



Speak Out – LGBTI Members

Anonymous 18-yr-old Economics Major at the Dominica State College

It is time for change. It is obvious that the majority of Dominican populists are in condemnation of “Homosexuality”.

Despite this main view, homosexuality is growing at an unprecedented rate, and we should come to the realization that they do live among us some closer than you think, in your families, your wife, your husband and even your kids.

Now one might wonder; how can this person be gay? She’s not a tomboy, he’s not effeminate! But a person’s behaviour has nothing whatsoever to do with a person’s sexual preference. We are ordinary persons just like our heterosexual counterparts, it is true that some of us are a little more flamboyant than the rest, but then again everyone has the right to expression especially where individuality is concerned.

We play integral roles both in the public and private sectors, we may be the scholars who excel at local educational institution, we may be the ones who keep the business afloat, we may be the ones who care for you at the hospitals, we may be the ones who represent you in court.

We believe that the time has come, for society at large to be sensitive and concerned about our feelings, more so with regards to the high levels of discrimination and violent crimes being perpetuated towards members of our kind.

The discrimination factor is becoming prevalent; gays are denied jobs, vital social services such as police assistance, gay teens fear being tested for HIV out of being the laughing stock of their peers, family, and friends, being treated as social outcast and more shockingly losing their lives.

We deserve respect and to be treated on equal terms. Government officials should seriously look into repealing the anti buggery laws in the constitution so as to provide to us our human rights and privileges. In this change we intend to foster positive relations, and work collaboratively towards driving the economy, we look towards remaining on the island to make our contribution to its development and also helping reduce the instances of the HIV virus.

You may not necessarily agree with our sexual orientation, but the time has come for change.





Speak Out – LGBTI Opponents

Prime Minister and Minister for Information Technology, Finance, and Foreign Affairs Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit

Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit is adamant that buggery laws on the books in Dominica will not be repealed pointing out that he has not heard any ‘compelling’ argument to support such move.

“The government’s position in relation to this matter is stated in law and this matter is still on our books and will remain there for the foreseeable future,” he said on state-owned DBS Radio on Monday. “I don’t think any compelling argument can be made for it to be repealed.”

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Skerrit said his government is willing to meet with the group, since members are citizens of Dominica and they have a right to express their views but stated that repealing the buggery laws is out of the question.

“One has to look at the broader context of this request,” he stated. “As it is now, anybody who wants to engage in whatever activities can do so in the privacy of his home but one should not believe that the government is prepared, or thinking of or wanting to make this a public affair.”

He noted that if the buggery laws are repealed then other laws could also follow suit.

“The point is, it could be buggery today, tomorrow it will be incest and what other law they will want the government to repeal?” the prime minister remarked.

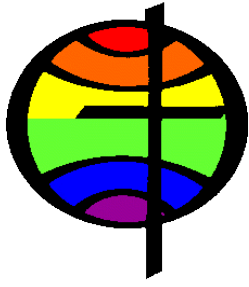
CariMan

Caribbean Male Acton Network (CariMan) Dominica Chapter Inc has declared that it will not support Minority Right Dominica’s (MiriDom) calls to revisit the laws on buggery presently on the books.

President of CariMan Thomas Holmes said the organisation cannot condone nor promote the ideals, mandate, or work plan of any particular group.

Holmes noted further that the buggery laws are part of the island’s laws and CariMan is not in a position to speak on behalf of MiRiDom on that matter.





Speak Out – Religious Leaders

**Catholic Bishop of the Parish of Roseau
The Most Reverend Gabriel Malzaire**

(a) Catholic Bishop of Roseau, His Lordship Gabriel Malzaire, is urging Dominica to stay away from same sex marriages and has reiterated the church's stance on the matter.

"In that area of life, the church has its own position, we cannot change the rules of the scriptures, we cannot change how God sees things," Bishop Malzaire said.

Bishop Malzaire said he cannot tell anyone how to live their lives but his understanding of marriage is that of one between a man and a woman. "I cannot legislate for anybody how they have to live their lives," he noted. "But I have to present it to humanity how the church understands how humanity should live and my understanding of marriage has to happen between a male and a female."

He argued it that is the church's stance and it will remain unchanged. "That is where the church is and that is where the church will be," he said.

(b) Bishop Gabriel Malzaire, the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Dominica, has called for the elimination of criminal penalties for homosexuality and an end to "all forms of violence" against LGBT people.

I wish to make it clear that the Catholic Church in Dominica adheres to the call of the Holy See in its statement to the 63rd session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Declaration of Human Rights, sexual orientation and gender identity, "to condemn all forms of violence against homosexual persons as well as to urge all States to take necessary measures to put an end to all criminal penalties against them. ..."

The Catholic Church maintains that free sexual acts between adult persons must not be treated as crimes to be punished by civil authorities.

Malzaire's statement came in response to a statement by the LGBT rights group Minority Rights Dominica, which complained that the church had not made its position clear about that law.

Malzaire emphasized his support of other Roman Catholic doctrines such as opposition to (though not criminalization of):

- Same-sex marriage.
- Adoption of children by same-sex couples.
- Homosexual activity. Malzaire said that, "according to Holy Scriptures, [it] is among many wrongs which, if not controlled, can lead to spiritual death. Among these are adultery, fornication, orgies, calumny, deep seated hatred, and the like (cf. Rom 13:13; Gal 5:16-21)."
- The use of the phrase "sexual orientation and gender identity." Malzaire said regarding the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, "The Vatican specifically objected to the declaration's use of the term sexual orientation and gender identity, which it said had no established meaning in international law."



Commonwealth of Dominica LGBTI Statistics

Pastor and President of the Dominica Association of Evangelical Churches (DAEC) Bishop Michael Daniel

“The DAEC unequivocally calls upon both the ruling party and the opposition to take a unified stand and oppose the LGBTI agenda to legislate their sinful behaviour,” Daniel said.

“We are in full support of the Prime Minister’s decision that the buggery laws will not be removed from the books now or in the foreseeable future. We agree with that because once you begin to repeal laws then the pressure is going to come to enact new legislation in favour of the LGBTI movement,” he said.

Bishop Daniel said the DAEC is deeply concerned about the recent upsurge in Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transsexual and Intersex persons (LGBTI) discussions in Dominica.

“The subject matter at hand has far reaching implications for current and future generations; hence, the level of seriousness with which the DAEC views the matter,” he said.

He noted that homosexuality is a sin from which anyone can be delivered. “We believe that those who practice sin needs Jesus, and in some cases deliverance,” he said. “We believe that homosexuality is a sin from which one can be delivered. Jesus can redeem humankind from sin, including homosexuality, and set all on a new course to serve God in the beauty of holiness.”

Pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church Randy Rodney

“It doesn’t matter what promise they make that if we don’t decriminalize it that they will stop whatever aid,” he pointed out. “We don’t want that kind of aid because we will get AIDS...”

He pointed out that Dominica needs to be careful where it gets its aid from. “Just like you parents need to be careful where your children get their money from, where your children get their BlackBerry from, where you children get there iPad from,” he stated. “You need to stand and stand against that now ... not just by talk but by action.”

Rodney had high praise for Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, who recently said the laws against buggery will stay on the books for the foreseeable future. Skerrit had said that he did not see any convincing arguments favouring the repealing of the laws.

“I applaud Honourable Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, for his statement that we will never ever repeal those laws,” Rodney stated.

