



December 19, 2017

ON APOLOGIES AND JUSTICE FOR LGBTQ

**On November 29, 2017,
Prime Minister Trudeau made an
historic announcement.**

Many are celebrating this recognition and apology for historic crimes against sexual orientation and self-identity. If crimes against Indigenous people are any indication, however an apology is the easy part. Settler and mainstream society are big on apologies but the real measure of success is on follow-through. It absolves the conscience of the oppressor by atoning for a wrong. It is not enough.

In nearly half the worlds' nations there are no policies for, and even open rejection, of LGBTQ rights. Many of these are nations with which Canadian transnational corporations do business. Our comrades worldwide are still struggling to varying degree, from chastisement to out and out murder, for being who they are.

Take Saudi Arabia for example. LGBTQ rights are labelled as immoral and indecent there. Crossdressing, same sex relationships and other acts of self-expression invite corporal punishment, public whipping, flogging, and execution. We have to ask ourselves, is an apology at home enough when such horrific things are still happening under a despotic regime that tortures and executes LGBTQ persons?

In the words of academic and co-author of the Canadian War on Queers, Gary Kinsman, who was kind enough to provide postal workers with this analysis, writes:

"The apology, redress announcement, and introduction of the legislation for the expungement of criminal code convictions for consensual same-sex practices, are historical steps. They should have happened decades ago."

"I remember the many people who needed this who have passed away in the long wait. These have only come about because of a long history of queer, Trans and two spirit survival and resistance. This does not come from on high from the goodness of the Liberal government. These are only first steps and there remain major limitations. Not covered in the legislation are such things as the bawdyhouse laws (under with the bath raids, the raid of the Truxx bar and the 1976 pre-Olympics clean up in Montreal and Ottawa)."

"It is also crucial to resist the interpretation of the apology that does not put in question the continuing national security practices of the Canadian state which CUPW has played such an important role in resisting."

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“The goal is not LGBTQ2S+ people being able to serve "Canada" as it exists, but the bringing about of social justice in all its dimensions including national self-determination and land rights for Indigenous peoples, an end to all forms of racism including quite centrally anti-Black racism, and an end to militarism and colonialism.”

He says that we need:

- An end to the blood ban and ending the criminalization of HIV+ people and sex workers;
- Eliminating remaining criminal code provisions and policing practices that discriminate against queer, trans and two-spirit people;
- Ending the violence directed against young queer and trans people, ending the combined forms of oppression that queer, trans and two spirit people face on the basis of class, poverty, race, gender, ability, age, HIV status and so much more.

We honour all those both dead and living for bringing us to this moment. It is only a beginning of a much longer journey. The struggle continues!

In solidarity,



Dave Bleakney
2nd National Vice-President

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