

Marriage In Canada

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT



PETER GOLDRING

The issue of forcibly redefining the traditional meaning of the word marriage to also include same sex unions is disturbing to many who question why the world's dictionaries must be rewritten and why the world's cultural and religious groups must radically alter their core beliefs simply to satisfy a misguided government bent on societal re-engineering.

Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* begins with the preamble "Whereas Canada is founded upon the principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law". The fear of many is that a continuation of recent government actions (or abdication of action) might herald a time when there will be a threat to freedom of religious expression. The passage of Bill C-250 in the last parliamentary session—also known as the "censorship bill"—concerns many that their freedom to speak and to express religious beliefs are at risk. Under this legislation, which received Royal Assent in April of 2004, "hate crimes" include remarks considered to direct hatred based on sexual orientation.



Member of Parliament Peter Goldring speaking in favour of traditional marriage, to a group of concerned Albertans, holds his Alberta marriage license.

Core to traditional religious beliefs is that marriage is recognized as being a union of one man and one woman. Espousing this belief has been characterized as hate-mongering. I was threatened to be reported to the RCMP for hate crimes because of a button I designed and distributed depicting a stick man and a stick woman under the words 'Marriage in Canada'. Certainly some are interpreting Bill C-250 to restrict freedoms of expression of a traditional religious and cultural viewpoint. More recently, Roman Catholic Bishop Henry had the charitable status of his Calgary diocese called into question, based on his written concerns about Catholic politicians and devotion. Censorship on the issue of the traditional definition of marriage is very much one way; it is very real and pervasive.

Canadians are very supportive of our multicultural and multifaceted society, particularly our emphasis on the equality of all individuals. For some, equality of the person is not enough. Some members of the same sex community group also want to formally co-opt the heterosexual group's deeply-held meaning and definition of the traditionally defined word, "marriage", to also describe their own same sex



unions. Same sex unions are already recognized for financial benefit purposes and further legitimized in areas of common law spousal benefits.

Beliefs in the traditional definition of marriage, that being one man and one woman, are held special by the vast majority of Canadians from across all of the world's cultural communities. Respect for minority beliefs has seldom, if ever, required that the majority group abdicate their group's traditional beliefs and permit a minority group's counter-perspective to dominate, simply because they want it.

This insensitive societal re-engineering effort by the Liberals is directed at traditional families who have been further forced into silence by the effects of the "censorship bill"—C-250. Driving the Liberals is a small activist same sex minority that is organized, demanding and intolerant of dissenting views of other people.

As one example of same sex community bullying tactics, Members of Parliament's offices in Edmonton were contacted with fundraising demands to financially support "Gay Pride" activities in Edmonton. Members of Parliament were coerced with suggestions that they would be characterized as "red necks" if they failed to comply. While same sex community leaders, through the media, promised an apology to the Members of Parliament, including myself, the apology never arrived. Later in

Calgary, a Christian assembly was shamefully invaded by hooded persons claiming to be the "Gay Militia", who seriously disrupted the gathering. Sadly, the Liberals do not appreciate that by acquiescing with shabby legislation, militancy by fringe elements is encouraged.



Buttons produced at Peter Goldring's personal expense elicit a threat to have the RCMP charge him for distribution of hate literature

The former Minister of Justice, Martin Cauchon, hollowly stated 'don't worry', religious organizations will have the right to refuse to sanctify the marriages of same sex couples. Previously, Anne McLellan, stated categorically in the House of Commons that 'don't worry', it was not the intention of the Liberal government to ever legally permit same sex marriages. Both have been followed by a new Minister of Justice, Irwin Cotler, who has also stated, 'don't worry', while Anne McLellan flip-flopped on her statement.

Those who do worry remember that it was only four years ago that the Liberals voted resoundingly in favour of a Canadian Alliance motion in the House of Commons defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman. When the matter again came up in the fall of 2003, a motion sponsored by the Canadian Alliance resulted in a tied vote defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman, broken only when the Liberal speaker of the House of Commons chose to vote with the government. If Edmonton Liberal Member of Parliament David Kilgour did not have a "sore back" that day, (he was absent on the day of



the vote), the vote in favour of traditional marriage would have been won. David Kilgour has recently made public his objection to the traditional definition of marriage being extended to same sex relationships. This support, while belated, is welcomed, as opinion continues to grow in favour of traditional marriage and the values it upholds.

Certainly, same sex unions should be publicly recognized, through the use of such concepts as registered domestic partnerships or civil unions or whatever term the same sex community decides, except to use the word "marriage". The word "marriage", after all, is inappropriate to describe a same sex union, other than in its most superficial of referents, that being of a promise of two people to be together for life. Same sex relationships are not equal in outcome to heterosexual marriages. Heterosexual marriages have been sanctified and celebrated by all religious faiths and all cultures on earth for eons to reinforce the union of two people who share their faith communities' hopefulness for the procreation that will be the continuation of mankind. Same sex relationships unfortunately cannot share that same hopefulness and optimism, as they have absolutely no possibility of procreating as nature intended. Same sex couples should, however, develop their very own expression they wish to describe for their special union, but the word "marriage" is a traditional heterosexual description for a union of one man and one woman.

Alberta often takes the legislative lead when the federal Liberal government fiddles constitutionally, while sensitive national issues burn provincially. According to the *British North America Act* of 1867, section 91 gives the provinces

constitutional authority over the solemnization of marriage. Given this constitutional provincial recognition, it should be expected that provinces would have some say, if not the final say, in the definition of marriage. The definition of marriage was well-understood at the time of Confederation in 1867. Today, the great majority of Canadians still support the traditional



Alberta has stepped forward to challenge the Liberal redefinition of traditional marriage. Constitutionally marriage solemnization is a provincial responsibility.

meaning of marriage. A provincial government supporting the historically understood definition of marriage might wish to hold a provincial referendum to add clarity to the issue, with a simple question: "Do you support the definition of the word 'marriage' to be that of the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others? Yes or No?" Canada's constitution also could be amended to entrench the definition of marriage, being one man and one woman, and to thereby put marriage beyond any further attack.

There is a precedent for entrenching definitions of specific groups of people in Canada's Constitution, and marriage certainly involves a "group", albeit of two. The Aboriginal group is defined as being those who are Métis, Indian and Inuit and this definition apparently

does not discriminate against the rights and freedoms of individuals of other cultural heritages. Perhaps it is time to entrench the definition of marriage in the constitution as being a union of one man and one woman, to remove it from the easy access of political flip-floppers. For a constitution that begins with "Whereas Canada is founded upon the principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law" entrenchment of the definition of marriage would seem to be very appropriate. If the Liberals were to have been honest and to have voted the will of their constituents in the last parliamentary vote on the issue, this entrenchment would now not be necessary.

TOWNHALL MEETING ON THE DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE WITH PETER GOLDRING

WHO: PETER GOLDRING, MP FOR EDMONTON EAST

WHERE: Kilkenny Community Hall 14910 72nd St.

WHEN: Wednesday, March 9th, 2005

TIME: 7:00-9:00 PM

COME EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS!

Update: *The Liberals, leading up to Election 2004, published brochures boasting of their success at having same sex unions recognized. Once the election was called, the Martin Liberals purposefully withheld the truth about their previous ongoing support for same sex marriage. Of course, the Liberals flip-flopped back to a call for same sex marriage recognition after the election.*

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This brochure series is intended to highlight special issues that Member of Parliament, Peter Goldring, has been involved in. If you wish to comment, please take a moment to fill out the survey below, write or call to the address above.

Your Opinion Matters...

Question #1 Do you believe that the word "marriage" should remain defined as the union of one man and one woman?

Yes No

Question #2 Do you believe that we should hold a national referendum on the issue of the definition of marriage?

Yes No

Comments: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Postal Code: _____
Telephone: _____



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