

Knights of Saint Columba

Accrington Council 188

Bulletin No.2- F24

Source Christian Institute

A 74-year-old woman has received an apology from police after she was questioned over online comments about transgenderism.

Margaret Nelson, a retired journalist, continues to blog and tweet about a number of issues, including radical gender ideology.

Suffolk Police probed her about statements pointing out the biological distinctions between the sexes.

Truth

In one post, Mrs Nelson wrote: “Gender’s fashionable nonsense. Sex is real. I’ve no reason to feel ashamed of stating the truth.”

In another, she explained that if a transgender person’s body was examined for medical reasons or a post-mortem examination, “his or her sex would also be obvious to a student or pathologist. “Not the sex that he or she chose to present as, but his or her natal sex; the sex that he or she was born with.”

She added that even when the body has been buried for a very long time, a person’s sex is still identifiable, using DNA or bone structure as “clear proof”.

Free speech

Mrs Nelson said the phone call she received was “the policing of people’s opinions”.

Speaking to The Spectator’s James Kirkup, she said: “The officer said she wanted to talk to me about some of the things that I’d written on Twitter and my blog.

“She said that some of the things that I’d written could have upset or offended transgender people. So could I please stop writing things like that and perhaps I could remove those posts and tweets?

“I asked the officer if she agreed that free speech was important. She said it was. I said that in that case, she’d understand that I wouldn’t be removing the posts or stopping saying the things I think.”

‘Chilling effect’

Kirkup said incidents are becoming more commonplace, and questioned why police forces are behaving this way.

“Are some people or organisations deliberately and vexatiously exploiting some police forces’ stance on this issue to instigate police action against people who say things they do not like?

“Could such police actions exert a chilling effect on the expression of opinion on transgender issues? Isn’t it possible that some people will now think ‘I’d best not say what I think about sex and gender, or the police might get involved’?”

Apology

Suffolk Police later apologised, saying a misjudgement had been made in following up the complaint.

“We accept we made a misjudgement in following up a complaint regarding the blog. As a result of this we will be reviewing our procedures for dealing with such matters. We are sorry for any distress we may have caused in the way this issue was dealt with, and have been in contact with the woman who wrote the blog to apologise.”

Kirkup said the force should be commended for admitting its mistake, but asked: “why on earth

did anyone ever think that this was the right thing to do in the first place?"

Joe and Helen Roberts

In 2005 elderly Christians Joe and Helen Roberts, of Fleetwood in Lancashire, were subjected to 80 minutes of questioning by police officers.

The police were sent to the couple's home after the couple had telephoned the local council to express their disagreement with its 'gay rights' policy. There was never any accusation that the couple had been impolite in their tone.

The two officers, from Lancashire Constabulary, told the Roberts they were responding to a reported "homophobic telephone call". They said the couple were close to committing a 'hate crime' which carried a seven-year prison sentence and were "walking on eggshells".

The Christian Institute supported their legal action against the council and the police, and in December 2006, the couple received an out-of-court settlement and an apology for their treatment.

Bernard Holden MBE JP

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