

Marriage In Canada



MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT



PETER GOLDRING

The following is an extract of Member of Parliament, Peter Goldring's speech for the House of Commons on Bill C-38, which is a bill intended to redefine the word 'marriage'. This issue is of great concern to many in my riding of Edmonton East and indeed of many across Canada.

The marriage debate taking place in this House, however, has once again allowed a special light to fall on marriage: *its very meaning, its essence.*

Canadians are very supportive of our multicultural society, particularly our emphasis on the equality and rights of all individuals. This issue of redefining traditional marriage to include same-sex couples, however, is not an issue of individual rights, but of collective rights.

Even before the origins of our great nation were being entrenched in history, the true value of marriage has been taken for granted, accepted as an absolute and never been questioned as to its purpose in society.

Historically, marriage was recognized by the common man to be the cornerstone of existence itself. Marriage, as we know it now, became entrenched in society. Religion embraced marriage and the family unit, as a significant sign of God's blessing for the world, and as a unique individual gift from God. Marriage is known and taught throughout the world by the vast majority of the people on earth as both sacrament and vocation.



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

The collective beliefs of the vast majority of Canadians from across all of the world's cultural communities is that the traditional definition of marriage is a union of one man and one woman. This debate has, this time, caused the Canadian people to rally to the defence of natural marriage.

As we speak, coalitions, fraternities, groups, organizations and ethnic communities are forming and growing roots of discontentment on this issue throughout our nation. For one of the few times in the history of Canada, the people of Canada, with a single purpose, are uniting to defend the traditional definition of marriage from what is now recognized as an orches-



trated attack, by this government, on the institution of marriage, the bedrock of Canadian society.

I wish to refer to excerpts of just one of the many new declarations and mission statements made available by citizens who are now rallying to the defence of marriage. This declaration speaks to the heart of issues and the matters at hand and should be recognized by this House as representative of the viewpoint of many citizens of Canada.

It is entitled: "A Declaration on Marriage".

It was made available by: Enshrine Marriage Canada through Robert Picard, President of the Canadian Foundation For Ethical Government.

Marriage and the family are universal

All human beings are born of a mother and begotten by a father. This is a universal biological reality and the common experience of all people. The state supports the institution of marriage because it promotes and protects the father-mother-child relationship as the only natural means of creating and continuing human life and society.

Marriage means one man and one woman

Marriage in Canada has always been defined as "the union of one man and one woman," the

chief function of which is to promote the biological unity of sexual opposites as the basis for family formation.

Marriage is centred on children

Marriage is a child-centred, not an adult-centred, institution.



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

Marriage rests on four conditions

Marriage is a solid social structure resting on four conditions concerning number, gender, age, and incest. We are permitted to marry only one person at a time. They must be someone of the opposite sex. They must not be below a certain age. They must not be a close blood rela-

tive. Those who satisfy all these conditions - each of which safeguards the well being of children, the family, and society - have a right to marry. The removal of any of them threatens the stability of the whole structure.

Marriage is about more than equality

All government policies are intentionally preferential. If we want welfare or veterans' benefits, or childsupport, or marital benefits, we have to qualify for them. Such policies are ordinary forms of distributive justice through which, for its own good, the state discriminates in favour of some people, and some relationships, and not others. So an absence of "equality" is not a good argument against such policies. As same-sex partnerships already receive the same benefits as marriages, however, something else is at issue: an attempt to persuade the



public that such partnerships are of the same value to society as marriages. But they can only be made so by denying the unique contribution of marriage as a biologically unitive, child-centred institution.

or to diminish the father-mother-child relationship in favour of the state-citizen relation, usurps the natural rights and freedoms of the people and constitutes a serious breach of the public trust.

Marriage is about more than love

The fact that two people say they love each other does not, in itself, justify a right to the benefits conferred by the state on married couples. The only justification for a state interest in the privacy of love flows from the connection between the political fact that the state has a fundamental concern for its own survival and well-



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

being, the biological fact that all human beings require someone of the opposite sex to create life, and the social fact that children have a natural claim to the love and support of their own mothers and fathers. Accordingly, the only kind of private love that is of justifiable public concern is the love that occurs between two people who qualify for marriage according to the four conditions listed above.

Marriage belongs to the people

Marriage is an institution that has arisen from long-held beliefs and customs of the people that are prior to all states and all courts, and are essential to the very fabric of society. Any attempt by unelected officials of the courts or by any other branch of government to claim ownership of marriage, to alter it without the support of a significant majority of the people,

It is my belief that the public controversy concerning this issue is so great, that it alone could be the deciding factor on how many citizens of Canada will choose to vote in the next election.

This pivotal issue has brought unity to the people of Canada in recognition that they can no longer take their constitutional freedoms

for granted. Further, it has brought with it the realization that all of us, as citizens of Canada, as human beings, must come to the aid to support our family values and the institution of marriage, and those who choose this definitive child-centred relationship as their lifelong vocation.

Same-sex relationships could be publicly recognized, as could opposite sex, long term economic relationships through the use of such concepts as registered domestic partnerships, or whatever term is decided.

This issue, the re-definition of the word marriage, cuts to the core of so many Canadians' lives that it boggles the imagination that it would even be an issue today. The Liberals, in their quest to reinterpret all things to fit their

myopic vision of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, do so without regard to the sensitivity of Canada's faith, cultural, and collective citizenry.

For those who recognize the importance of how the lessons of history affect the present, I would remind them that the Charlottetown Accord was supported by the government of the day, but failed when all Canadians had the opportunity to have a voice, to have a vote in a national referendum. Even the issue embodied in distinct society recognition for Quebec failed to have Quebecers' (the minority affected) support.

In 1999, the House of Commons held a free vote to support the definition of traditional

marriage as the union of one man and one woman, which carried by a great majority.

Today, shamefully, many members of the House of Commons will not be allowed to vote freely. Members will not be allowed to represent the people who have elected them to be their voice. The Liberals, the Bloc, and the NDP are stacking the deck of true public opinion by forcing members to vote only the party line. Its very evident that the only way true public opinion will be heard is in a national referendum, where once again each and every Canadian will have a voice, a vote. It's clear, Mr. Speaker that it's time we heard from all Canadians on this vital social issue.

Update: Recently the Liberal Party at its national convention passed policy initiatives that call for legalizing drugs (marijuana) and legalizing prostitution. Clearly the Liberals are radically out of step with Canadian values and wishes.

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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: _____
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