

# ZONE FREE FROM LGBT (AND FROM DECENCY)

Leopold Kozłowski, composer and multi instrument player who died recently, in the interview with Jacek Cygan once told the story about the fate of the Jews from his home town of Przemyślany during the World War II. The Jews were all rounded up in the local ghetto and transported to the death camps. After this, the signs 'Juden frei' were put on the roads leading to the town.

This was my first thought when I read about the idea from the editors of the 'Gazeta Polska Codziennie' newspaper and weekly, to insert shameful stickers saying 'Zone Free of LGBT' in the issues. The paper is financed by the PiS senator Grzegorz Bierecki and by the state owned companies. Published articles are generously sponsored on the order of the Kaczynski's party.

Similar signals appeared months ago. Many local governments in the South-East of Poland with the ruling party's majority in the councils, were racing to pass the laws to stamp out 'LGBT ideology' from their territories. Even though in truth, this is not an ideology but an acronym referring to the living people – lesbians, gays, bi-sexual persons and transgender persons. In fact, what it served was to prevent the adoption of the resolution introduced in Warsaw. The Council in Warsaw implemented rules on anti-discrimination and introduced sex education in schools. It is incredible to try to forbid educational initiatives against intolerance and violence among school children! How can one explain opposition to raising children's awareness of the dangers of paedophilia? All this regardless of the fact, that this initiative was followed in many other places in Poland. Warsaw is Warsaw, the President of the city is a Civic Platform

politician, who is none the less, being kept at the arm's length by many cowardly top politicians from his own party.

In response to hate provoking speeches by Jarosław Kaczyński and the statements by some bishops of the Catholic Church, the officials and activists of the PiS party together with the clergy, started to make false accusations. Most absurd of which, was scaremongering that sex education in kindergartens will sexualise children and teach them to masturbate. I can't resist wondering in whose interest it is to keep children unaware when they may be abused? Under disguise of protecting the family, the precepts of 'just don't tell anyone' and silent consent are let in through the back door. It is of no importance that the most vulnerable will suffer, those who are unaware of their rights to defend themselves and where to turn for help.

Let's go back to the abominable idea of placing stickers 'Zone Free of LGBT'. We don't know what would be their purpose. Would public



In response to the initiative by 'Gazeta Polska', Campaign Against Homophobia printed their own labels: 'Zone Free from Hate'.

places such as shops, offices, restaurants, trams and buses be marked with these stickers to keep non-heteronormative persons away? As it was during the Nazi occupation were trams, cinemas or cafes were marked? And how would these people be identified? Will there be warrants with photos posted around? Would LGBT persons be forced to wear sew on labels on their clothes as it was during the Nazi occupation with the Star of David or a letter P? Or as in Auschwitz, pink triangle?

And, how can this relate to The Constitution of The Republic of Poland and the international human rights convention, according to which, discrimination against people on the grounds of their sexual orientation is unacceptable? The Constitution, in art. 32 prohibits discrimination of anyone for whatever reasons. The art 47 of The Constitution clearly says, that all citizens have the right to decide on their personal lives. Even more categorical in terms of the human rights and the prohibition of discrimination on any grounds is The European Convention on Human Rights in art 14 of its unified version dated 2010.

The events in Białystok and mass protests against violent attacks on the participants in the local March for Equality, caused ingenuous criticism from the government. The Church said nothing to stop the hate for the non-heterosexual marchers and those who support them in their fight for equal rights.

The court of law had come up to the mark by ruling that the issue of the newspaper with the stickers should be stopped and not be sold. I fear that the paper despite this ruling, will continue to be sold and the judge who had the courage to deliver the ruling in line with the Polish and international laws will be punished.

**By Stefan Kubów**