

## FREE SPEECH IN CANADA INCREASINGLY DEPENDS ON YOUR POLITICS

By Charles W. Moore

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The Regina Leader-Post says it won't back down from its decision to run a controversial ad quoting passages from the Bible that condemn homosexual behavior. The Leader-Post's general manager, Greg McLean, said that his newspaper champions freedom of the press and freedom of expression, and that Hugh Owens' paid advertisement will be treated no differently than any other ad.

The Bible verses quoted in Owens' July 25 ad were declared "disgusting" by gay and lesbian spokespersons. Owens placed the ad to protest homosexual pressure on Regina's City Council to proclaim Gay and Lesbian Pride Week.

"If the homosexual community has the right to promote this behavior, I have the right to speak to that. It's as simple as that. There are still laws that govern freedom of speech and freedom of religion and conscience," Owens said. Unfortunately, on this issue those Charter-protected freedoms collide head-on with the currently fashionable witch-hunt against alleged "hate-speech."

So, is the Bible "hate literature?" I fully anticipate that the not too distant future will see militant homosexual lobbyists and their fellow travelers mounting an aggressive campaign to have the Bible banned or purged of certain "offensive" passages.

Those would include Genesis 19: 5, Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, Judges 19:22, Romans 1: 26-27, 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10 and 1 Timothy 1: 10, all of which convey absolute opposition to active homosexual behavior with references like "vile passions;" "against nature;" "unrighteous and immoral wrongdoers,... an abomination;" and "perverted."

"It's an issue of freedom of the press and freedom of expression." said the Leader Post's Greg McLean. "We don't want to label ourselves as a newspaper where only these (certain select) groups get freedom of expression or only we (the people who work within the industry) have freedom of expression."

Well said, but unhappily those words don't quite square with the Leader Post rejecting Mr. Owens' original ad submission, which contained statements of his personal opinion on this issue. The ad was only permitted to run once Owens' "freedom of expression" had been purged, leaving just verbatim Biblical quotes.

No doubt the newspaper's enthusiasm for defending free speech was tempered by the fact that a human rights action is pending against Mr. Owens and the Saskatoon StarPhoenix with regard to an ad that did contain Owens' freedom of expression. In May the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission declared that there was "probable cause" to believe The StarPhoenix and Owens had discriminated against gay people by publishing the ad. Donna Scott, chief commissioner, suggested that it is necessary to find a balance between protecting freedom of expression and protecting people from hatred and discrimination based on their sexual orientation.

Well, do we have freedom of speech, expression, and religion in Canada, or not? It's not at all surprising that homosexuals are offended by the Bible's unequivocal condemnation of homosexual behavior (although not, it must be emphasized, of persons who engage in it). Despite concerted attempts at "liberal Christian" revisionism on this issue, for orthodox Christians who consider the Bible infallibly authoritative, homosexual acts are non-negotiably sinful and unacceptable. This is not going to change.

That infuriates the politically correct who seek to stifle any public contradiction of what they have decided is right. Their speech-chilling agenda collides head-on with Canadians' freedom of speech, expression and religion. Rationalistic fudges like "responsible speech" will not do. Either speech is free or it isn't.

Homosexuals certainly enjoy freedom of speech and expression. Gay advocacy journalism pours forth relentlessly from the pages of every major newspaper in Canada. Many cities have caved and declared "Gay Pride Week" complete with parades featuring X-rated displays of public lewdness and explicit anti-religious mockery that would have been a ticket to the slammer or the psychiatric ward even 20 years ago. This sort of thing is profoundly, hurtfully offensive to Christians and to devout adherents of other religions as well, which is presumably its intent, but of course the human rights gestapos' "hate-policing" doesn't extend to anti-Christian speech and expression.

What's next? Forced "re-education?" Last year, after a coalition of two dozen religious groups opposed British Columbia's granting full "spousal rights" to homosexual and lesbian couples, B.C.'s NDP Attorney General responded by suggesting that these people needed some "sensitivity training" and "further education," hinting ominously that the Human Rights Commission might be strengthened even further in order to help them "grow up" and gratefully accept the enlightened vision of the politically correct.

Most churches, shamefully, have laid low and kept silent in these debates. However, at some point, those who call themselves Christian will be obliged to clearly choose which side they are on -- that of the Bible and the 2000 years of Christian tradition that founded and built Western culture, or the side of the revisionist moral relativism and secular humanism that are doing their damndest to tear that culture down and destroy it. Activist courts and human rights commissions are the not-so-thin edge of the wedge in the coming persecution of Christians for their faith, and of anyone else who holds opinions unacceptable to the political-correctness mafia.

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