

Charter-Free Zones?

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Anchor-less, rudderless judges are making it up as they go along; ignoring the rule of law, they are damaging our heritage of equality and freedom.

In a recent court decision, the BC Supreme Court ruled against a student pro-life group at the University of Victoria. The Youth Protecting Youth club (YPY), backed by none other than the BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA), was petitioning the University to have its right upheld to display its message on campus property (a common practice of student clubs on other topics). The crucial distinction, of course, is that YPY's display included pro-life images some students consider disturbing. YPY — although it is a legitimate student club — was first refused equal treatment by the University of Victoria Student Society (UVSS) and later by the University itself. The final blow was to have this institutional bias upheld by the BC Supreme Court. The Court held that UVic was not bound by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms since it was “not government.”

Since when did “not government” come to mean that individuals, businesses, or institutions are not required to operate within the bounds of our Canadian Charter? If that's the new reality, every human rights case against any Canadian who has ever resisted the “new cultural norms” should be thrown out of the courts as irrelevant, regardless of the details. After all, if they're “not government” they're not required to submit to the law of the land. The very evident bias shown by the University of Victoria against pro-life students has been highlighted and underlined by the BC Supreme Court's ridiculous judgment.

That decision could easily be interpreted to mean that it's now open season on Christian and pro-life groups, whether on university campuses (long held to be bastions of free and open debate) or in any public venue. We either have free speech or we don't. If only the prevailing opinion on current cultural “hot-button” topics can be presented, then free speech is a sham and Canadians better batten down the hatches and prepare for increased surveillance by the Thought Police and increased interference in the exchange of ideas. This decision —if it stands — screams loudly that discrimination based on religion (or race or age or gender) is okay as long as the party showing bias is not a part of government. That distinction, as flimsy as it seems, would not last long either. Once government ruling bodies and government-appointed judges begin moving the goal posts to accommodate political correctness, the tendency to ignore civil liberties and the “rule of law” is likely to become a habit.

Even if “not government” were a legitimate basis for ignoring Charter values for non-discrimination (and I don't believe it is), the fact that the University is largely funded by tax dollars and that it grants accreditation and certification based on provincial standards seems to have been lost on the court. Diplomas earned at UVic are based on government standards and qualify its grads for employment opportunities with government; wouldn't that seem to tie the school to the government in a significant manner? The University administration is certainly of interest to the Government; extremely generous salaries paid to a privileged class of politically-correct managers of thought and dispensers of opinion

raise concerns for taxpayers as well as for students seeking a well-rounded education. For those entrusted with the oversight of UVic to use that privileged status to shut down debate is simply unacceptable.

This case boils down to our fundamental freedoms and our expectations of the post-graduate experience. The YPY students are educating their fellow student and University staff on an issue that should be of importance to all Canadians. They are performing — free of charge — an educational service that our public educators should be providing (yes, those public educators trained in our universities). After all, by the time students are in university, shouldn't they already have been taught enough basic biology to understand the development of a child in the womb? They are instructed on every imaginable aspect of sex and sexuality. Since they receive so much information about "choice", shouldn't they also understand the brutal reality of what abortion really is? Perhaps the University is embarrassed that these brave students feel they must fill this information gap, which our public education system is failing to address. The hypocrisy and double-speak of those who wish to control free speech is troubling. It's time for Canadian citizens to demand justice, freedom, and equal opportunity — not just for the unborn but for these young adults seeking to exercise their responsibilities in a free society. Let's give them reason to believe that they still live in a democracy.

CHP Canada is the only political party that has shown itself, in all of its policies, willing to stand for our heritage of rights and freedoms. Freedoms are not granted by the Charter; they were granted by the God who established the standards of justice upon which the Charter is based.

Join the battle to retain our heritage of freedom... join CHP Canada¹ today. If you are a member support this battle for our heritage with your energy and your finances.

Footnotes

¹ www.chp.ca/get-involved