

THE NORMALISATION OF DEVIANCE

Air safety organizations are critical of operations where departures from rules and practices are demonstrated to have become the norm, often with devastating consequences. Here is a quote from the *Flight Safety Australia* website.

“Your phone bleeps while you’re driving and you can’t resist the temptation to look—after all it could be important! You check your messages and continue driving without incident. Given the frequency and banality of such occurrences, you might even start to tell yourself it’s perfectly safe regularly to perform the behaviour. The increased practice leads to familiarity and ‘habit’ such that the actions become a normal part of your driving routine.

“The lack of bad outcomes can reinforce the ‘rightness’ of trusting past practices instead of objectively assessing the risk, resulting in cultural drift in which circumstances classified as ‘not okay’ slowly come to be classified as ‘okay’. Diane Vaughan (an American sociologist) coined the term ‘normalisation of deviance’ and defines it as ‘the gradual process through which unacceptable practice or standards becomes acceptable. As the deviant behaviour is repeated without catastrophic results, it becomes the social norm for the organization.’”

Diane Vaughan developed her theory while investigating the *Challenger* disaster on 28th January, 1986. NASA officials had continued to allow space shuttle missions despite a known design flaw in the O-rings in the shuttles’ solid rocket boosters (observed in instances recovered) which compromised the seals’ effectiveness. NASA managers convinced themselves the problem could be fixed without grounding the shuttle fleet, a mentality re-enforced by the successful completion of further missions. As the argot has it, the disaster was just waiting to happen.

It would be hard to find a better term than this phrase with which to categorise the recent plebiscite to allow homosexuals to “marry” and the passage through Australia’s parliament of legislation to legitimize their aberrant behaviour.

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“From the very beginning, and before time began, the eternal Father chose and prepared for his only-begotten Son a Mother in whom the Son of God would become incarnate and from whom, in the blessed fullness of time, he would be born into this world...”

Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*, 8th December 1854, defining the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

How fitting it was that the parliament should pass the legislation on 7th December. For it was on that date in 1965 that the bishops of the Second Vatican Council under the auspices of (nay, aided and abetted, encouraged, by) Pope Paul VI, embraced the error which had been formally condemned by the Church through the mouth of Pope Pius IX in proposition 15 of the *Syllabus of Errors* on 8th December 1864, the date on which, ten years prior, he had defined the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

On 7th December 1965 the bishops of the Catholic Church, led by the reigning Pope, rejected Catholic principle out of deference to secular and Masonic demands. The document they promulgated, *Dignitatis Humanae*, more than any other of the documents of Vatican II has been responsible for the abandonment by the bishops of the Catholic Church of adherence to moral and theological principle, particularly, the principle that God is to be worshipped in the religion and in the Church He founded, and there alone.

Australia's Catholic bishops' lack of leadership, not to say cowardice, in the face of secular opposition over the fifty years that followed has contributed in large measure to the embrace of atheism by the Australian people which is at the heart of the vote and of this "legislation". The bishops abandoned the struggle over the popular vote without firing a shot. Their submission to a House of Representatives Standing Committee considering amendments to Commonwealth marriage legislation was pathetic. There was no mention whatsoever of natural principle or of the Catholic Church's commitment to natural principle. The Catholic position was reduced to the level of opinion, and the Catholic faithful advanced as no more than a voting block.

The "legislation" which the parliament has approved is, of course, not true legislation at all for it breaches natural moral principle. Accordingly, it is not so much law as a species of violence, as St Thomas remarked 750 years ago (*Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 93, a. 3, ad 2). The "legislation" is, moreover, fatuous, for marriage is not of human will—not a reality that originates in the will of man—but of nature, God's handmaid. Parliament might as well have passed a law altering the movement of the tides or the phases of the Moon as one legitimising "homosexual marriage" such is the impossibility of what is essayed. No such reasoning against the attempt was ever put by any Catholic bishop.

Long before parliaments, or the states that give rise to them, came into existence, men and women married. Long after these parliaments and their supporting states have descended into chaos—and homosexuality is once again recognised for the perversion of the natural order that it is—men and women will marry. The right to marry is *not* one that is given them by the state but by God and embodied in their very human nature—male and female, as He created them. Needless to say, the errors in Australian Federal legislation, including the country's Constitution, on this issue have never been addressed by an Australian Catholic bishop.

No man brings himself into existence; no man keeps himself in existence; no man establishes the essence of body and soul he enjoys, the intricacy of their inter-relationship, his body's operations and needs, the circulation of the blood. These things are given him by God through nature which determines them willy nilly—*whether he likes it or not!* Human will in the matter is utterly irrelevant.

Homosexual acts are unnatural because disordered and disordered because unnatural, driven by no imperative but venereal pleasure. Notwithstanding the appeals to "love", and "equality", and the other excuses put forward and adopted by

the garrulous, such as Australia's Prime Minister, as reasonable grounds for their position, the vote on the issue and the "legislation" was not about marriage at all but the legitimizing of sodomy and lesbianism. The arguments invoking "love" and "marriage" were, as Australians in more rational times were wont to say, "a furphy".

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The moral evils that afflict us compare with those that afflicted the German people under the Hitler and National Socialism, and the Russian people under Stalin and Communism. But our situation is far worse. The evils in which those movements engaged were, in large measure, imposed from without. Once freed from the violence of oppression, the German and (later) the Russian people were able to return to a life of comparative dignity. But the evils that afflict us are embraced from within. The life of dignity has been abandoned in favour of degradation willingly embraced.

When a majority votes for some intrinsic evil, such as abortion, contraception or homosexual activity, its members exercise a sort of tyranny over the right-thinking minority. And that minority is bound to resist for the sake of the greater good of their human dignity, indeed for the common good of all.

Our politicians and the media—and both are to blame—have no understanding of the Pandora's box they have opened. They do not understand how they have sown the seeds of civil strife among the Australian people.

Michael Baker

12th December 2017—*Our Lady of Guadalupe*