

Conversion Therapy Ban Is Back on the Agenda

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Priorities tell you something about a person. What a person does is often more revealing than what a person says. That can also be true for an organization, a political party or a government. When Parliament reconvened on September 23 after its prorogation, it launched with a Throne Speech full of unaffordable, pie-in-the-sky promises. This is undoubtedly why the NDP has committed to supporting the scandal-saddled Liberals for now and the foreseeable future. They're getting everything they've ever dreamed of and more; how could they possibly vote against it? Actually, this is nothing new. Although the federal NDP has never formed government, their nipping at the heels of the Liberals has resulted in policy after leftist policy being passed into legislation over the past four decades.

Case in point: on October 1, just 8 days after Parliament reassembled, Justice Minister David Lametti tabled legislation banning "conversion therapy".¹ Now known as C-6,² the new bill is actually a re-tabling of the bill put forward last March and which had become null and void upon prorogation. The early move by the Liberals to put this legislation back on the agenda is a clear signal of their intention to push it through. This is NDP-style legislation that the Liberals have decided is in their best interests, postponing, at least for a time, a non-confidence vote.

Across the country, left-leaning city councils have already passed similar bans for their cities. For some of those councillors, this is an intentional framing of the conversation designed to support and promote the ever-expanding LGBTQ agenda. For others, it may be a lack of knowledge or understanding. They have heard the Liberal talking points and have accepted the premise that "conversion therapy causes harm to society..." Those words are found in the Whereas section of Justice Minister Lametti's bill. Yet, even now, after all the discussion that has taken place over the past few months, there is no clear definition of conversion therapy.

What is "conversion therapy"? The promoters of C-6 use—as a straw-man—an assortment of archaic and long-discredited practices that we all agree have no place in modern therapeutic counselling. They lump them together with any counselling that does not conform to "progressive" ideas about sexuality. The overarching intent of this bill is clearly to prevent or hinder any efforts to encourage or assist a gender-dysphoric person from ever returning to a lifestyle or self-perception consistent with his or her biological sex.

Proponents of the legislation claim that it will not hinder parents, counsellors, or pastors and other faith leaders from discussing gender issues with children or adults. Where have we heard these kinds of promises before? Oh yes, when same-sex marriage legislation was passed in 2005, we were assured by the NDP and their Liberal colleagues that it would not be something forced on pastors and people of faith. Tell that to Kevin Kisilowsky, the Manitoba marriage commissioner who lost his licence in 2006 for refusing to perform same-sex weddings.³ It will no doubt be the same for people of faith and parents who care about the choices their children are making—or being led to make—in regard to their gender expression.

We need only look to the plight of the BC father who was recently stripped of his parental right to counsel his daughter and who was even ordered not to speak to her about her proposed sex change. He was denied his right as a parent to protect his 14-year-old daughter from undergoing irreversible damage from gender re-assignment chemicals or surgery.⁴

The left operates like a ratchet. They gain some ground and some attention for a cause. They succeed in getting a new law passed or a change made to an existing law. Then they find a poster child, an exception to the law. They find a judge who is willing to stretch the Charter to create a new supposed right . . . or wrong. Then they start all over again. What they call compromise only works in one direction. Like the action of a python swallowing its prey, the peristaltic movement continues until they have achieved their purpose. Their societal goals—that once seemed unattainable, even laughable—gradually become the new normal.

While the actions of the Liberals and the NDP are not entirely surprising, the reaction of the new Conservative Leader, Erin O'Toole,⁵ continues to disappoint. Of course, he can't enthusiastically support C-6 because, after all, it is a Liberal bill and he is the Leader of the Opposition. But when he speaks against it, he first says that he supports the concept of banning conversion therapy. His rejection of the bill is nuanced. He says it fails to protect parents, teachers and faith leaders from criminal prosecution if they are conversing with anyone—their own child or a willing adult—on the topic of gender identity. He's absolutely right but he doesn't go far enough. The LGBTQ activists promoting this bill deny the likelihood of prosecution (unless the person holding the conversation has the intent of persuading the other person to choose to live and identify as a heterosexual). Then it becomes criminal. So it's okay to have a conversation as long as you don't actually present any facts or ideas contrary to the politically-correct notion of "gender fluidity". The little detail in the bill that neither Mr. O'Toole nor the Justice Minister is addressing is the fluidity of judicial interpretation.

Bill C-6 explicitly criminalizes "advertising" the services of a counsellor who could help someone suffering from unwanted same-sex attraction. In previous discussions, it became clear that a pastor (as a paid professional counsellor) who invites a parishioner to come to his office to discuss the gender issue (whether or not the discussion was initiated by the parishioner) could be accused of "advertising" his counselling service. If the pastor were to present traditional Christian moral teaching as a preferable approach, he could be deemed to have committed an offence.

The priorities of this government are concerning. The piecemeal response of the Leader of the Opposition is also concerning. The CHP approach remains the same: a biblical approach to gender and sexuality is best for children and best for society. People will be happier, families will be stronger, society will be healthier if biblical values, parental rights and free speech are protected. Bill C-6 undermines those principles and should be rejected. To join CHP Canada and help us promote sound policies, visit us at www.chp.ca.

Footnotes

¹ globalnews.ca/news/7371451/liberals-lgbtq2-conversion-therapy-bill/

² parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-2/bill/C-6/first-reading

³ nationalpost.com/news/canada/all-marriage-commissioners-must-perform-same-sex-wedding-manitoba-judge-rules

⁴ globalnews.ca/news/6399468/bc-gender-change-court/

⁵ www.cbc.ca/news/politics/politics-conversion-therapy-lametti-liberals-lgbtq-legislation-1.5746433

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