

National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? Some limits needed on abortion

Last November, when 19-year-old Tory Sam Oosterhoff crushed the opposition to become Ontario's youngest-ever MPP ? despite weeks of attack-dog journalism against him ? you may have thought he would have received at least modest recognition for his impressive record-setting feat.

But no, Oosterhoff is not the sort of candidate worthy of any praise. Why not? He is ? dare we say it? ? a social conservative, apparently a challenge to every ?truth? most journalists hold near and dear to their hearts.

So instead of writing about him becoming our youngest MPP when he showed up at Queen?s Park ? as they would have had he held ?acceptable views? ? journalists swarmed him to attack his conservative views on such taboo topics as homosexuality and abortion. Just last week, when a local Tory organizer challenged Oosterhoff for the nomination of his redistributed riding ? only to lose by a landslide ? the local Stoney Creek News story focussed on that old chestnut that federal Liberals used for years to malign Tories, headlining: ?Oosterhoff says party has no ?secret agenda' if elected in 2018.?

Ah yes, the old scary ?secret agenda,? that tried and true canard which ignores the fact that there is nothing secret about Oosterhoff's views and there is no valid reason why they should be secret.

But the ongoing negative approach to Oosterhoff ? and any other politician who dares to defy the accepted liberal wisdom on social matters (which includes, sadly, current Ontario Tory Leader Patrick Brown) ? is a classic example of a media double standard.

Politicians who favor abortion, for example, are never challenged to explain why it is a good thing that Canada is the only western government with absolutely no abortion restrictions whatsoever. Why is this admirable? Is the death an unborn baby every few minutes in this country not at least worth a question or two about the ethics of it? Apparently not.

Which brings us, of course, to the announcement last week by Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould that Ottawa is editing out so-called ?zombie laws? from the Criminal Code, including the statute dealing with abortion which, the media rushes to tell us, was ?declared unconstitutional? by the Supreme Court about 30 years ago.

Public opinion polls have consistently shown that a majority of Canadians think there should be some limits on abortion ? they don't want it banned, and even most pro-lifers wouldn't restrict victims of rape or incest, for example. Unfortunately, polls also show that there is little public will to change the status quo because so many Canadians believe we actually do have some restrictions on abortion. That's not surprising, since the media rarely tells them anything different.

The aforementioned Supreme Court ruling did shoot down the law as it existed ? the one the federal Liberals (to sustained applause from the media) now want to nuke ? but, contrary to what most journalists and editorialists are reporting, the court did not rule that abortion itself was unconstitutional.

In fact, they said the federal government has a legitimate interest in exercising some abortion controls and suggested they should quickly bring in a new law which satisfied the unconstitutional provisions of the old law.

Indeed, then prime minister Brian Mulroney did come up with a proposed law ? introduced by then attorney-general Kim Campbell ? only to see the law lose by a tie vote in the Senate. Here again, had the Senate been responsible for killing virtually any other legislation, there would have been general outrage in the media. But, hey, killing an abortion law was widely applauded, and ever since ? recognizing that even mentioning the word abortion leads to automatic attempts at kneecapping from the media and assorted liberal elites ? no government has made a move to right what social conservatives feel is a terrible moral lapse in a country which likes to present itself to the world as a beacon of moral rectitude.

A Sunday Star editorial, for example, headlined: ?Good riddance to ?zombie laws'? describes the old ?ban on abortion? ? which, to be accurate, was not a ?ban? at all ? as the ?most frightful zombie law . . . a signal . . . the government, not just the courts, officially recognizes a woman's right to choose.?

Again, the Supreme Court did not suggest an unfettered right to abortion. Quite the contrary. It found government had a duty to rewrite the law as it stood. It's just that governments haven't had the guts to try, knowing the kind of media reception such efforts would invite.

It is ironic that entire world outside of Canada believes in some abortion restrictions, but Canadians who also believe in that universal proposition are dismissed as dangerous radicals.

Or, as the Star put it, ?frightful.? Kind of like Hillary Clinton's ?deplorables? to describe those millions who clearly aren't as enlightened as she.

