



LGBT

NEWS BULLETIN

WINTER 2022

Conversion Therapy We Need a Total Ban



While we welcome the Governments proposals to ban the “coercive and abhorrent practice of conversion therapy”- Liz Truss Minister for Women and Equalities. It is clear that the proposals put forward by the Government in the consultation document “Banning Conversion Therapy” represent a watered-down version of the total ban being fast tracked by Canada onto their statute books or the decision taken by the Northern Ireland Assembly, in April 2021 for a full legal ban on conversion therapy.

There are also real concerns within the LGBT community about the Governments motives in bringing forward a set of proposals on banning conversion therapy that do not recognize or accept that in order to protect the fundamental right of all LGBT+ people living in England and Wales to freely determine their own sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity; without fear of abuse, exclusion or isolation, the ban on conversion therapy must extend to the use of such practices by religious and faith groups.

We do not know how many LGBT+ people have been subjected to electric shock therapy and other conversion therapy practices over the many decades when such practices have been condoned and considered as legitimate and ethically acceptable “treatments” by professionals working in our NHS and Mental Health services. We do know that there are many thousands of LGBT+ pensioners alive today



whose lives have been blighted by conversion therapy. There is now clearly a need for a much-needed Public Inquiry into the use of Conversion Therapy and the impact on the Survivors, their partners and families.

Among the many testimonies to the devastating consequences on the lives of survivors of Conversion Therapy are the growing number of Gay men now seeking formal apologies from Birmingham University for the use of electric shock therapy by the Psychology Department in an attempt to “cure them” of their sexual attraction towards members of the same sex. Including the testimony of a 74-year-old Gay man “I would be sat in a room with a projector screen, an electrode was attached to my ankles and wrists. A photograph of a man would appear and if I did not press a button to remove the photograph, I was given an electric shock. When a photograph of a woman appeared on the screen there were no such consequences.

We have further anecdotal testimony from a member of the National Pensioners LGBT Working Group “When I was in my teens, I went to my local Baptist church and became a” Born Again Christian”. The elders of the church said I was very effeminate and should behave as a Male would do. They forcibly prayed over me, threw me in a church pool to wash away my sin of wanting to be a woman. They commanded that the “demons inside of me” be cast out. Do to the fact that I felt strongly and would not back down from changing my gender, I was kicked out of the church. A lot of good friends both from church and school, turned their backs as though I had either gone mad or it was a “phase”. My family disowned me, for 25 years my mum would not speak to me.”

A Historic Day For LGBT+ Veterans



In November LGBT+ armed forces veterans finally won the right to march together and lay their wreath at the Cenotaph; thanks to the armed forces charity "Fighting with Pride".

This was an emotional day not only for the 22 LGBT+ armed forces veterans proudly marching down Whitehall but also for the untold numbers of LGBT+ armed forces personal, many who would have sadly lost their lives in the service of their country, their partners and family.

We also need to remind ourselves that more than twenty years after the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, as late as 1999 homosexuality was defined as "incompatible with military service". In 2000 the European Court of Human Rights scrapped the ban on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people serving in the military. It is estimated that over 20,000 LGBT+ armed service personal was dismissed because of their sexual orientation prior to 2000; many forfeiting medals they had rightfully earned, denied the opportunity of continued service and pension rights.

Craig Jones and Caroline Page, Joint C.E.O. of the charity Fighting with Pride said "Today, LGBT+ veterans are finally beginning their journey back to the military family. We welcome the Governments commitment to investigate the long-term impact on being dismissed from our Armed Forces, particularly in regard to the health, housing, and employment of LGBT+ veterans many of whom today still live in poverty and beyond the protection of the Armed Forces Covenant."

Righting the Wrongs of the Past

For over five years the 71-year-old LGBT activist and politician Lord (Michael) Cashman along with the 76-year-old Lord Lexden, has been urging the Government to expand the legislation known as "Turins Law" along with the Disregard and Pardon Scheme; to cover all same sex legislation which would not constitute a criminal offence today.

It is estimated that in the 20 century over 100,000 Gay and Bisexual men were given criminal convictions for consensual same sex activity under laws which have now been abolished. The consequences on the lives those subjected to such historical criminal convictions can only be imagined; the end of any career prospects even the loss of their job, break up of marriages, loss of family, isolation, exclusion and some even taking their own lives.

So, the announcement by Home Secretary Priti Patel that the Government will be supporting an Amendment to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Support Bill which will broaden the criteria to include any repealed or abolished civil or military offence imposed on someone purely for or due to consensual same-sex sexual activity... will be widely supported by LGBT+ activists and all campaigning for LGBT+ Equal Rights under the law.

For More information about the National Pensioners Convention LGBT Working Group, to add your name to our Networking Contact List...if you are an affiliated organization to or Regional/Branch of the NPC and would like to hear more about the work of the LGBT Working Group.

Please get in touch. info@npcuk.org

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