



Czech President Zeman Calls Transgender People 'Disgusting'

Description

CZECH REP: Czech President Miloš Zeman, commenting on a Hungarian law that bans LGBT material from schools, told a television interview on Sunday that he finds transgender people “disgusting”.

Zeman, who has often espoused views outside the mainstream, was responding to a question about the law Hungary passed earlier this month, which bans the dissemination of content in schools deemed to promote homosexuality and gender change.

“If you undergo a sex-change operation you are basically committing a crime of self-harm,” Zeman told CNN Prima. “Every surgery is a risk and these transgender people to me are disgusting.”

The Hungarian law has been strongly criticised by opposition parties at home, rights groups and by many of Hungary’s fellow European Union members. At an EU summit last week, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte told Hungarian premier Viktor Orbán to respect LGBT rights or leave the bloc.

More than half of the EU’s 27 member states have opposed the law but so far the Czechs have not done so. Zeman said the condemnation amounted to meddling in a country’s internal affairs.

Czech presidents have limited executive powers but Zeman and his predecessors have had a strong influence on public debate. The president has also leaned toward Russia and China and criticized immigration from Muslim countries.

“Viktor Orbán says that he is not against homosexuals, but that he is against the manipulation not only of parents, but also of children in sex education,” Zeman said. “I see no reason to disagree with him,

because I am completely annoyed by the suffragettes, the Me Too movement and Prague Pride. ”

Unless it rows back on the law, Hungary faces a legal challenge at the EU's highest court. Luxembourg Prime Minister Xavier Bettel said Orban should also be subject to an as-yet untested procedure to cut EU funding for those who violate rules.

Orban, who has been Hungary's prime minister since 2010, has become more conservative and combative in promoting what he says are traditional Christian values from what he sees as excessive Western liberalism. Before last week's summit he told reporters the law was aimed at guaranteeing parents' right to decide on their children's sexual education.

(Reporting by Michael Kahn; Editing by Frances Kerry)

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