



## Speech by Bev Jackson, of LGB Alliance at Labour Women's Declaration #ExpelMe Rally London, 9th March 2020

First: thank you very much to Labour Women's Declaration for organizing this rally. I'd also like to thank the impromptu choir outside for demonstrating rather graphically that there is something of a misunderstanding here: we are not against trans rights. We are for women's rights and the rights of LGB people.

Everyone in this room – well actually, every single person on the planet – was born from an egg from a female and a sperm from a male. Biological sex is binary, it's immutable, and it's the basis on which women and LGB people worldwide are oppressed.

Sex – not gender. When I moved from London to Amsterdam, I became a professional translator. I deal with language. So I've watched with interest as more and more people have taken to using the word 'gender', partly to avoid the unwanted associations of the word 'sex'. Now this has spun out of control until it reaches everywhere, even influencing children's views of their own bodies, and the lessons they are taught at school. Let's be clear: Sex is biology. Gender is about social stereotypes.

When the candidates for Labour leadership and deputy leadership signed up to a pledge that defamed my organization, LGB Alliance, clearly showing that they knew nothing about us, we were proud to be linked with Woman's Place UK, which is a fantastic organization.

LGB Alliance and Woman's Place UK both insist on the importance of biological sex. And when women's sex-based rights are at issue, lesbian rights are doubly impacted. Women who make love – and make their lives – with other women have always been seen as a threat within patriarchal society. LGB Alliance is an organization that supports the rights of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals to define ourselves as same-sex attracted. Sexual orientation is protected by the Equality Act. More and more gay men and bisexuals are protesting against the insistence on gender identity. But we are a lesbian-led organization, and that is no accident. Because what we're seeing now is the worst attack on lesbian rights in my lifetime. Let me give you a few examples:

- Young women visiting 'lesbian' dating sites report that some 40% of the people who sign up have male bodies.
- There's been an almost 4000% increase in the number of girls going to gender clinics and self-IDing as boys in the UK over the past decade. The government has commissioned research into this huge increase, but says it's not in the public interest to tell us who is carrying it out or what the terms of reference are. Meanwhile, hundreds of young women in their twenties now regret transitioning. You can go online and hear their stories – brave young women like Benji from Canada, like Sinead Watson, and like Keira Bell, who is now challenging the NHS gender clinic in a landmark legal case. They and hundreds like them question why the medical profession went along with transitioning them instead of giving them the care they needed. They were sure they were trans. Now they know they're lesbians.
- And lesbians are no longer welcome within what some people still refer to as the LGBT 'community'. Community! When Lesbians assert their sexual orientation at Pride events, they are jeered at and shouted down by activists. When this happened at Lancaster Pride last year, the activists were praised on Twitter. Who by? By the chair of Stonewall. It's the upside down. Stonewall – that once proud organization, which helped to defeat the infamous Section 28 legislation and helped to achieve same-sex marriage –

Stonewall no longer represents us. It has signed up to gender identity theory. Gender identity theory says that males who 'identify' as women can call themselves lesbians. This is a kind of theft -- stealing our word for ourselves -- and we will not, do not accept it.

We are LGB but we have many allies: straight women and men and trans people too – trans people who are appalled at the attacks on the rights of women and on those of LGB people. When they speak out, they often find themselves caught in crossfire. I'm happy that one of our strongest trans allies will be speaking here today. We value all those who support us in our work.

What is that work? Right now we have four priorities:

Our first priority is to 'Press Pause' on the Gender Recognition Reform Bill in Scotland. The Bill is described as a minor administrative change that will help a small group of people and leave existing rights intact. That is completely false. Please fill in the consultation: there's just one week left! There are guidelines on our website and on the website of For Women Scotland.

Second: We will stop the rollout of Stonewall's 'LGBT-inclusive curriculum' for primary schools. Although schools can choose which curriculum they use, Stonewall's is the only one shown on the DfE website resources page – no sign of the resource produced by the group Transgender Trend, for instance. Stonewall's curriculum focuses on gender identity, and suggests to kids that they may have been born in the wrong body. It does not belong in any classroom.

Third: our battle to end the rule of what we call 'Stonewall Law'. We sent a letter to the EHRC in the autumn, asking for an inquiry into whether Stonewall is in breach of the Equality Act. The EHRC wrote back saying there was nothing to worry about. Funnily enough, this did not reassure us. Our lawyer has now sent the EHRC a killer letter, detailing the damage Stonewall is wreaking across the public and private sectors - with no Parliamentary authority whatsoever. We're expecting the reply next week.

Fourth, we demand a seat at the table everywhere where decisions are made about LGB issues. For example, the government's LGBT advisory panel consists of 12 people – all twelve of whom support self ID. No diversity of thought at all. We are in talks with the Government Equalities Office and have requested a meeting with Liz Truss.

On top of all this, we've been building a brand new organisation. Believe me, it's detailed, boring, tiring but it has to be done. We're applying for charitable status and building an organization to challenge the dominance of those who promote the damaging theory of gender identity.

We're a grassroots organization trying to engage with people who hold different views. And to the Labour candidates who know so little about us, I have two things to say:

- First, stop pretending that there is no conflict between the demands of transactivists, especially self-ID, and the rights of women and LGB people.

- And second, talk to us! Where there are problems and clashes, let us sit down and talk about them. We've been arguing for months now for fact-based, respectful discussions in which we can work towards finding solutions that are fair for everyone: for women, for LGB people, for trans people, and for children. As Kate Harris, co-founder of LGB Alliance, likes to say: "Our door is always open."

Let me close with the words of the late Magdalen Berns: "It is not hate to defend your rights. And it's not hate to speak the truth." So: when we leave here today: let's try to cast off the fear. Let's go out, stand up, and talk in public about sex and gender! Thank you very much.