech – the very rights certain bigots are happy to exercise while condemning others for the same exercise of these rights.

There is an amazing number of self-aggrandizing leaders and their cheerleaders who refuse to take to heart Abraham Lincoln’s admonition: “Tis better to be silent and be thought a fool, than to speak and remove all doubt.”

Had Munroe, whose doctorate seems to be honorary rather than earned, submitted his screed as a paper to a professor in a reputable undergraduate theology class it would earn a failing grade.

One example: Munroe invokes natural law – or at least his uninformed version – to support his prejudice. The complexities and nuances of natural law theory seem to elude him.

Fallacies

There are so many errors of thought that a paper he submitted would be returned drowning in red ink correcting a plethora of poor thinking, including logical fallacies and general illogic. He began one sentence with what he claimed as a matter of fact, but which is his biased opinion.

The document would horrify undergraduate professors in biology and genetics, various social sciences such as anthropology and sociology, as well as history, political theory and other disciplines. Indeed, his screed may have been used in pamphlet, “How Not to Write a Paper!”

Munroe offered this scare tactic and fear-mongering: “Is it civil, right, reasonable, logical, sane to promote a cause, lifestyle or practice of a behavior that could in its ultimate conclusion cause the extinction of the human race.” (Curiously the sentence did not end with a question mark.)

How desperate and disingenuous can one get in making a bogus argument? This sentence is the height of hyperbolic nonsense bordering on stupidity. It is wrong in its conclusion, unreasonable, illogical and hardly sane.

Perhaps we should alert the demographers and population experts that, according to Munroe, humanity is headed toward extinction because of a conspiracy by gays and lesbians and unwitting heterosexuals.

Are we to believe that there will be a mass conversion of billions of heterosexuals as homosexuals? Fret not thyself: Heterosexuals will be just fine and will go on making plenty of babies. With gays and lesbians having children of their own, the real fear of human sustainability has to do with environmental degradation.

Worryingly, Munroe's document is filled with grammatical and other errors which would not pass muster in an undergraduate English class.

Before releasing his screed Munroe should have had an editor correct basic mistakes which would be unacceptable in a high school essay. In terms of reasoned thinking and proper writing, the public deserves considerably better from religious leaders than this pathetically slipshod dribble.

Perhaps other more capable religious leaders might advise Munroe in crafting public statements.

To label the meandering document incoherent would be charitable. It begins and ends in error. The very title of Munroe's rambling, "Homosexuality – Phobia or Principle", is a false choice.

Antipathy

Munroe's antipathy to science is captured in the title. While biologists and geneticists generally view homosexuality as a biological reality, Munroe seemingly resides mostly in a prescientific era where evolution is denied and climate change is not mostly the result of human activity.

One imagines that he must at least believe that the Earth is not flat and that the sun does not revolve around Earth, though what he and certain religionists might have believed back then is open to question.

A scientist titling a paper “Heterosexuality (or Gender or Ethnicity) – Phobia or Principle” would be laughed out of the academy.

Munroe says he has watched with horror over the years as people have “hijacked” and “raped” the meaning of the civil rights movement in an effort to fight for the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community.

“I have, with all my logic, sought to understand, but still cannot equate the philosophy, ideology or purpose for the civil rights movement with the agenda of the homosexual LGBT community...”

Clearly, Munroe’s logic is quite limited and easily exhausted. And he is not only annoyed with gays and lesbians.

He must also be angry with moral giants like Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, who championed the civil rights of black people as well as those of gays and lesbians, linking the struggles for equality.

Did Mandela and Tutu “rape” and “hijack” the civil rights movement? In Munroe’s blinkered illogic they did. What an affront to the legacies of these great men in whose footsteps and witness Munroe could never stand.

In the Rainbow Nation that he celebrated and for which he spent a quarter of a century in prison, Mandela pushed for one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, which proclaims (emphasis added): “The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, sexual orientation...” et al.

Inane

Munroe doubled-down on his seemingly breathtaking capacity for making inane statements: "I think the attempt to equate the historical civil rights movement with the demands for the right to dignify, glorify and accept as normal the practice of a lifestyle that could render the human race, for which they sacrificed, extinct is illogical, dishonest, and is the abuse of the blood and imprisonment of many. It's a hijacking of the gains paid for by the blood of honorable men and women for an unnatural, human-destroying behavior."

His words are an affront to civil rights heroes and heroines who spent their lives in the struggles for human rights and who equated that struggle with that of the struggle for equality by gays and lesbians.

They are an affront to Coretta Scott King, the widow of Dr. Martin L. King Jr., a civil rights champion in her own right, who had to bury her assassinated husband, and then continue his struggle. Her statement at a 2000 conference on equality is a stern rebuff to the limited moral and intellectual imaginations of the likes of Munroe: "My husband, Martin Luther King Jr., once said, 'We are all tied together in a single garment of destiny...an inescapable network of mutuality,...I can never be what I ought to be until you are allowed to be what you ought to be.' Therefore, I appeal to everyone who believes in Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream to make room at the table of brotherhood and sisterhood for lesbian and gay people.

"Gays and lesbians stood up for civil rights in Montgomery, Selma in Albany, GA, and St. Augustine, Fla., and many other campaigns of the civil rights movement. Many of these courageous men and women were fighting for my freedom at a time when they could find few voices for their own, and I salute their contributions."

The Chicago Defender of April 1, 1998, reported that Mrs. King declared: ‘Homophobia is like racism and anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry in that it seeks to dehumanize a large group of people, to deny their humanity, their dignity and personhood.’”

Affront

Munroe’s arrogance and ignorance would be an affront to the likes of the brilliant civil rights leader, former politician and intellectual Julian Bond, who was reportedly known for his ability to read a book in one evening.

In a 2005 speech, Bond, who is not gay, stated: “African Americans...were the only Americans who were enslaved for two centuries, but we were far from the only Americans suffering discrimination then and now...Sexual disposition parallels race. I was born this way. I have no choice...Sexuality is unchangeable.”

A report in *The Huffington Post* reported: “Science has demonstrated conclusively,’ he [Bond] says, ‘that sexual disposition is inherent in some; it’s not an option or alternate they’ve selected. In that regard it exactly parallels race...Like race, our sexuality isn’t a preference. It’s immutable, unchangeable...’

“And what about Dr. King? ‘I believe in my heart of hearts,’ Bond says, ‘that were King alive today, he would be a supporter of gay rights...He would make no distinction between this fight [for gay rights] and the fight he became famous for.’”

With whom will increasing numbers of Bahamians and history side: the collective wisdom and witness of Mandela, Tutu, Scott King, Bond, Congressman John Lewis, the leaders of the NAACP, President

Barack Obama, Rev. Al Sharpton, Rev. Jesse Jackson, and many others notables – or with Myles Munroe?

Admittedly, it is not a fair contest. Still, at home, we may be nearing the end of the beginning of much of the struggle on various fronts.