Consultation on the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

Tystiolaeth i'r Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg ar gyfer craffu Cyfnod 1 Bil Plant (Diddymu Amddiffyniad Cosb Resymol) (Cymru)

Evidence submitted to the Children, Young People and Education Committee for Stage 1 scrutiny of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

CADRP-21

About you

Individual

1 The Bill’s general principles

1.1 Do you support the principles of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill?

— No

1.2 Please outline your reasons for your answer to question 1.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

Experience as grandparent and parent suggests that a quick smack is effective in some circumstances. When Child A allowed the pushchair containing Child B to begin careering down a steep slope, with only one parent (myself) in charge, I felt it was highly appropriate once Child B had been saved from being flattened by traffic (a) to shout, (b) to administer a slap to Child A. Both children immediately became serious and better behaved, thus avoiding a safety issue re-occurring.

Hypocrisy leers at me with an administration seeking to outlaw responsible parenting when the said administration oversees and funds the dismemberment and/or poisoning of children before birth and up to birth in certain circumstances. I would see the care for the child in Wales to be something holistic and total, and the blithe way back-street (in private, self-administered) abortions are approved or encouraged suggests that the protection of the children of Wales before birth means absolutely nothing to AMs regarded collectively. Much as I deprecate unnecessary violence against children once they are born, I can’t help entertaining a mental image of children before birth who have been legally destroyed and subjected to the most barbaric violence under the aegis of the Welsh Government. Please be consistent in your care for children, as well as considering the needs and dignity of those who have conceived them and expected to look after them. How many more times are we to
come across women and others so profoundly hurt by an abortion experience? This of course is not unrelated to attitudes to children and parenting in general: it strikes me that an administration that enthusiastically strikes down the new generation before arrival and then suggests a smacking ban really ought to go and learn the first principles. I also suggest a short spell with a really troublesome child in a potentially dangerous situation. Parents may also be anxious to avoid other people’s children being harmed by the action of those they are in charge of. It beggars belief that AMs should be so remote from family life that such a purely theoretical and intolerant idea should have made it so far. I would suggest empirical research or perhaps a long weekend with certain children of our acquaintance.

1.3 Do you think there is a need for legislation to deliver what this Bill is trying to achieve?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

No. Legislation is the wrong approach, and probably far more expensive on the public purse than a well-conducted publicity campaign. The principle should always be not to make things compulsory if it can be helped. Personal freedom is too important an element in human dignity to be bartered away by immature over-legislation by people who have no value on human life during its first 9 months, but prefers to hide under deceptive language to kill not only Welsh children but Irish children too - a long historical tradition, alas, as students of Irish History may find. Neo-colonial killing priorities are not what one would want to find in a Welsh Administration. Compulsion concerning childcare from a body so careless of the lives of children, so cavalier in traumatising those whose children have been dismembered or poisoned, is especially distasteful to the responsible citizen. This responsible citizen retains the right, thank you, to connect the two issues. I have a special repugnance about harming young citizens, particularly if the harm is statutory and unquestioned as at present.

2 The Bill’s implementation

2.1 Do you have any comments about any potential barriers to implementing the Bill?

If no, go to question 3.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

The barrier that I find insurmountable is the very objectionable nature of the proposal. There is something so trendy and unreal and awfully remote Middle-Class about it that I find the proposal stinks. If this consultation means anything and is not - as previous consultations have been - just a cosmetic exercise, I would recommend after my own long years of political experience that you drop the thing, to save the bother of repealing this bit of silliness later on. As I write, I suspect that voices from outside the establishment or established views will simply be ignored. Ignore them you may, but that does not make the process democratic in any semantically truthful way. When democracy means just that, you will be disgusted with a cosmetic exercise gone through (at public expense) just to make someone feel warm and
virtuous inside, whereas in reality it is the symptom of a profound malaise at the heart of our politics. I expect you will simply suppress these "extremist" remarks as irrelevant! I don’t think they are. I resent consultations that don’t consult. A three-year programme with full publicity (the sort you give to positive achievements of the administration, only more so) might be nearer the mark. These hole-in-the-corner things you ignore anyway are simply not good enough.

2.2 Do you think the Bill takes account of these potential barriers?

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

Its very existence proves the point that it neither does nor can.

3 Unintended consequences

3.1 Do you think there are there any unintended consequences arising from the Bill? If no, go to question 4.1

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

Yet another attack on the responsible freedom of the individual may have consequences that none of us would like to see.

4 Financial implications

4.1 Do you have any comments on the financial implications of the Bill (as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum)? If no, go to question 5.1

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

A sheer waste of public money, from the first inception of this hypocritical and unreal scheme to any point it should reach.

5 Other considerations

5.1 Do you have any other points you wish to raise about this Bill?

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

See above. Please stop killing young children first, and then try and tell us off for trying to look after them responsibly. Even without total abolition of official and legalised foeticide, WAG could work much harder to stop my sister, daughter, girlfriend, neighbour, going through the agonies after an officially approved - often promoted - and horrific abortion experience. Please be consistent in caring for the needs of our youngsters - every single one of them. A response is invited.