TRANS PRIDE RALLY (First in Belfast)

JEFF DUDGEON SPEECH

2 JUNE 2018

I bring greetings from the past. In fact two generations past when we were fighting for gay rights, indeed decriminalisation.

At the time two pioneers of trans rights joined us - Michelle O’Callaghan and Wilma Creith and I am returning that support.

Wilma’s story. Werner Heubeck. Sad end.

And ever since success in 1982, I have been involved in a series of lesser reforms including age of consent, equalisation in criminal offences, civil partnership until today equal marriage which I am hoping will get through Westminster.

Transgender and non-binary equality rights are still in their early stages in NI. And they are human rights.

Trans people and non-binary people still do not have the same rights as other people in the UK and Ireland.

Getting a gender recognition certificate is a hard process and the government is fixated on relentless over-prescribed regulations which bring their own troubles not unlike for the Windrush people in England.

Why should transgender people have to go through an expensive and unnecessary process to be recognised for whom they really are?

I conclude with the point I have always made, and that is the hostility towards gays is at its strongest because of a sense of gender betrayal by too many.

That explains the violence that is too often meted out by certain groups. Where trans people are concerned that violence is even more extreme. The murder rate, globally, is colossal.

Gender fluidity – the breaking of the gender norms may well be the key to early progress. Indeed it can be most effective with clothes as people break out of the rigid uniforms we are allocated in colour and style. [The unvarying drabness of blue jeans might go first.]

So on this glorious day with a rally to follow I salute todays trans activists and wish them success in the time to come.

NOTES

For example, some Trans and Non binary people in Northern Ireland are still being affected by the lack of Marriage Equality in Northern Ireland.

Adrianne could not apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) if she was married, or in a civil partnership in Northern Ireland. She could apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate if she was married or in a Civil Partnership if she lived elsewhere in the UK.

It is ridiculous that it still takes at least 2 years to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate in the UK. Getting a gender recognition certificate ensures that a transgender person can apply for jobs and medical treatment, without having to disclose their transgender status, transgender people should not be discriminated against.

There is very little non binary identification recognition available for non binary people in Northern Ireland.

Why should transgender people have to find a specialist in Gender Identity, a doctor and a solicitor to fill in parts of the Gender Recognition application form?

Why are any medical professionals required to apply for a GRC, when Transgender and Non binary individuals should be able to self-identify their own genders?