



Why has Canada purged its pastors from political office?

Despite an impressive political track record clergy are no longer welcome on our nation's ballots

Canada's governments are in love with the word 'tolerance.' It peppers most political screeds and is an indispensable requirement for any speech by Justin Trudeau. However, to quote Hamlet's mother, "The lady doth protest too much, methinks." In my experience, when politicians parade a certain virtue deeper examination often reveals the precise opposite to be true. Case in point: one political hack is on record as saying "evangelical Christians were the worst part of Canadian society." The source of that precious little gem of concentrated bigotry? None other than our [current prime minister Justin Trudeau](#).

Here in Alberta, although you will not find it in any party bylaws, pastors are essentially banned from running for public office. Two elections back, while talking to a scrutineer from

the Alberta Progressive Conservatives he pointed out to me that not a single candidate running for the PCs was clergy. With a very serious expression on his face he finished with, 'That is no accident.'

The reason for my interest was that that election race included the celebrated "Lake of Fire" incident. During the 2012 Alberta election the *Edmonton Journal* sensationalized an old blog post by Alan Hunsberger, Wildrose candidate for Edmonton South West. Hunsberger, a pastor for a church in the nearby town of Tofield, had written:

"You see, you can live the way you were born, and if you die the way you were born then you will suffer the rest of eternity in the lake of fire, hell, a place of eternal suffering."

Note that the above statement essentially condemns all humans (i.e. not just homosexuals) who choose to not change from the 'way they were born.' The *Edmonton Journal*, however, chose to [twist Hunsberger's text](#) to imply he was only condemning gay people. This political hit piece achieved its desired effect: Hunsberger was drummed out of Wildrose and the party went on to suffer a humiliating defeat. The lesson learned by most Alberta conservatives: **never** let another pastor near political office ever again.

Our memories in this regard are notably short. Was not Saint Tommy Douglas of the CCF (ancestor to Canada's NDP) a Baptist minister? And what of Bible Bill Aberhart, Alberta's premier during the Dirty Thirties and World War Two? Or his successor Ernest Manning, Alberta's longest-running premier and setter of the stage for our province's bountiful energy economy? Did Manning not first host a national radio program called "Back to the Bible?" Why were these gents not pilloried out of office for their regrettable clerical connections?

So here we are, with a sociopathic socialist government

bullying independent schools, essentially saying they are free to call themselves Christian just as long as there isn't a trace of their loathsome religion to be found in any school policies. Something tells me this sort of asinine interference would never have happened under an Aberhart, Manning or even a Douglas watch.

So what can we do about this?

For a start, media could begin exposing this secularist bigotry and stop alluding to baseless fears that all Christian politicians are "intolerant." Readers and listeners can do their part too by calling pundits out who continue to engage in such religious slander. The next time the *Journal* or *Herald* chooses to flog a Christian hit piece church-goers throughout the province should get into gear with a flurry of emails, letters, social media posts and subscription cancellations. Henceforward, being able to play the "Christian Card" is a necessary argument in our rhetorical arsenal for us to master. Finally, if you haven't already done so, join a party. This simple act dramatically increases your personal political clout.

The next time a pastor builds up the gumption to run for office we should be ready for the inevitable media onslaught. Christian slander should trump all denominational biases. I look forward to the day when the following can be heard over Alberta dinner tables, "I was not going to vote for Jones. But since they've run that story slamming him as evangelical, now I ***have*** to choose that jackass. Thanks a lot, *Edmonton Journal*."

The same would apply, of course, if Jones was a cradle Catholic and that dinner table was surrounded by Spirit-filled Pentacostals. Regardless of denomination, he (or she) is now our chosen candidate. In this political climate divisionary thinking is holding us back. Jesus died for us all, folks. Let's make Him proud.

One thing is undeniable. Christians are being bullied out of politics. Whether this is a change for the better society will ultimately find out, perhaps sooner than we realize. And Albertans should think carefully before voting again for such needless and unprecedented meddling in societal and economic affairs. Instead of landing in a lake of fire we may very well wind up drowning in a sea of debt.

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