



# News Release

Wednesday 3 March 2004  
14.00 hrs. For immediate release.

## Ludicrous Legislation

Church Society, at a Council Meeting on 2 March 2004, expressed its profound regret that the bishops of the Church of England who sit in the House of Lords have utterly failed in their duty to uphold the clear teaching of Scripture during the recent debate on the Gender Recognition Bill.

It is particularly distressing to note that three bishops voted against an amendment to the Bill which would have protected the existing legal rights of the clergy. Not only did the bishops fail to resist legislation which flies in the face of the Bible but, through their negligence, have colluded in the passing of legislation which will lead to the legal persecution of Christians who seek to be faithful to the written Word of God.

Church Society reaffirms that our sex is God-given at conception and cannot be changed. Furthermore, Church Society reaffirms that sexual intimacy is only to be enjoyed within a marriage between a biological man and a biological woman.

George Curry, Chairman of Church Society Council, said today:

“This is a ludicrous bill that will criminalize clergy as they go about their pastoral duties. For example, if a curate discovered his vicar was unwittingly about to conduct a marriage ceremony involving a transsexual, the curate would commit a crime if he was to tell his vicar.

Sadly, the bishops are guilty of appalling dereliction of duty in failing to oppose a bill which clearly tries to coerce clergy to compromise or renege on their deeply held religious beliefs.”

Contact: George Curry 0191 273 4680 or 0775 287 2550

Attached, Church Society letter to Prime Minister

*For further information please contact:*

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*Church Society exists to uphold biblical teaching and to promote and defend the character of the Church of England as a reformed and national Church.*

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The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair MP  
10 Downing Street  
London, SW1A 2AA

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2004

Dear Mr. Blair,

I write on behalf of the Church Society to object to Government proposals for transsexuals.

The Church Society Trust has been entrusted with the patronage of 117 livings in most dioceses in England. In collaboration with Bishops and Parish representatives, Church Society Trust seeks to appoint godly men and, once they are licensed, to support them in ensuring the pastoral care of the parish.

The trust considers applications for livings and selects those who, in confession and conduct, uphold traditional Christian teaching. The Gender Recognition Bill will make it a criminal offence for the trustees to discuss one basic issue of character relating to candidates – their true sex.

We consider it immoral for a person to reject their God-given sex. We also believe that church leadership positions should be held by men. (Section 19 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 enshrines this as a right.) The Trust would not wish to appoint a woman who believed she was a man. Nor would we appoint a man who was purporting to live as a woman.

A candidate who is biologically female but has changed her sex in law could deceive the trustees into believing she is a man. She could be appointed to a freehold and, under Church rules, could not be removed from it if the truth about her sex emerged. Even if a trustee did discover a candidate's true sex, the Gender Recognition Bill could criminalise him for disclosing it to other trustees.

I have to say that, as a matter of conscience, I personally would break the law rather than be complicit in deception. But can it really be right for the Government to introduce a law that forces me to lie?

Yours sincerely,

David Phillips  
General Secretary, Church Society