

“HATE SPEECH” BILL THREAT to FREE SPEECH

“And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32

Responsibilities and Rights

The only Biblical restrictions on our freedom of speech in the Ten Commandments are: **“You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain”** and **“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.”** Outside of those prohibitions of blasphemy and slander, we have freedom of speech. **“Do not commit Adultery”** prohibits immorality and pornography in all its forms by upholding the sanctity of marriage. **“You shall not commit Murder”** prohibits incitement to hatred and violence. So outside of these few Biblical restrictions, we have freedom of speech.

To Proclaim Liberty

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.” Isaiah 61:1.

Liberty to the Captives

At the beginning of His earthly ministry, our Lord Jesus Christ quoted this passage from Isaiah: **“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.”** Luke 4:18

Freedom of Speech is a Fruit of the Protestant Reformation

Historically, freedom of speech is a fruit of Christianity. As observed by Carlton Hayes, in *Christianity and Western Civilisation*: **“Wherever Christian ideals have been generally accepted and their practice sincerely attempted, there is a dynamic liberty; and wherever Christianity is being ignored or rejected, persecuted, or chained to the state, there is tyranny.”** **“Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”** 2 Corinthians 3:17

Essential Foundations for Freedom

From the *Dooms* of King Alfred the Great, to *Magna Carta* of 1215, the *Petition of Rights* of 1628 and the *English Bill of Rights* of 1689, political, economic and religious freedom is founded on Freedom of Thought, Freedom of Conscience, Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Speech. **“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”** Galatians 5:13

In a Time of Universal Deceit

However, anti-Christian forces and tyrants always seek to restrict freedom of speech, freedom of religion and therefore also freedom of thought. This is well illustrated in George Orwell’s insightful book, *1984*: **“In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth can become a revolutionary act.”** Free speech is hate speech to those who hate the truth. Truth is truth, even if no one believes it. A lie is a lie, even if everyone believes it!

A Tactic to Silence Dissent

In the past, in the Middle Ages, political leaders could silence dissent by accusing critics of: **“treason!”** Religious leaders, such as the popes, could silence critics and opposition by accusing: **“heresy!”** Today, the modern equivalents of these attempts to silence freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, freedom of religion and freedom of speech, are: **“racist!”**; **“homophobic bigot!”**; **“anti-Semite!”**; **“Islamaphobe!”**; **“Nazi!”**; **“legalist!”**; **“intolerant!”**; **“judgemental!”** or **“sexist!”**

War Against Free Speech

“Hate speech” is what governments call free speech which they do not like. This is a worldwide phenomenon and part of a comprehensive war against God. The war against free speech is a threat to

freedom. It is a threat to Christian schools, missions, ministries, Christian community radio stations, families and individuals.

Rise of Thought Police

Innocent comments such as: *“marriage can only be between a man and a woman”* have been construed as *“hate speech”* in Canada and has been enough for police investigations and criminal charges in parts of the United States, Great Britain and Australia.

Thought Crimes

Quoting Scriptures, such as John 14:6 ***“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’”*** has been condemned as *“intolerant,” “bigoted,” “judgemental”* and *“offensive”, “hate speech!”* Pro-life comments and scientific reality such as: *“life begins at conception”* and *“abortion is murder”* have been condemned as *“hate speech!”* by radical liberals in North America, Europe and Australia.

Where Will This End?

How far can this go? The answer to that is in George Orwell’s *1984*, where Thought Police prosecute *“thought crimes.”* The bias, prejudice and malice being manufactured by secular humanists through Hollywood entertainment, mainstream news media, secular humanist school textbooks and increasingly intolerant political legislation are providing a sinister tool chest, an armoury for anti-Christian intimidation, harassment, prosecution and persecution.

Restrictions on Freedom of Speech will Lead to Prosecutions, Fines and Imprisonments

“Gag rules” and restrictions on free speech are only a prelude for a tsunami of prosecutions, censorship, fines and even, ultimately, imprisonment, for those not willing to sell their soul, violate their conscience and be intimidated into silence. ***“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”*** Galatians 5:1

Confronting Government with Christian Opposition to their Bill

On Wednesday, 15 February 2017, Freedom of Religion South Africa (FORSA) hosted a meeting at His People in Goodwood, Cape Town, to discuss potential threats to religious freedom posed by the *Hate Speech Bill* and the CRL Rights Commission’s proposals to *“regulate religion.”*

Ministry of Injustice

The meeting was attended by ANC, Deputy Minister of Justice, John Jeffery, who addressed the delegates and gave an example of a minister who he claimed had called for the killing of gays!

Due Process of Law or Taking the Law into Your Own Hand

One of the delegates in the meeting challenged him on this and made the distinction between somebody discussing academically what the Law of God may require as far as law and due process of justice goes and someone inciting people to take law into their own hands. There certainly is a big difference between advocating that abortion be recognised as murder and babies protected by law from the violence of abortion by due process of law and some rabble-rouser, or agitator, calling for individuals to take the law into their own hands and murder abortionists!

Shutting Down Debate

Michael Swain, Executive Director of FORSA (Freedom of Religion South Africa) said, *“The Bill’s hate speech provisions have the potential to shut down important dialogue and to entrench a polarisation of viewpoints.”*

Criminalising Free Speech

Member of Parliament, Steve Swart, challenged Mr Jeffery over **the danger of criminalising free speech**. At a time when **our legal system is overwhelmed and not coping with real, serious crimes, such as armed robberies, assaults, murders and rape, is it wise and helpful to swamp the courts even further with time-wasting and money-wasting intrusions into Freedom of speech and**

Freedom of Religion? Mr Jeffery then opinioned that, in the light of the “*wars of religion*”, it was necessary to implement the “*Hate Speech Bill*.”

Death by Government

At this, I stood up and challenged him that is seemed ironic to have a politician talk about “*wars of religion*”, which after all ended over 350 years ago with the Peace of Westphalia 1648. We have just come out of a century where secular humanist states, atheist states, socialist and communist states, have murdered over 190 million of their own citizens. The “*wars of religion*,” which ended so many centuries ago, pale into insignificance compared to the colossal body count of secular states in our own lifetimes. Secular humanism has caused most of the wars and massacres in the 20th century as documented by [*Death by Government*](#), by Professor R.J. Rummel and [*The Black Book of Communism*](#), which documents, from the archives of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, over 100 million of their own citizens killed in peacetime in the name of Atheism, just between 1917 and 1991. All this started with registering churches and restricting freedoms.

Hypocrisy and Failure

The “*Hate Speech*” Bill threatens freedom of speech, restricts freedom of conscience and erodes freedom of religion. Who determines what hate speech is? The ANC government has failed in the last 25 years to deal with “*kill the Boer, kill the farmer*” songs and slogans, which have not only been an incitement to violence, but have actually led to thousands of brutal murders and tortures of South African farmers. Are we to believe that this government is seriously concerned with dealing with genuine hate speech and hate practice such as BLF and EFF espouse daily?

What About Islamic Jihad

Are we to believe that the ANC government really intends to deal with genuine hate speech and incitement to violence, such as is found in many mosques in our country, where *Jihad* is proclaimed and promoted? Are they really going to monitor Friday messages at the mosque?

What About Pornography and Blasphemy?

Are we to accept that pornography is legally protected as free speech? We are told that even blasphemy is considered free speech! But our sermons, publications and postings are now to be examined to see if anything can be construed as “*offensive*” by subjective secularists who have a track record of harassing and prosecuting Christians? Freedom of speech is essential for any free society. Freedom of speech is not negotiable.

An Anti-Christian Agenda

There is a clear anti-Christian bias amongst many in this government and we do not believe that political appointees will be fair, even-handed and objective in determining what constitutes “*hate speech*” and what does not. Thousands of churches have been closed in Cuba and tens of thousands of Christians imprisoned under similar legislation, enacted under Fidel Castro.

An Inadequate Response

Many of the delegates assembled responded to these questions and statements with applause. This seemed to unsettle the Justice Department representative, who stuttered and stammered in trying to formulate a reply, neglecting to address most of the issues raised. Finally, he lamely said: “*I do not think that it is constructive to try and compare **who** was most responsible for deaths in the last century. Let us just agree that **some** people died because of wars of religion.*”

Limiting Freedom

Mr Jeffery claimed that no rights are absolute and all must have “*limitations*”. Whatever happened to being innocent until proven guilty? **Truth does not fear investigation**. Stifling debate and criminalising dissent does not make for a free society. Condemning people without granting them a meaningful opportunity to answer accusations is unjust.

Unconstitutional, Unworkable and Unnecessary

The invasive registration process proposed by the Commission is unconstitutional, unworkable and unnecessary. The proposed regulation of religion recommended by the CRL Commission is also not in keeping with the South African Charter of Religious Rights and Freedoms to which the CRL is a signatory.

Expose Con-Men

Charlatans and con artists who exploit the poor and vulnerable in society need to be exposed and dealt with as false advertising. We must also encourage greater discernment amongst Christians.

Constitutional Freedoms are at Stake

From a constitutional perspective, the CRL's proposed Regulation of Religion in South Africa, if implemented, would violate the Constitutional Rights to Freedom of Religion, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Thought, Freedom of Association and Freedom of Belief and Opinion.

Enforcement of Existing Laws is Needed

Rather than creating new laws, which would place additional burdens on the already strained resources of government, the police and the courts, the state should focus its energy and resources on enforcing existing laws to address the problems identified. FORSA strongly recommended a Code of Conduct to which religious institutions and practitioners should be encouraged to subscribe. However, one needs to find solutions that are practical and constitutionally permissible without infringing on, or eroding, the freedoms of religion, belief, opinion, speech, conscience and association. The history of registering churches and religious practitioners, as in the Soviet Union, Red China and Cuba, show the disastrous and destructive results of interfering with freedom of conscience. ***“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”*** Galatians 5:13

The Rise of the GayGB and the Pink Inquisition

Africa Christian Action recently published the book: [***The Rise of the GayGB and the Pink Inquisition***](#), which documents how the radical LGBT homosexual lobby is jealous for the loyalty and approval of all. No longer satisfied with freedom, or tolerance, they now demand approval, funding and conformity. Some even demand prosecution of dissenting voices. If you think that the homosexual agenda will not affect you, your congregation, or your family, you are wrong. Homosexualists and the Gender Fluidity movement want to transform the very fabric of society. They want to homosexualise the schools and the next generation and they want government funding (that is your taxes) to force this on all. ***“As free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.”*** 1 Peter 2:16

War Against God's Created Order

Satan's plan is to invert reality, where blasphemy and perversion become the new normal, but free speech is criminalised as *“blasphemy”* and *“treason”* to the New World Order. Pornography becomes an essential aspect of *“free speech.”* Abortion becomes the blood sacrifice *sacrament* of the New World Order, replacing the Lord's Supper. Questioning the multicultural interfaith agenda of the New World Order becomes *“treason”* and *“heresy!”* Questioning the secular humanist version of origins through *“billions of years”* of evolution is intolerable. Questioning the secular humanist New World Order version of *“history”* is considered *“subversive.”* Proclaiming and teaching the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and applying the Lordship of Christ to all areas of life, is condemned as *“hate speech”* and *“intolerance.”*

How Should We As Christians Respond?

So, how are we, as Bible-believing Christians, to respond to this war against free speech, criminalising of Christian conscience, prosecution of *“Thought Crimes”* and pervasive pressure to normalise and accept pornography, perversion and blasphemy?

Where the Battle Rages, There the Loyalty of the Soldier is Proved

Nearly 500 years ago, Professor Martin Luther declared: *“If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God's Word, except precisely that point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, then I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing*

Him. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battle front besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point."

Wide Gates to Hell

Professor Luther warned: *"I am much afraid that schools will prove to be wide gates to hell, unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them on the hearts of youth. I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not constantly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt."*

My Conscience is Captive to the Word of God

We, as Bible-believing Evangelical Christians, must respond as Dr. Martin Luther responded at Worms, before the assembled political and ecclesiastical might of Europe, on 18 April 1521: *"Unless I am convinced by Scripture, or by clear reasoning, that I am in error - for popes and councils have often erred and contradicted themselves - I cannot recant, for I am subject to the Scriptures I have quoted. **My conscience is captive to the Word of God.** It is unsafe and dangerous to do anything against one's conscience. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. So help me God. Amen."*

The Price of Principle

Of course, making such bold and Biblical stands comes at a price. Professor John Wycliffe, *"The Morning Star of the Reformation,"* was kicked out of Oxford University because of his bold Bible-teaching and translation of the Scriptures into English.

Truth Conquers

Professor Jan Hus, of Prague University, was excommunicated by the pope and burned at the stake at Constance. However, as Jan Hus was pressed to recant, to save his life, he declared: *"I would not for a chapel full of gold, recede from the Truth... **the Truth stands and is mighty forever.**"* Hus declared that he would prefer to be burned in public than be silenced in private. *"In order that all Christendom might know what I have said in the end."*

To Live is Christ – To Die is Gain

Hus declared that he would gladly seal with his blood the truths that he had taught in his life. *"In the truth of the Gospel I have written, taught and preached; today I will gladly die."*

The Goose and the Swan

Jan Hus made a prophecy as he was about to die. *"My goose is cooked!"* he said. (Hus is the Bohemian word for goose!) *"But a hundred years from now a swan will arise whose voice you will not be able to silence."* Many recognised Professor Martin Luther as that voice, hence the prevalence of swans in Lutheran art and architecture.

"Over My Dead Body!"

Interestingly, a century later, as Martin Luther was being ordained into the priesthood, he was required to lie face down before the altar, in Erfurt Cathedral. Martin Luther was actually lying face down over the tomb of the bishop who had burned Hus at the stake. One could imagine that the bishop, hearing Professor Jan Hus predict that a hundred years later a swan would arise, whose voice the pope would not be able to silence, he may have muttered something along the lines of: *"Over my dead body!"* Indeed, Martin Luther entered the priesthood over that bishop's dead body.

We Must Fear God Alone

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7. Our Lord Jesus Christ told us not to fear man. The fear of man can prove to be a snare and a trap. We should fear God who can destroy both body and soul in hell forever. The fear of God is liberating. Better to fear the one true God than to be enslaved to the fear of the multitude of men.

Deception Brings Bondage –The Truth Sets Free

It is the Truth that sets us free. Deception brings bondage. The Truth brings freedom. We need to notice that those people who claim to be concerned with *“hate speech”*: ***“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption...”*** 2 Peter 2:19

The Worst Hate Crimes

As Christians, we are, of course, against hate, but the *“Hate Speech Bill”* is not designed to silence genuine hate speech. The worst kind of speech is blasphemy against Almighty God, our Creator and Eternal Judge. Libel and slander are real hate speech and yet so much of our entertainment industry vilify the victims and victimise the villains, inverting reality, slandering God's people and demonizing those whom, blaspheming, God hating perverts, hate. ***“Whoever hates his brother is a murderer and you know that no murderer has Eternal Life abiding in him.”*** 1 John 3:15

Christians are Called to Counter Hate with Love

“You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbour and not bear sin because of him.” Leviticus 19:17

“Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.” Proverbs 10:12

“He who says he is in the light and hates his brother, is in darkness until now.” 1 John 2:9

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught that: *“The world... hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.”* John 7:7. Our Lord Jesus declared: *“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.”* John 15:18. The Lord gave a parable how the people of the world would say of God's Son: *“We will not have this Man to reign over us.”* Luke 19:14

Always Be Ready to Give a Defense

The Word of God commands us: *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you...”* 1 Peter 3:15

Back to the Bible for Reformation and Revival

500 Years ago, in 1519, Swiss Reformer, Ulrich Zwingli, dispensed with the Latin mass and began Expository Preaching - teaching from Matthew 1:1, verse by verse, chapter by chapter, through the whole of the New Testament. We need to go back to the Bible for Reformation and Revival.

Conviction and Courage

In the face of intimidation and threats from the world, we need to respond with the courage and conviction of the Protestant Reformers, Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli. Our conscience must be captive to the Word of God. We must stand on the unchangeable Word of Almighty God. We must not be conformed to this world. We must be willing to be different. Stand up for Jesus. Step out in Faith. Speak up and proclaim the Word of God faithfully and accurately. ***“And that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”*** 2 Timothy 2:26

Stand Fast in the Liberty by Which Christ Has Set Us Free

Truth does not fear investigation. You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall set you free. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. ***“For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”*** Romans 8:2

“Because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Romans 8:21

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