

Montreal Protesters Defy Face Veil Ban in Solidarity with Muslim Women



Montreal, November 10 (RHC)-- In Montreal, Canada, protesters have begun riding the city's buses and trains wearing traditional Islamic face veils known as niqabs, as well as scarves and other coverings, in solidarity with Muslim women and in defiance of a new law requiring people to show their faces when receiving public services.

Protesters say Quebec's Bill 62 is an Islamophobic law aimed at stigmatizing the province's Muslim minority. An organizer for the protest, Sarah Brand, said: "Even if you believe that the niqab is oppressive in some way and that women are struggling with this, if that really is a problem, cutting them out of public transit and access to education and medical care is simply not the solution."

Supporters of the bill point to similar laws passed in France and say it's aimed at upholding Quebec's secular traditions. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who campaigned in 2015 against former premier Stephen Harper's Islamophobic rhetoric, offered muted criticism of Quebec's niqab ban and said it's "not up to the federal government to challenge the law."

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