

# SOMETHING THAT'S OURS, AFTER ALL

*John Gleeson*

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The equality tyrants popped up again this week, this time to attack a Defend Marriage rally held on April 17 in a city park in London, Ont.

The rally was organized by a Conservative senator and a Liberal MP -- and, yes, it was staged to protest Bill C-38, the Liberal legislation that would change the definition of marriage to recognize gay and lesbian couples.

Predictably, a group calling itself the London Association for the Elimination of Hate (and funded in part with your tax dollars through Heritage Canada) branded the rally after the fact as a display of discrimination and homophobia -- even though no specific examples of unruly or rabble-rousing behaviour were cited.

No matter. Appealing to London city council to deny future access to public parks to "groups that discriminate," executive director Debbie Lee was quoted in the London Free Press as saying, "I think the city should take a good look at what was promoted and who was hurt."

Lee summed up her view of the rally's participants with this cute catch-all: "Homophobia is as homophobia does."

She also linked the rally to hate groups because white supremacists had apparently posted it on their websites.

Which raised the ire of one London city councillor who'd appeared at the rally. "I was there as Ab Chahbar -- as a citizen," he fumed. "This is not hate. This is my religious point of view. Nobody is going to tell me what to say or not say."

That didn't stop gay rights activist Julie Glaser from demanding London council issue a formal apology because Chahbar and another councillor had attended the rally -- thus proving, according to Glaser, that "we live in an intolerant community."

And there you have it. Defending the traditional definition of marriage is intolerant. It's discrimination. It's homophobia. It "hurts." And it's one small step removed from hate.

Never mind that polls show that up to two-thirds of Canadians don't want the government to change the definition of the most important -- dare we say sacred? -- social construct we have.

No, the equality tyrants know better. And we'd better like it or else.

Just ask Chris Kempling, a soft-spoken guidance counsellor in British Columbia who has been suspended from his job twice now for writing letters to the editor of his local newspaper, opposing same-sex marriage in one case and criticizing the promotion of homosexuality in the public school system in another. The B.C. Court of Appeal is now deliberating on whether teachers in that province have freedom to express their religious beliefs on their own time -- if you can believe that.

Lined up against Kempling is the unholy trinity of the B.C. College of Teachers, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association and the B.C. Public School Employers Association.

In other words, the whole system is trying to bury the guy, whose professional record, for what it's worth, is spotless.

In presenting the college's case last week, Bruce Laughton said the college was well within its authority to suspend a member for speech it had determined was discriminatory -- the "harm" could be inferred, he said. He also dismissed as irrelevant the freedom of religion defence.

The bottom line: somebody might have been "hurt" by Kempling's letters.

And don't think it's just in liberal Ontario and loony B.C. that this is going on -- in Alberta, the supposed heart of conservative Canada, Roman Catholic bishop Fred Henry has been hauled before the province's human rights commission for speaking out too strongly in support of traditional marriage.

No, this is a pan-Canadian epidemic. And to top it off we've got the odious Paul Martin defending same-sex marriage as a Charter right, even though up to two-thirds of Canadians (I have to repeat this) don't want the definition of their institution changed.

Stephen Harper should hammer this one hard, promise to use the notwithstanding clause -- because that's the only way the Canadian people can reverse the judicial rulings that have made same-sex marriage the de facto law of the land.

A majority of Canadians have found something they value after all; something that's theirs, rooted in faith and tradition.

Fight for it, Harper.

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