

## THE TRAGEDY OF NO-FAULT DIVORCE

By C. Gwendolyn Landolt, National Vice President, REAL Women of Canada

No one seems prepared to discuss or come to grips with the fundamental flaw in Canadian society, created by the 1986 Divorce Act, which provided for no-fault divorce.

The problems this law is creating are overwhelming. Instead of dealing with them, society designs social programs to remedy the problems in our social network created by this legislation. For example, we require increased public support for the growing number of low income single parent families, caused by the high divorce rate; increased support services for adolescents coming from fatherless families where the incidence of troubled teens has increased, especially in regard to violent crimes; government-regulated and enforced financial support guidelines are required to ensure parental support for children in separated/divorced families, etc. These are band-aid solutions to deal with the fall-out from the divorce legislation and they would not be as necessary if we had not brought no-fault divorce to Canada.

Regrettably, even when this legislation was passed over twenty years ago, there was no public discussion at all about its consequences. At that time, REAL Women was only recently established, but we did what we could to try to rally the public against the no-fault divorce legislation. We lobbied the government and individual MP's, distributed press releases, pamphlets, etc. predicting that the legislation would be harmful to society, especially to families. To no avail. Our voice was drowned out by the loud voice of the special interest group of government-funded feminists who lobbied the government to pass the no-fault divorce legislation. Feminists regarded no-fault divorce as an inexpensive, quick solution to release women from the supposedly damaging patriarchal ties of marriage, including abusive husbands and women's economic dependence on men. That is, feminists believed that the sooner women broke away from the harmful effects of marriage and became independent and self-supporting, the better it would be for women. Hence, their demand for the expediency of no-fault divorce.

### 1. Effect of No Fault Divorce on Women

The feminist dreams for no-fault divorce, however, have in some cases proven to be illusory. In fact, it has, in some instances, been highly detrimental to women. This is due to the fact that under this legislation a husband can unilaterally walk away from the marriage for any reason, or no reason at all, leaving his wife and children abandoned. A wife's consent or agreement to the husband's action is irrelevant, even though she is not at fault. She can be easily divorced after living apart for only one year. No questions asked by the court. All too frequently, as well, the abandoned woman and the children of the marriage are left to live in poverty.

#### Single Mothers and Poverty

Although single parenting can be the result of out of wedlock births, it is mainly due to no-fault divorce and this often leads to poverty for women and children. According to Statistics Canada, 1996 (Statistics Canada Catalogue 13-207), the incidence of low income for families with children was as follows:

Husband and Wife Families	Lone Parent Families-Female	Lone Parent Families- Male
11.8%	60.8%	31.3%

That is, children in lone-parent families headed by women were almost five times more likely to be in a low-income situation than children in two-parent families. The low-income rate for female lone-parent families has been consistently above 50% since the 1980s when no-fault divorce came into effect. The answer to the problem of child poverty, then, is to strengthen marriage and keep families together, rather than making divorce easier to obtain.

Another difficulty that can arise as a result of the husband arbitrarily abandoning the marriage, due to the ease of doing so under the no-fault legislation, is his failure to carry out his parental role in regard to the abandoned children of that marriage. Children deserve parents who are fully engaged in their parental responsibilities. Unfortunately, however, the 1986 Divorce Act makes no provision to address the failure of a parent to exercise his parental role by requesting joint access to his children and his connection to them on a regular basis. This can leave the mother, as the sole caretaker of their children, with physical fatigue, increased stress and overwhelming feelings of solitude and frustration.

Before the implementation of the Federal Child Support Guidelines, courts were able to take into account the level of access by the father when setting amounts of child support. There is not, however, any authority within the present Guidelines to deviate from the table amounts based solely on a failure to exercise adequate access by the father. Even if there were penalties included in the Guidelines and Divorce Act, it still does not address the underlying problem of a less than ideal parent who is permitted under the law to walk away, without consequences, from his marital and parental responsibilities.

## 2. Effect of No-Fault Divorce on Men

Most divorces in Canada today are initiated by women, who generally do have a considerable advantage over men in no-fault divorce. That is, regardless of their behaviour, women can leave their husbands under the no-fault divorce legislation for any reason, taking their children with them and not experience any unfortunate consequences for doing so. They can also obtain sole access to the marital home, due to the machinery set up by the divorce industry to remove the male partner from the marital home.

That is, under our legal system, a husband can be arrested for domestic violence and child abuse, even if no evidence is presented. A custody order can be put in place, plus child support payments ordered, again, with no evidence required – only the accusations of the wife. The latter frequently use these accusations of domestic violence and child abuse for a tactical advantage in the struggle over custody and support. This tactical advantage, however, is not readily available to men, given the fact that domestic violence is instigated, it is presumed, incorrectly, by police and the justice system, by the male who, therefore, should be removed from the home. Studies indicate, however, that women instigate domestic violence as frequently as men (see REALity, March April 2008, “Violence Against Women – A Money Grabber”, page 1). The latter findings, however, are not helpful to men who are regularly removed from the home, regardless of the fact they may not be responsible for the domestic violence of which they have been accused.

Fathers also suffer from no-fault divorce because custody, in most cases, is awarded to the mother. According to Statistic Canada, in 2004, custody was awarded to the wife in 45% of cases, while fathers were awarded custody only in 8.1% of cases; in 46.5% of the cases, custody was awarded to the mother and father jointly. Under a joint custody arrangement, however, children do not necessarily spend equal amounts of their time with each parent, but rather one parent retains physical custody, mostly the mother, and the father is left often with relatively infrequent access rights, despite the fact both parties are supposed to have equal say over the child’s upbringing.

The federal financial support guidelines, enforced by the courts, do not make a father’s life any easier either since they make no provision for the mother refusing the father access to the children. That is, even court-ordered access is not always honoured by the mother if she decides she wants the father out of her children’s lives. Court ordered access is seldom enforced because of financial considerations, often leaving the father to pay for support of children he seldom, if ever, sees.

## 3. Effect of No-fault Divorce on Children

Sadly, the lack of a father’s constant presence and influence is one of the reasons that many children in broken families fail to thrive on nearly every scale, educationally, emotionally and socially.

In fact, despite a deserted spouse’s bad experience, emotionally or financially caused by a divorce - the real losers in

no-fault divorce are the children. Single parenting is not good for children. Marriage serves the all-important function of providing the ideal conditions for rearing children. Within an intact family, children learn their gender identity and roles. Hundreds of studies have been done on children – studies in psychology, the social sciences, economics, and medicine, and in every way, scientists have determined that children do far better when their parents are married and stay married, than in any other social arrangement.

By contrast, every major social pathology that can trouble a child happens more often when his or her parents are not married. The majority of these children experience more poverty and are much more likely to experience physical and mental ill health, including depression and suicide. Boys from fatherless households are two to three times more likely to end up in jail as adults. Children of single parents do not do as well in school and are more likely to drop out of school. They are also less likely to attend university.

Empirical research on family and crime strongly suggests that crime is closely linked to family structure, which is the strongest predictor of urban violence. In this regard, it is deeply troubling that, although total crime rates have dropped in Canada, the rate of serious crime and particularly serious violent crime by youths, such as homicide and armed robbery, has increased in the past five (5) years. The 2007 youth homicide rate was 3 per 100,000 youths, only slightly down from 2006 (3.3), the highest ever measured. This was a jump from 1.7 per 100,000 youth population in 2002 to 3.3 in 2006, a whopping 94% increase. Much of this violent crime by youths is caused by children raised by a single parent – mainly mothers. This is not to suggest that mothers (the majority of single parent families are headed by mothers) are not responsible or not capable of caring for their children. Rather, they are overwhelmed by their difficulties in balancing paid employment with family responsibilities while living on a reduced income. Exhaustion and lack of home time frequently precludes the disciplining of children, and loss of control over them to their peers and youth gangs.

#### Sexual Abuse of Children

Sexual abuse increases with single parenthood because homes without a strong loving father figure are susceptible to sexual predators. The latter target lonely, emotionally empty and hurting boys and girls who seek affirmation and attention from a father figure. This makes children from homes headed by mothers especially vulnerable to predators. This explains the disturbing Statistics Canada figures on child sex abuse. According to the Statistics Canada Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics in 2006, 4,995 sexual assaults on children (male and female) were caused by friends and acquaintances (not related to the child), boyfriends of the mother and stepfathers being the most common male perpetrators. That is, there are 1000 more incidences of sexual abuse by friends and acquaintances than by family members (defined as spouse, ex-spouse, parent, sibling and extended family). Statistics Canada in the same report also stated that 16,976 physical assaults on children and youth were caused by friend/acquaintances versus 8,109 by family members.

Similar statistics occur in Britain, where young people are five times more likely to have experienced physical abuse and emotional maltreatment if they grew up in a lone-parent family, compared with children in two-birth-parent families.

#### What has to be Done About No-Fault Divorce

No divorce is a happy experience. It is sad to end a marriage, no matter what the circumstances. However, the promise that no-fault divorce would reduce the acrimony of divorce without increasing the divorce rate has proven to be false. For example, before any amendments were made to the Divorce Act in the 1960's, the number of divorces was 11,343 (54.8 per 100,000 population). In 2003, the number of divorces was 70,828 (223.7 per 100,000 population). Additionally, much of the conflict between spouses has simply been transferred from the divorce proceedings themselves to child custody and support disputes – the winners being the lawyers and accountants.

It is the responsibility of society to protect vulnerable children from harm because of divorce. Divorce, which is readily available and easy to obtain, permits marriage partners to walk away during the rough patches, which are

inevitable in every marriage. Society should stress not so much Perfect Love, but Perfect Determination to stick the marriage out and make it work. In this regard, the state cannot persuade husbands and wives to accept the high obligation of marital chastity and commitment. However, it can extract a price from those who break the marriage contract by failing to meet lawful marital and parental obligations. It can, not from malice, but rather to protect the children, enforce restraints on the partners by making the marriage contract more difficult to break by enforcing legal controls and adopting stricter divorce laws.

#### Reform of the Divorce Act

One possible reform of the Divorce Act to curtail the number of divorces is to replace the “no-fault” aspect with a system of “mutual consent” divorce, under which it can only be expedited and available if both spouses want the divorce and are able to negotiate mutually agreeable arrangements regarding child custody and the division of assets and finances.

Without such a mutual agreement, “fault” should be reinstated in divorce legislation in order to prevent the easy walk-away from marriage currently permitted.

Please write to:

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper  
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The Honourable Robert Nicholson  
Minister of Justice  
105 East Block House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Fax: 613 992-7910

Your MP  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Please request that the no-fault divorce law be amended.

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Sampson, Robert J., (1995). “Unemployment and Imbalanced Sex Ratios: Race Specific Consequences for Family Structure and Crime.” In M.B. Tucker and C. Mitchell-Kernan (eds.). *The Decline in Marriage Among African Americans*. New York: Russell Sage. p. 249.

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## **EQUAL PARENTING WHY IT MATTERS**

By Kris Titus, Co-President, Canadian Equal Parenting Council, [www.f4jcanada.ca](http://www.f4jcanada.ca), [www.canadianepc.com](http://www.canadianepc.com)

When I was a little girl, I wanted to be the first female Prime Minister of Canada. Why not? Raised in a single parent matriarchal home, I was told on a daily basis that women were equal to men. "We can do anything men can do, if not better. You don't need a man." Unfortunately for me, Kim Campbell beat me to it. I was still a high school student when she became the first female Prime Minister.

So, imagine my shock, when as a young mother, I divorced and realized that there was one area where women had MORE equal rights than men. Parenting. I was told by six lawyers that I had all the rights when it came to the children. I could have sole custody. I could sit back and focus on myself and my children because my husband would have to pay me for the privilege of seeing his children four days a month. I imagine that it is a very heady moment for some women when they are provided with this information: a moment of omnipotence; a moment of retribution.

My former husband and I decided on Joint Custody, however, I've come to learn that regardless of what the law says, in the eyes of the courts, joint custody is really only sole custody with visitation. "But this is the way it is," I was told.

That is, with joint custody, children do not necessarily spend equal amounts of their time with each parent. Rather, one parent retains physical custody, usually the mother, and the father is left behind, often with relatively infrequent access rights, despite the fact both parties are supposed to have equal say about the child's upbringing.

After several months on my own with the children, I was beginning to feel far more like I was living in the underworld, rather than a specially ordained place called single motherhood. My young children were suffering and needed their father far more than four days a month. They were no longer being raised by their mother and father, but by their mother and a string of babysitters and daycare providers that would be better off caring for inanimate objects. Something had to change.

I became involved with another man who was a great dad: one of the new generation of men we women have been seeking. Caring, involved in raising his children, a good provider, does dishes AND takes out the trash. He, unfortunately, went from being the primary caregiver to his own children to a non-custodial, four-day a month dad. And the pattern repeats. His children displayed all the same suffering and symptoms my own children did.

I began to do research and in December of 1998, the government issued a report on child custody and access called "For the Sake of the Children." The Joint Senate/House Committee made 48 recommendations, and one was for a presumption of shared parenting – a recommendation that has yet to be implemented.

My ex-spouse and I decided, however, that a shared parenting arrangement would be much better for our own children. We made a joint motion to the court to vary our custody order to 50:50 time with equal rights and responsibilities and no child support. The judge, in his infinite wisdom, said no. We applied again. Our order was granted and for the past ten years I have had what I now call equal parenting. Our children live alternate weeks with each of us. The children benefit from not only both of their parents being continuously involved, but from their extended family, as well. Our children are being raised by the people who love and protect them most.

As an adult, I realize how much I lost out on being raised in a single parent home and I have a different view on equality as a result. If I gain my rights by taking away someone else's, I have gained nothing at all. It is now my life's

work to fight for equal parenting as a presumption in law. The welfare of women, men and children demands it and 80% of the population agrees.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Since 1988, REAL Women of BC has lobbied the provincial government to make someone responsible for the children who have been removed from their parents and are now in the care of Ministry of Children and Family Development and its social workers.

In 1988 when I first lobbied MCFD on the issue of child protection legislation, the abusing parent remained in the home and the child was taken from it. The child lost the love, support, and presence of the non-abusing parent, as well as siblings, neighbourhood friends, school, basically everything that was familiar to him or her. Why not remove the adult instead? The Ministry also did not have any policy in trying to place the child with relatives, if possible, or trying to keep the child in the same neighbourhood with friends. The child was punished when he or she was the victim.

In February 2009, an interesting ruling came from the BC Supreme Court which I hoped would improve the situation.

In the case of 6 year-old B.M. vs. his father, R.M. and the province of BC, Madam Justice Janice Dillon ruled that the father, a convicted child abuser, was liable to pay damages for assault and negligence, and the Crown was liable to pay damages for its negligence in regard to the child. The Supreme Court of BC judge concluded "the social workers failed to meet the applicable standard of care in this case when it was decided to remove the supervision provision" which had been set over the father in all contact with his infant son in 2002. The government could be liable to pay up to (\$6 million in damages for the future care of this child, which will be decided at the second stage of the trial beginning November 18th, 2009.

You can read the judgement, released February 23rd, 2009 at <http://www.courts.gov.bc.ca/jdb-txt/SC/09/02/2009BCSC0214.htm>. (When I first read about this case I was elated because, I thought, finally the court has ruled that someone must be held responsible. However, upon careful study, this case is different from most apprehensions because B.M., the infant, had been initially declared a child in need of protection from R.M. who was already criminally convicted of assault on a different child. The criminal conviction provided clear indication of imminent risk in a situation where such clarity is rare. The judge stated, "It is not known why the social worker removed the (supervision) (requirement or how the decision was made.)"

In the case of all the other children who are apprehended from the care of their parents and families and placed in the care of the government, more work must be done to protect children removed from their parents to ensure the children's safety.

This is just one example of why our organization exists. Each of us must do our part to make our land a better place to live for future generations. Everyone can do something. If you can't write letters, perhaps you can renew your membership and donate to our legal fund for the prostitution case in which we are intervening. Would you consider becoming a regular donor to REAL Women of Canada? This would allow us to continue to work on your behalf. Thank you for your support, partnership, letters, and prayers.

Till next time!  
Laurie Geschke

## **MORE FEMINIST NONSENSE PAID BY THE TAXPAYERS – IDRC**

By C. Gwendolyn Landolt, National Vice President, REAL Women of Canada

The Conservative Party formed the federal government in January, 2006. Since then, it has made a few stabs at halting the hemorrhage of taxpayers' money from falling into feminist hands, such as curtailing the funding of the Status of Women (see REALity, March/April 2008). However, at the same time, the Conservative government has turned a blind eye to many other areas where feminists are wallowing in our tax dollars.

Especially in these difficult economic times, the government should curtail its spending on the promotion of feminist ideology, which is not supported by the majority of Canadian taxpayers.

One feminist recipient of taxpayer money is the relatively unknown International Development Research Centre (IDRC) which was headed for nine years by feminist Maureen O'Neil, who was at one time, the co-coordinator of the federal Status of Women. The newly appointed chairperson (appointed in 2008) of IDRC is feminist Barbara McDougall, the former Minister Responsible for the Status of Women under then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. During her sojourn as Minister for the Status of Women, Ms. McDougall made no secret of her dislike of REAL Women and all we stood for. She made it clear that, as Minister, she represented only feminist women in Canada.

What is the IRDC?

The IDRC is a Crown corporation created by Parliament in 1970 by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Its purpose is to generate and apply new (technological) knowledge to meet the challenges of international development on a global basis. This sounds impressive, but this agency has, in actual fact, succumbed to feminist ideology. Its gender unit was described in 2006 by one of its bureaucrats as concerned with "gender roles and power in sexual relationships, ... access to choice – contraception and safe abortion, ...regulation of new reproductive technologies, ...women's rights in marriage, including polygamous unions, ... safe sex, ... " (see REALity, Professional feminists face changing times, May/June 2006). A committee, chaired by the controversial Maurice Strong, laid the foundation for IDRC. Its Board of Governors is comprised of 11 Canadians and 21 non-Canadians. For 2007-2008, IDRC received \$149.7 million dollars in funding from the Parliament of Canada, up from \$107.9 million in 2003-2004, and another increase is planned, to \$163.3 million, for 2008-2009.

IDRC's Many Research Projects

According to its latest annual report, IDRC now has a large environmental research component, researching such areas as learning to adapt to climate change in Africa, how to assess climate risk, and how men and women experience climate change differently. As part of its transitional justice interests, IDRC is "helping societies to heal from past abuses." IDRC funds research on "links between education, science and technology, for example, in each country's legal and political framework, and investment and financial systems, among other factors." It also funds online clinics to fight HIV/AIDS. IDRC has funded 14 studies in 12 countries on barriers that prevent African women from using information and communications technologies. The list of health, technological and environmental research is very long.

Gender and the Current Economic Crisis

In keeping with its feminist mind-set, on November 27, 2008, IDRC hosted a talk "Gender and the current economic crisis" when IDRC headquarters in Ottawa, given by feminist sociologist Dr. Diane Elson from the University of Essex, United Kingdom. She was introduced as an economist specializing in feminist analysis.

About 100 attended the talk: government bureaucrats, such as those from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), various NGO's, political science students, professional feminists and one NDP Member of Parliament, Irene Mathysen, (London-Fanshawe). The object of Dr. Elson's feminist analysis and advice was the current economic

crisis and how it can be used to advance “gender equality” on a global scale and in Canada. True, there will be much suffering, she claims, “women’s organizations will be squeezed.” But this crisis should be used as an opportunity to make feminist demands and transform society, she insisted.

Dr. Elson described the current feminist dilemma: As more people lose employment she fears an increase in “unpaid work”, which she describes as “all the things that women do for their families without pay”, such as shopping, food preparation, home based health care. She stated, “we should not just be trying to turn women into men, but also make men more like women”.

She divided the labour force in two groups: the rich (men) and the poor (women). The “women’s movement” should insist on job creation in equal numbers for women when men lose their jobs during the economic crisis, she stated, and not allow “male breadwinner bias.” Women should insist that they get jobs building roads and infrastructure to meet feminist gender equality expectations. Funding should be provided to collect data to measure the impact of the economic crisis on women, she insisted. Statistics Canada may not be able to do this, so women’s organizations may be able to, as she stated, “mobilize the information.” She predicted more violence in the community, lower male life expectancy, alcohol abuse, premature death; these are the hidden costs that should be monitored.

Feminists obviously never let the facts stand in the way of their revolution. Statistics Canada has monitored and found that for November 2008, employment fell by 40,000 for men aged 25 and over, and changed little for women. Since the start of the year (2008), increases in employment for women, aged 25 and over, have been twice that of men (Labour Force Survey, November 2008).

Notwithstanding these facts, Dr. Elson called for socialization not privatization, as she feared that the “deep-seated male bread winner bias” may persist. She called for a Green New Deal and a Care New Deal, not just a Fiscal New Deal, but also a Gender Equitable New Deal.

#### Typical Feminist Mind-Set

It is typical of feminist economists to call for a building of social infrastructure, not just a material infrastructure because of a “social infrastructure deficit”. Dr. Elson opposed open markets and set exchange rates, and endorsed regulation of banks and capital flows, and a reconstruction of “an international financial system from the ground.” She called for “an extension of the social control of banking and direction of credit.”

Dr. Elson also praised the work Canada’s House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women is doing on Gender Budgeting and will bring this to the United Kingdom. (See “Dishonesty and Duplicity by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women”, REALity January/February 2008). Dr. Elson repeated that circumstances have changed and the recession, as bad as it will be, should be an opportunity to press for “changes that we would (like to see.” The pressure of the recession “may force new [feminist] thinking.” Heaven help us!

#### NDP and PSAC: Bosom Buddies Want More

According to Irene Mathysen, NDP MP for London-Fanshaw, who attended the talk, the economic crisis will mean “hell for women.” She was hosting a panel of women’s groups that afternoon to discuss the issue. Needless to say, REAL Women was not invited.

Among the attendees was Andrée Côté, former president of the feminist NAWL (National Association of Women and the Law) whose core funding and research was cut by the Conservative government in September, 2006. She is currently the Director of Legislation and Law Reform for PSAC (Public Service Alliance of Canada). She has also been a spokesperson for the Pay Equity Network, comprised of the National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL), Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF), National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada (NOIVMW), and the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) (see REALity Jan/Feb. 2009) and various labour organizations. Côté was Human Rights Officer for PSAC during their Call to Action against Bill



C-484, a bill to make violence against the fetus a separate crime. She was Research Associate at the Centre for Feminist Research, York University, and also represented the pro-abortion, same-sex marriage World March of Women in 2000 (see REALity May/June 2000).

Feminists never fade away; they just change positions at taxpayer expense or, in this case, on compulsory union dues to promote their feminist views.

At the IDRC meeting, Coté forcefully called for mobilization during the financial crisis: “We want 50% of infrastructure spending, we want women training to do those jobs, ...building roads. We want employment equity. If you’re going to spend, you’ve got to spend respecting constitutional equality rights. And it’s got to come to us damn quick [she who received \$290,000 from the Status of Women for her then organization NAWL in September 2006]. Creating jobs for infrastructure is great ... child care is a great way to create jobs.” For this, she received a prolonged hug from NDP MP Irene Mathyssen.

#### Utopian Feminist Dreams in Jeopardy

It was obvious that the sisterhood in unions and the feminist movement will use the financial crisis to promote big spending socialist demands, as evidenced by their presence and comments at the meeting tax-supported IDRC hosted. Our governments cannot allow this to happen. With increased economic pressures on Canadians and calls for a return to reasonable tax rates for families and businesses, governments cannot continue the luxury of tax funded global feminist experimentation. Globe hopping feminists interfering with other cultures and politicized feminist research in developing countries should be high on the list for cutbacks. This would be very popular among Canadians struggling to raise their families in trying economic circumstances. This Conservative government must cut feminist funding now.

Please write to:

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Minister of State (Science & Technology)  
Minister Responsible for IDRC  
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Your MP  
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### **ALL WELCOME! THE WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES V AMSTERDAM, AUGUST 10-12, 2009**

The lovely, sparkling city of Amsterdam has been chosen as the site of the World Congress of Families V (“WCF V”) to be held August 10-12, 2009.

Amsterdam is a beautiful city of canals and exquisite, unique buildings dating from many centuries ago.

Amsterdam also has a wide variety of restaurants, featuring international cuisine and at least 40 widely known museums, plus numerous galleries featuring classical and modern art and design. One will never be bored in Amsterdam while attending WCF V!

#### Purpose of WCF

The purpose of this WCF conference in Amsterdam and its predecessors (Prague, the Czech Republic, 1997; Geneva, Switzerland, 1999; Mexico City, 2004; and Warsaw, Poland, in 2007) is to arrange a jamboree or celebration focused on the natural family in order to promote the development of a common worldview, networking and the sharing of new ideas and strategies to encourage and support the traditional family.

The Congress seeks to shift the public debate from the perception that the family is an obstacle to development to that of the family as the source of social renewal and stability in the 21st century. The Congress also promotes religion as a source of humane values and cultural progress, rather than as a “threat to progress” as is being currently pushed by political entities, such as the UN and the European Union.

The WCF is the key leadership organization for pro-family supporters, non-governmental organizations (NGO’s), scholars and political figures around the world.

#### Why Amsterdam?

Amsterdam is the heart of left wing or liberal advocacy prevalent in Europe today. The World Congress of Families is to face, head-on, this secular liberal mind-set by arguing for and promoting a better way to organize society – namely, to rely on the natural family as the foundation of society.

Additionally, the Dutch government today includes at least some Christian members in its Cabinet. There is also a growing pro-life/family movement in the Netherlands. These developments have made it the right time to hold the Congress in the capital of the Netherlands. Our presence will serve as an antidote to the destructive policies of same-sex marriage, abortion, common-law relationships, euthanasia etc., which are causing deterioration of society in Europe.

#### What You Need to Know About the Congress

Date: August 10-12, 2009

Place: Amsterdam at the RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre (two miles from the historic city centre, and 6.5 miles from Amsterdam’s Airport Schiphol).

Cost: \$249.00 US (individual)

\$299.00 US (family)

\$59.00 US (student)

Website: [www.worldcongress.org](http://www.worldcongress.org).

Registration: In the first column on the left on the web site, under World Congresses, click on 2009 Amsterdam, and at the end of the fourth line of the header, click on Registration

Hotels and Travel Service: RAI Hotel & Travel Service (RHTS) is a department within Amsterdam RAI Convention Centre, which is in charge of arranging hotel accommodation (and travel services) in and around Amsterdam during conventions taking place at the convention center. RHTS staff members have excellent knowledge of the hotels in and around Amsterdam, as well as extensive experience in reserving hotel accommodations.

Travel services can also be arranged via RHTS, offering flights to/from Amsterdam, excursions in Amsterdam, airport transfers to and from the hotels, as well as car rental. All of these services can be booked online at [www.rai.nl/hotelservice](http://www.rai.nl/hotelservice). RAI is operating with major three, four, and five-star properties and also collaborates with

budget hotels in the two and three-star categories. For World Congress of Families V participants, RHTS can also allocate triple and quadruple rooms for delegates staying at these hotels.

Please attend the World Congress of Families V. It will be a memorable experience!

### **THE UNBORN CHILD TOTALLY ABANDONED**

The notorious Ontario Court of Appeal which brought us same-sex marriage and the legalization of the 3-parent families (two lesbians and a sperm donor as the legal parents of a child) has continued its journey to turn society into a secular wasteland.

Its most recent effort occurred in October 2008, when it concluded that an obstetrician does not owe any duty of care or responsibility for any harm caused to an unborn child in the course of treating that child's mother.

In Paxton v Ramji, a physician treated a woman for serious acne with the drug Accutane. This drug was known to carry with it a significant risk of causing birth defects if used by a pregnant woman. Doctors prescribing Accutane were expected to ensure that Accutane was not given to any patients capable of having children. However, the woman's husband had undergone a vasectomy four years previously. Unfortunately, approximately one month after receiving her prescription for Accutane, her husband's vasectomy failed, and she became pregnant. Her child was born with severe disabilities as a result of exposure in utero to the drug Accutane.

The Ontario Court of Appeal concluded that a doctor or any health care provider does not owe a duty of care to an unborn child when the physician or health provider is treating the mother as a patient. It based its conclusion on the fact that the treating physician would be caught in an impossible conflict of interest between the best interests of the mother and the best interests of her unborn child when deciding whether to prescribe certain medications.

Prior to this case, there was no question that a physician owed a duty of care to an unborn child, if born alive. That is, the physician was regarded as having two patients, with one common goal: the safe delivery of a healthy baby. This, apparently, is no longer the case, thanks to the Ontario Court of Appeal.

It will be interesting to see whether courts in other jurisdictions apply this decision and also whether it will be followed by the Supreme Court of Canada.

In the meantime, the unborn child is of little consequence - to be killed or harmed at the discretion of the mother and/or her physician. It's Canada's tragedy and Canada's humiliation to allow such a heartless and morally bankrupt situation.

### **LIFE OF ALLAN MORSE**

REAL Women was saddened by the death in January of Allan Ross Morse, beloved husband of REAL Women member and former president (1988-1990), Lettie Morse. He and Lettie had just celebrated their 63rd Wedding Anniversary.

Allan was a great help to REAL Women early on, remaining a generous contributor until his death. When Lettie organized the Capital Region chapter of REAL Women in the early eighties, he kept up the data list, helped with arranging meetings, and was always there to do all the required jobs, from setting up the PA system to putting out the literature, setting up chairs and putting them away again.

When Lettie became the National President and editor of the newsletter, Reality, he critiqued her articles, kept up the national database and was the "mail man", sending out the thousands of copies of Reality personally by mail.

From 1969, when abortion became legal, both Allan and Lettie were active in the pro-life movement. When REAL Women was founded, Lettie found their REAL niche in this pro-life, pro-family movement. From then on they were both active in this movement and Allan was a generous contributor till the end.

Besides being involved in pro-life and pro-family work, Allan was also active in O.D.A.M.R. (Ontario District Association for the Mentally Retarded), the Cursillo Movement, Days of Awareness for prisoners and other community organizations.

His exuberant personality, his flair for story telling, his sense of humour, and love of life made him an interesting companion and friend. His courtesy and friendliness did much to endear him. He will be much missed by Lettie and their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, as well as many relatives and friends.

Because REAL Women is a pro-family organization, we always warmly welcome men as associate members. There has never been a greater friend to REAL Women than Al Morse. Rest In Peace.

Bless him – and Lettie and family.

## **THE CRTC MUST GO**

By C. Gwendolyn Landolt, National Vice President, REAL Women of Canada

What are we going to do about the CRTC? The only reasonable response to this question is to get rid of it.

The CRTC was established back in 1968 when broadcasting was conducted in a completely different world. Its mandate, according to its enabling legislation, was to maintain a balance of views in the broadcasting industry in the public's interest among cultural, social and economic differences. At that time, there were only a few channels available, and the CRTC's purpose was to ensure Canadian content, as well as this balance of views on matters of public concern. The CRTC has obviously failed in this regard – big time – since all we have heard over the airwaves on both radio and TV, has, over the years, been the mindlessly repetitive views of the left in Canada. Rarely has a conservative voice been heard in the broadcasting industry. On the few occasions that it was heard, it was mainly to disparage or ridicule that perspective.

Today, however, with the presence of a 500-channel universe, brought about by digital technology, the CRTC is no longer able to control channel capacity. Despite the impossibility of this, the CRTC is still trying to control what the public sees or hears. For example:

### **Pornography**

In August 2008, the CRTC approved a Canadian pay-television pornography channel called "Northern Peaks" on the basis that 50% of its pornographic content would be produced in Canada. This implies that the Canadian content was one of the main reasons for the approval of the channel.

In justifying its decision, the CRTC argued that it never takes a moral perspective on the content of the applications it reviews. This explanation was not credible because the CRTC has been noticeably reluctant over the years to license any religious broadcasting. Even today, there are only two or three religious broadcasting channels permitted in Canada.

The result of this CRTC decision to accept the application for the pornography channel is that it is now increasing the amount of pornography that is already taking place in that lucrative and unregulated industry in Canada. The latter is mostly located in Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto. Northern Peaks, based in Alberta, is no slouch either since, to date, it has produced 200 pornographic films or "titles". It is now enthusiastically shooting more videos and reality

television shows using equally enthusiastic homegrown Canadian pornographic actors.

This is scarcely of benefit to society, and only benefits the owners, operators and porn actors in this greatly enhanced porn industry. The latter will be making an easy profit: the more disreputable the content, the greater the profit.

#### Homosexual Channel "Out TV"

The CRTC is incensed that the homosexual/lesbian Channel "Out TV" has been allegedly placed at an unfair advantage by Shaw Cable. Apparently, the latter cable company has not been "marketing" the homosexual/lesbian channel as the CRTC thinks it should, resulting in "Out TV" (formerly known as Pride Television) failing to achieve the audience on Shaw cable that it has on other cable systems. "Out TV" on Shaw Cable reaches merely 0.49% of its subscribers, in comparison to other cable systems on which "Out TV" has 18.11% of Telus subscribers, 15.9% of Bell ExpressVu, 9.27% of Cogeco subscribers, 7% of (Rogers) Systems and 6.61% of Star Choice subscribers.

Shaw Cable has placed "Out TV" adjacent to channels carrying such adult programming as Playboy and Hustler, and includes these channels in an "all in one" pack. Significantly, Shaw Cable provides its customers with the choice of opting out of a specific channel such as the homosexual channel in their All-in-One package. The option may well be a reasonable explanation for Shaw's low subscribership of "Out TV" in that it actually allows its customers to opt out of "Out TV's" package deal. In short, it may not be the marketing of "Out TV" by Shaw that is contributing to its low membership on Shaw Cable, but rather the fact that Shaw daringly gives the subscribers a discretion as to whether they want to view the controversial channel. We'll never know whether this actually is the case, as the CRTC hasn't bothered to investigate the matter. It just accepted the complaint from "Out TV" about Shaw Cable's low number of subscribers to "Out TV," and concluded the cable company wasn't pushing the homosexual/lesbian channel enough.

#### Response by Shaw Cable

Shaw Cable responded by agreeing to market OUT TV as equitably as it does other channels and raise the profile of it on the dial by including free previews of it for new digital customers.

The CRTC at this time doesn't have the authority to fine Shaw or to make it reimburse OUT TV for its supposed financial losses. Unless the CRTC is controlled, however, this will no doubt be added to CRTC's arsenal so as to control what the public is allowed to view and hear.

#### The Internet

In 1999, before the digital 500-channel universe descended on the broadcasting world, the CRTC decided it would not become involved with regulating broadcasting services over the Internet.

The CRTC confirmed this again in 2003 when it concluded that transmission of television or radio programming over the Internet would not be regulated by it.

That was then. The CRTC has now changed its mind about regulating the traffic on the Internet. With high-speed residential Internet access, increased accessibility to audio, radio, professionally produced high-quality broadcasting content, and the emergence of new advertising revenues business models, the CRTC held public hearings in February 2009 to determine whether it should assume jurisdiction over the internet.

Members of the TV production industry, including actors, artists and directors, want the CRTC to regulate the internet in order to impose Canadian content which would then provide more opportunities for them. Internet servers think this is a very bad idea because under this scenario, they will be asked to surrender 3% of their subscriber revenue – roughly \$100 million – to cover the cost of producing this Canadian content material for the Internet. Needless to say, this 3% tax on the Internet provider's revenue will be passed on to its customers by way of our monthly bills.

The unionized culture industry with its actors equity systems which regularly dictates who is to act professionally and who isn't, will then become a part of the Internet. This will change it profoundly since the Internet has always prized itself on its free flow of ideas and expressions. No more will this be a part of the Internet, if the CRTC controls its content.

Why bother with the public hearings when we already know that the CRTC will decide to regulate the Internet? Why not regulate, if it gives the CRTC greatly enhanced power and influence plus the requirement for the dreaded Canadian content, which no one wants to view anyway?

For far too long, appointed and well paid members of the CRTC have been deciding, unilaterally, what is good and bad for Canadian viewers, telling us what is acceptable to watch. It has no right to do this. The CRTC is an unaccountable group of bureaucrats who are attempting to retain power over a broadcasting system, which has long outgrown its control and which Canadians do not want.

Please write to Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Heritage Minister James Moore, requesting that the CRTC, which was established in 1968 and no longer has a useful role, be disbanded.

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