

Beware leaked government plans on gender ID and 'conversion therapy' ban

Dr. Carys Moseley, Public Policy Researcher
First Published by Christian Concern: June 18th, 2020

Carys Moseley comments on the government's reported plans on gender self-identification and so-called 'conversion therapy'.

Last weekend, The Sunday Times reported¹ that a leaked government report said that the government has decided to scrap its previous plans to allow gender self-identification. Liz Truss, the Minister for Equalities, is due to publish the new plans on sex and gender at the end of July, just before MPs have their summer break. At the same time, a government source said there would be "a total ban on 'gay cure therapies'."

Medical checks to stay

The Sunday Times claims that it knows of the government's new proposals. It speaks of the continuance of so-called 'medical checks', or as it puts it 'medical approval' by doctors for a person to be allowed legal recognition as a member of their chosen gender. The paper says that "at present that means two doctors have to sign off a gender change."

Does this hint that in future only the signature of one doctor will be required? In the current situation we need to be vigilant about any policy that allows only one doctor to sign things off. For example, the Coronavirus Act has temporarily required only one medical certificate rather than two for a deceased person's cremation, in case there aren't enough doctors available.

Ironic crackdown on 'quack' doctors

It is astonishing how it is reported that the government promises a 'crackdown' on 'quack' doctors. The Sunday Times says that this is "to ensure that only reputable medics can give approvals." At present a person who wants to change gender needs two doctors' signatures to be granted a Gender Recognition Certificate by the Gender Recognition Panel. The Panel is part of HM Courts and Tribunals, which is run by the Ministry of Justice.

It makes little sense to distinguish between 'quack doctors' and 'reputable medics' here. For as I have previously explained, all gender reassignment amounts to quack medicine². The plain truth of the matter is that only quack

doctors would ever approve patients for gender recognition in the first place!

Single-sex spaces protected

It is good to see that the government plans to protect single-sex spaces for women, thus sticking to the Equality Act 2010. The nature of these safeguards has yet to be specified. The leaked plans also state that there will be new UK-wide guidelines on lavatory provision. This is important given that access to public toilets has been raised as a problem as lockdowns are eased. As a result, many existing guidelines purporting to advise on the Equality Act 2010 only to undermine it will have to be withdrawn.

The Sunday Times appears to paraphrase the government's own words when it says that this will replace the 'free-for-all' where local authorities set their own rules. Is the government scapegoating local authorities as a whole for an ideology that it was primarily responsible for promoting? Without the grip that transgender activists have had over Whitehall and the NHS since the Gender Recognition Act, their more recent influence on local authorities may not have been so successful.

Why this? Why now?

According to government sources, the Prime Minister's 'aides' nearly announced the policy change on gender during the general election campaign. Having missed that opportunity, they considered doing it again 'before the Coronavirus struck'. This is all rather suspicious.

Why did the government hesitate? Would announcing the plans have caused unwelcome distraction from Brexit during the election period? It is not hard to imagine how plans to publish them in the new year would have been undermined by increasing realisation of the danger of the Coronavirus to society. If the government did not want policy on the latter to eclipse these plans, there are still more questions. Why has there been a leak now, before the lockdowns have been lifted completely across the UK? Is the government using this time for transgender campaigners to craft yet more 'guidelines'? After all, unlike

legislation these would escape parliamentary scrutiny.

Who responded to the consultation?

Many people will recall how only days before the closing date, the Government Equalities Office said there had been over 53,000 responses³ to the Gender Recognition Act consultation. The deadline was then extended. By the new closing date, it reported that this number had more than doubled to over 100,000.

Now government sources have told The Sunday Times that “about 70% of those” supported the plan for gender self-identification. They also said the following:

“the results were skewed by an avalanche of responses generated by trans rights groups.”

It is obvious that this ‘avalanche’ happened at the last minute. The reason that civil servants can tell these results are ‘skewed’ is that public opinion is less favourable to these proposals than the proportion of consultation results would suggest. Did the Government Equalities Office extend the deadline because it knew that the majority of the 53,000 timely responses were opposed to its plans?

‘Conversion therapy’ ban to ‘placate LGBT people’

Clearly transgender campaign groups are very unhappy about this alleged government U-turn. The Sunday Times reported that “Ministers and Boris Johnson’s team” (i.e. Special Advisers) planned instead to do the following:

“to announce a ban on “gay-cure” therapies in an attempt to placate LGBT people.”

This wording is extraordinary and calls for close scrutiny. What is the government up to here?

Who are ‘LGBT people’?

First of all, who exactly is meant by the reference to ‘LGBT people’ here? It would be more accurate to refer to ‘LGBT organisations’, and even then only a very small number. The Women and Equalities Committee in Parliament held an inquiry last year

about Health and Social Care in LGBT Communities⁴. Only a handful of LGBT organisations mentioned or supported a ‘therapy ban’. They included Stonewall⁵, the National LGB&T Partnership⁶ and the Equality Network⁷ in Scotland. Of these, only Stonewall⁸ has ever made a formal statement about the matter on its website.

The bulk of the campaigning has happened behind closed doors, coming from activists within the mental health professional bodies alongside Stonewall, under the umbrella group the Coalition Against Conversion Therapy. In addition, several other government departments and public bodies appear to support a ban. We know this from submissions to the Women and Equalities Committee by the Equality and Human Rights Commission⁹, the Department of Health¹⁰, Public Health England¹¹ and the General Medical Council¹².

Who is being placated?

In light of this we need to step back and get a clearer picture. Stonewall has a very strong grip on the government and is largely responsible for having added transgender campaigning onto LGB campaigning. To what extent does ‘to placate LGBT people’ mean ‘to placate Stonewall’? Perhaps the government is driving a wedge here between Stonewall and the LGB Alliance, formed by disgruntled former member to protect single-sex rights.

Every single news outlet in the UK that carried this story repeated these words in paraphrase and without comment. Undoubtedly this is partly because The Sunday Times has been treated as the leader in breaking transgender news from the government. However, we must ask whether we are not also seeing the true beliefs of many editors at this point. It is interesting that none of the journalists named as writing this story up were known for gay or transgender campaigning. Are journalists getting fed-up of Stonewall? Or is it that it is the Government Equalities Office itself that needs to be placated by the Cabinet at this point?

Is the government covering up its own errors?

The word ‘placate’ can mean ‘to appease’ someone. In politics it means making concessions to a hostile and aggressive foreign power to prevent further escalation of conflict. If the government is proposing a

'conversion therapy' ban as appeasement, it is surely making a huge mistake. Gay activists (now transformed into 'LGBT' activists) will never just accept appeasement. We have already seen this with major policies such as same-sex 'marriage' and parenting.

Ministers must realise that 'conversion therapy' bans function in numerous ways to prevent free speech about problems arising with homosexuality. The very people best placed to speak about these matters are those who have left the gay lifestyle¹³. In other words, individual clients and the counsellors, therapists and pastors who help them. If they are silenced, there can be no first-person accounts of the problems, and so journalists cannot report their words.

Successive governments have implemented policies such as same-sex parenting and 'marriage', and allowed LGB indoctrination in schools and elsewhere, as well as the takeover of public health and the criminal justice system. It makes sense that politicians would not want anybody investigating the effects.

Christian counsellors and ministries to be sacrificed

It should be very clear by now that any plans for a 'conversion therapy' ban would involve sacrificing the already-attenuated freedom of Christian counsellors and ministries¹⁴. For it is they that stand in the way of such a ban – as long as they can speak up.

The members of this Cabinet, and the Prime Minister's 'team', should hang their heads in shame at such abject cowardice in the face of an implacable gay rights lobby.

Time to fight back

Irresponsible politicians will not be able to hide forever. We are starting to see de-transitioners suing the Tavistock for administering puberty-blocking drugs. In future we can expect young people who have undergone gay-affirmative therapy, LGB indoctrination or same-sex parenting, to sue various levels of government as well for the negative outcomes.

-
- ¹ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/boris-johnson-scrap-plan-to-make-gender-change-easier-zs6lqfls0>
 - ² <https://christianconcern.com/comment/time-for-nhs-trusts-to-stop-peddling-transgender-quackery/>
 - ³ <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2018/10/19/gender-recognition-act-consultation-deadline-extended/>
 - ⁴ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201919/cmselect/cmwomeq/94/9402.htm>
 - ⁵ <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women and Equalities/Health and social care and LGBT communities/Written/90992.html>
 - ⁶ <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women and Equalities/Health and social care and LGBT communities/Written/90865.html>
 - ⁷ <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women and Equalities/Health and social care and LGBT communities/Written/90986.html>
 - ⁸ <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/node/81266>
 - ⁹ <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women and Equalities/Health and social care and LGBT communities/Written/91063.html>
 - ¹⁰ <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women and Equalities/Health and social care and LGBT communities/Written/92147.html>
 - ¹¹ <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women and Equalities/Health and social care and LGBT communities/Written/92147.html>
 - ¹² <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women and Equalities/Health and social care and LGBT communities/Written/103507.html>
 - ¹³ <https://iftcc.org/>
 - ¹⁴ <https://christianconcern.com/news/bacp-appeal-panel-rules-on-lesley-pilkington-christian-therapy-case/>