

MORE PROOF, PLEASE, OR SHUT UP

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Avedis Kevorkian, Philadelphia, PA USA, 11 August 2013

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When I next met Karekin II, he was an Archbishop, and I met a good man and who was highly respected.

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So, I am wondering where this ogre posing as Karekin II has come from.

How is it that when he was a seminarian, no one found anything negative and untoward?

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How is it that when he was a Bishop, no one found anything negative and untoward?

How is it that when he was an Archbishop, no one found anything negative and untoward?

How is it that when he was a candidate to succeed Vasken, no one found anything negative and untoward?

How is it that when he was a candidate to succeed Karekin I, no one found anything negative and untoward?

How is it that when he was elected to succeed Karekin I, no one found anything negative and untoward?

So, we are now meant to believe that between Pontifical visits to Armenian communities throughout the world, and between his official visits throughout the world, and between receiving foreign dignitaries making the obligatory visit to Etchmiadzin, and between his administrative duties, and between his being visible as few others are, he has found time to be corrupt and venal.

My first reaction to the long editorial was "Holy Hell! He must have rubbed a few people the wrong

way!" My second reaction was to ask, "Cui bono?" by these attacks and the apparently hoped-for resignation of Karekin II.

My third reaction was my own response to that question: "Don't let your mind travel down that path."

I know absolutely nothing about the workings of Etchmiadzin. So, I can only surmise, since most of the accusations and so-called "charges" seem to be anonymous and uncredited, that neither do his accusers.

Nor, am I even going to attempt commenting on the 23 accusations and charges.

But, picking at random, that he has unfrocked more than the apparent quota permitted by his critics. Perhaps they were not up to the standard expected of the Church, and had been able to get away with their punishable actions. We should not forget that Vasken had to walk a very narrow line between serving the Church and the more-than-likely demands of the Communists--and, let us not forget, the nasty lies spread by Giligia about him and Etchmiadzin. Perhaps he didn't have time to check on the morality of his clergy who, therefore, assumed a certain impunity. And, let us not forget that his successor Karekin I was in poor health and may not have had the opportunity to check into the morality and activities of the clergy. But, it is possible that Karekin II has found the time to do the checking and has found things that needed decisive action.

Yet, among the "charges" against Karekin is that the church (still) has corrupt priests and homosexual priests. Obviously, that means that he should get rid of them. But, if he does, he will be charged with defrocking priests. Are his critics trying to walk on both sides of the street at the same time? Or, are they just plain stupid?

And, by the way. What is wrong with being homosexual, today? Or, is the "accusation" that they are pedophiles? If so, say so.

He is also accused of having passionate and, obviously, over-zealous, supporters during the election of Catholicos. Is it a crime to have supporters? Didn't any of the other candidates have supporters? I asked one of the lay delegates for whom he was going to vote, and he refused to tell me, adding that he had been under some pressure from some people to vote for their candidate. Apparently, having won, Karekin is therefor guilty for winning.

Karekin II would be a fool to even respond to these accusations, so we may never know.

At one time, the Patriarchate in Jerusalem had a bad reputation, that treasures went missing, that a certain high clergy (no further identification, please) used to spend an inordinate time playing poker with some rich Arabs. But, enough, on that, if you please.

So, when Torkom was elevated to Patriarch he had his hands full. When he eliminated himself from consideration as successor to Vasken, I asked why, and he responded, "I still have much to do in Jerusalem," meaning (to me, at least) that "the mess was bigger than I thought and I don't want to

leave the cleaning-up unfinished and for my successor to finish."

My father censored an editorial of mine in which I attacked a corrupt priest ("When you spit up, you hit a mustache and when you spit down you hit a beard"--meaning any attack on anyone in the Church was an attack on the entire Church "and not in my newspaper"). It was the only time he did so, by the way. Many years later, the paper long dead, he said to me, out of the blue, that his censoring the editorial was a mistake. I was surprised that it had lingered in his mind for all those years, and I said nothing. I learned later that (he had read that) the priest was getting even worse. So, it is possible that for too long were clergy permitted to violate the trust their collar demands--and, alas, gets.

My late brother had seven children. All were baptized in the Armenian Church (though his wife was not Armenian). The first 13 of his grandchildren were baptized in the Armenian Church. The 14th was born with a serious heart defect and spent her 91 days in the hospital. When she died, my brother wanted her buried from the Armenian Church. The Archbishop refused to permit it because the child was not baptized. My brother argued that she had been in the hospital receiving intense medical care and that baptism was the last thing on his mind. To no avail. Her funeral service was through another church. When the second 14th grandchild arrive, he was not baptized in the Armenian Church.

When my brother died, Catholicos Karekin II sent his widow a very moving letter about the great loss to the Armenians of my brother's death. However, he did not send it to her. He sent the letter to the Archbishop, with the instructions that he go to the widow, read the letter in Armenian, translate it into French, and express the Church's condolences, etc. Of course, Karekin had been told about the earlier disgraceful act of the narrow-minded Archbishop. I was present when the Archbishop came to the widow, and I have never seen a more uncomfortable man--and, dare I say?, contrite man. I even felt sorry for the man.

Was that the act of a Catholicos who doesn't give a damn about the Church, and the act of a man who thinks of nothing but his own self-interest?

I will make no attempt to answer the question, "Cui bono?" but I hope that I will be excused if I say I think I know.

And he is someone who has boasted that he has never been in an Etchmiadzin Church in his life.

Before you out there start throwing stones, permit me to say that the above is not saying that Karekin II is perfect (I seem to recall that the last person who was perfect was last seen hanging on a cross), that he has not set a foot wrong, that he may not have made some mistakes, that he may have taken some short cuts, that he may not have violated canon law, that he may have become too friendly with some rich "benefactors," but no jury of intelligent people--that leaves out, alas, Armenians--would find Karekin II, or anyone else, guilty of the 23 "charges" in the editorial.

