

OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY! REAL WOMEN OF CANADA

The year 2008 marks the 25th anniversary of REAL Women. It has been a 25-year journey of ups and downs, twists and turns. It has been a very fulfilling journey, and one which has brought us much joy and satisfaction in working to preserve the traditional family: a journey with no regrets.

Our Early Years

The first years were the most difficult ones for us. The media were shocked that there were women who actually did not blindly fall in line with contemporary feminist thought and policies and even dared to publicly raise their objections to them. The media coverage given to REAL Women in those days heaped scorn on us in the belief that we would skulk away, hide, and then quickly disappear. Little did they know or understand the tenacity of REAL Women!

Feminists Alarmed

The feminists, however, were, in this regard at least, a little more astute, and realized that REAL Women could and would undermine their supremacy as their single “voice” of Canadian women. They were alarmed. Consequently, the feminists, especially the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), serving at that time as the umbrella group for all feminist organizations in Canada, made an all-out effort to destroy REAL Women’s credibility, not only in the media, but also within the government.

We know this because, under the Access to Information Act, REAL Women uncovered documentation in the 1980’s revealing, for example, that the public servants in the Women’s Programme Secretary of State, several Cabinet Ministers, Robert Rabinovitch Under-Secretary of State (who has just retired as President of the CBC, 1999-2007), the Assistant Under-Secretary Richard Dicerni (currently Deputy Minister of Industry Canada) held private meetings with the President of NAC, Chaviva Hosek (who subsequently became Director of Social Policy under Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chretien). They agreed to shut REAL Women out of any recognition and to continue a policy to recognize and fund only feminist groups. (REAL Women has retained these documents for historical purposes).

When REAL Women attended a meeting, in July 1985, at which Robert Rabinovitch was in attendance, he made the extraordinary statement that he had never met anyone like the members of REAL Women before. It is too bad that Mr. Rabinovitch didn’t get out of Ottawa more often. Perhaps if he had acquainted himself with the real aspirations of the Canadian public, his term at the CBC would not have been quite so disastrous, as only 7% of the viewing public watch CBC TV - and that is mainly because of the hockey!

At a subsequent meeting at which Mr. Dicerni was in attendance, as well as the then Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Conservative David Crombie, REAL Women was shown by Mr. Crombie a document, which was headed “Talking Points.” This document was written by the officials in the Secretary of State and contained statements about REAL Women. We subsequently requested a copy of this document under the Access to Information Act. However, Mr. Dicerni denied to the Information Officer that such a document ever existed. So much for the integrity of Mr. Dicerni!

Naively, we had initially assumed that the Women’s Programme represented all Canadian women, not just those with a feminist philosophy. However, we soon were concerned that there was a deliberate attempt by the government to exclude REAL Women. This became especially apparent when the Women’s Programme would not even forward to us the application forms for funding. In order to ascertain whether this was the case, we notified the Programme that a group of women were organizing a new group called “The National Association of Lesbian Mothers” and we requested application forms to apply for a grant. Within a week, the requisite application forms, together with the funding guidelines, were forwarded to us. Included with these documents was a hand-written note, dated March 1, 1984,

signed by Tamara Levine, National Projects Officer, in which she warmly welcomed us, and stated: "Please feel free to contact me once you have had a chance to look over the material and I will be pleased to discuss projected ideas with your group".

We knew then that REAL Women would never be accepted by the feminists and other officials in the Women's Programme. In the following years, despite all our efforts, successive governments (including Prime Minister Mulroney's so-called conservative government) continued to fund feminist groups only, with only a few minor grants to REAL Women. It was government funding that sustained feminist groups over the years. They did not represent Canadian women, nor do they now. This funding enabled feminists to dominate and influence government policies - a situation not duplicated anywhere else in the world.

It was not until September 2006 that the Conservative government, under Prime Minister Harper, had the courage and integrity to call a halt to this insanity of using taxpayers' money to fund the advocacy (lobbying) and "research" efforts of the exclusive special interest group of feminists.

Present Position of Status of Women Funding

The Secretary of State's Women's Programme is still continuing under the Harper Conservative government, supposedly to provide only "hands-on" assistance to women's groups in matters of violence against women and to assist women in projects to promote their economic and social well-being. We do not know what this means exactly - especially under the current Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, feminist Josée Verner. We are keeping a close eye on this agency and will include our analysis of it in a future issue of REALity. (See article "Tax Money Still Tossed Around" .)

However, none of this bigotry and discrimination against us ever deterred us. Throughout all the turmoil over the years with the media, the government and the courts (the latter by way of our numerous court interventions) REAL Women has continued to focus on its objectives. We have never swerved from our determination to protect the natural family of mother, father and children. We've simply tossed off the criticism and have single-mindedly pursued our journey, undeterred by the hurdles thrown in our path.

REAL Women of Canada Today

REAL Women has achieved both credibility and respect from the media, government and the courts. Whenever the voice of respected conservatives is required, REAL Women has been a prominent choice. Part of the acceptance of REAL Women is due to the excellent quality of our research. Because of this, we frequently receive requests from the media and the public on current issues, and our web site serves as a popular resource.

REAL Women has been extremely busy over the past 25 years. (The "A" for Active in our acronym was well chosen!) We have made approximately 250 appearances before government committees - both federal and provincial. We have become a Non-Government Organization (NGO) with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. In that capacity, we have attended 35 UN meetings in New York, Cairo, Beijing, Lisbon, Rome, Istanbul and Geneva, always promoting the pro-life, pro-family cause.

REAL Women has made many TV and radio appearances and has written literally hundreds of articles on issues relating to the family. We have also spoken to a great many groups over the years and have produced a video on REAL Women, which discusses many of our activities and concerns.

REAL Women has intervened in the Canadian courts in approximately 20 different legal court challenges - again, always promoting the family and traditional values. Although the courts have certainly not followed our well-researched arguments, our factums have been a challenge for them to navigate around! The courts can never claim that they didn't hear "the other side."

All of this work has been done mostly by volunteers without government financial support. REAL Women's existence, then, is actually a tribute to our wonderful members who have sustained us over the years - financially, morally, and prayerfully. Without you, we would not exist. Our deepest and humblest thanks to all of you who have so valiantly stood by our side during this on-going struggle. Our 25th anniversary, therefore, is really a tribute to each of you.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN THE HISTORY OF REAL WOMEN OF CANADA

We could think of no better explanation of REAL Women's beginnings, our objectives (which remain the same today, only the volume of work has greatly increased!), and our choice of name, than that which was expressed in one of our very first issues of REALity. We have reprinted this part of REALity from the fall of 1984 issue. We think you will find it interesting!

Reprint from Fall 1984 REALity Issue Brief Biographical Sketch of REAL Women of Canada

We began as a core group of four like-minded, concerned women (Patricia Loughran, Jean Murphy, Gwen Landolt and Grace Petrusek) meeting informally in February 1983 and grew to a dozen other interested women to form a steering committee. Our vision for REAL Women was to create a new path, a new identity for Canadian women, who were pro-family and pro-life in today's society.

We wanted to establish an alternative voice for women, such as ourselves, for whom the government-funded Status of Women Councils, and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) do NOT speak. We decided to act and became incorporated in the fall of 1983.

What Influenced Us

Two events influenced our formation as a group of concerned women. The first was the grave recognition that a small, but influential group of feminists had masterminded the inclusion of several sections in the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to be activated April 1985. This legislation may be interpreted to give women rights, often at the expense of others' human rights in our society. As well, court interpretation may adversely affect traditional family values as we now know them. The second factor was the suggestion made by MP Judy Erola, Minister responsible for the Status of Women, in December of 1982, that women who stay at home to care for their children should not receive tax exemption on their husband's income tax. The thinking behind this was feminist we believed, as it fitted their ideology that in order for a woman to be fulfilled, she must work outside the home. In other words, staying home to nurture children was not a recognized contribution to society, especially in monetary terms, so a woman should not be tax-exempt. The subtle implication was that such a mother was not contributing to society and that her work was not of value and therefore she should not be tax-exempt.

Our Name

The story of our name is a tale in itself. In early meetings we kept referring to "the real women of Canada" as wanting and needing this and that. Gradually, the name began to stick and to slowly bond, although we fully intended one day to find a proper and serious name. Time passed and our meeting agendas became so busy that shortly before our incorporation we faced a deadline - find a new name or else...Frantically, we searched, but were unable to find one as slick and as catchy. Some of us liked it, aware of its tongue-in-cheek characteristic, while others did not. Time was the deciding factor. Media friends urged us to keep it, predicting it to be "a winner". We then decided that what it lacked in class, we would give it in clout, by making the word "Real" an acronym - Realistic, Equal, Active, for Life (R.E.A.L.). We think we have a winner all right, since everyone smilingly remembers it, especially the media, but for some reason the feminists are offended by it!

Besides, we ARE the real women of Canada, the salt of the earth and the backbone of the country, working unobtrusively whether in the home or outside, or both. We make a priceless contribution to our country by holding it

together by our responsible attitudes, efforts and values, which we are passing on to future generations.

Our Direction

Our direction is spelled out in our name - Realistic, Equal, Active, and for Life. Contrary to media publicity, we did not set out to “get the feminists.”

Rather, we set out “to do our own thing,” which is to look at critical issues in society today that affect women and their families. We evaluate both positive and negative implications as the basis on which we develop our position papers. We found, when doing our research, that we kept tripping over well-established feminist positions and we were astounded at the degree to which their views dominated the media and proposed legislation.

For example, the alarming statistics of marriage and family breakdown during the past two decades are of deep concern to us. Accordingly, we are looking at the family, long recognized as the basis of a stable society, to see where change is needed. We wish both to preserve those values, which have served society well in the past, and to implement these in the present to build a better and more stable future.

With these ideas in mind, we developed position papers prior to our press conference on February 1, 1984, on Marriage, Divorce, Day Care, Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value, Affirmative Action, Pornography and Prostitution, Reproductive Choice and Pension Reform.

Public Launching

On February 1, 1984 at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, the REAL Women of Canada was publicly launched as our [Canada's] new national women's organization. We unveiled our carefully researched position papers (above) and introduced our provincial representatives from British Columbia (Margaret Steacy), from Alberta (Joanne Lewicky and Sheena McLellan) and from Quebec (Christianne Durand). We received stunning media coverage from coast-to-coast, which included national, provincial and local TV and radio and many newspaper articles across Canada.

Our experienced speakers helped fill the many speaking requests received after the press conference, which to our delight are still continuing.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! I hope you will enjoy reading some of the historical content in this issue of REALity. More will be included in future issues of REALity in 2008. Our Ottawa Chapter is now busy planning our Anniversary AGM and conference to be held on September 20, 2008 at the lovely and historic Fairmont Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa. I hope you will plan to be there.

On a sadder note, January 28th, 2008, marks another anniversary — the 20th anniversary of the Morgentaler decision by the Supreme Court of Canada, which struck down protection for the unborn at any stage of development in Canada. Canada is, regretfully, the only country in the developed nations of the world with no restrictions on abortion.

Hundreds of thousands of Canadians, who have never committed a crime, have suffered capital punishment since abortion became legal in 1969 and then was unrestricted in 1988. Hundreds of thousands of inventors, creators, doctors, plumbers, sons, daughters, wives, husbands, mothers, fathers, and now grandparents have been wiped from the Canadian landscape in a wash of blood and “products of conception”. What a tragedy of epic proportions!

And did you know that Alexa McDonough, NDP MP (Halifax) and former leader of her party, claims “that never in [her] 40 years of involvement in the women's movement, and 28 years in public life . . . [has she ever] had a single woman, a single advocate, a single representative of a single organization, or an individual family member come to [her]” and

express support for unborn victims of crime legislation. This was included in her speech rejecting Bill C-484, Unborn Victims of Crime Act tabled by Conservative MP Ken Epp (Edmonton, Sherwood Park). Ms. McDonough said that she needs to be convinced that Canadian women want Bill C-484 passed, which provides that the unborn child is to be regarded, in law, as a victim when the mother is attacked. McDonough also said that if she did have reason to believe that Canadian women did want this law to pass, she would “consider” their opinions when voting on Bill C-484 in second reading.

That sounds to me like a challenge. I hope you will join me in accepting.

Please write to:

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or contact her in Ottawa:

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House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6.

She can also be emailed at McDonA@parl.gc.ca or phoned free of charge in Ottawa at 1-866-599-4999. Ask the switchboard to put you through to her. Please make sure you also send a copy of your communication to your MP, and to Ken Epp, MP, both at the House of Commons address above.

It has been good to hear from you by cards and letters. Let's not lose touch. As the volunteers who make up the REAL Women of Canada board continue to work for ideals which are important to all of us, please remember that we do love to hear from you — and we could not do what we do without your financial, prayer and moral support.

Until next time,
Laurie

A FEDERAL ELECTION AROUND THE CORNER

Managing a minority Parliament is not easy. There is little leeway for a government when the House of Commons and its Committees are dominated by the opposition. The latter are diligently tabling and passing their very own bills and the Liberal dominated Senate is happily rubber-stamping them. It is a frustrating situation for the Conservative government. The only saving factor is that the opposition parties are deathly afraid of defeating the government right now and forcing another election. As a result, a cat and mouse game is being played in the House of Commons with the opposition parties making certain that there are just enough votes available to pass the government bills. This little game cannot last, however, and we can anticipate that the opposition parties will acquire some courage in the early months of 2008, possibly over the budget in March, and make a break to defeat the government, thereby leading to an election.

We can expect a federal election sometime between February and June, 2008, sooner rather than later - possibly in the very early spring.

THE PROSTITUTION LAW - REAL WOMEN TO INTERVENE IN THE LEGAL CHALLENGE OF THE LAW

Whenever the left wing does not achieve its objective by way of the political route, it turns to the tried and true method in Canada of obtaining its objectives - namely by bringing a legal challenge before the courts. The latter rarely let them down.

Background to the Legal Challenge of the Prostitution Law

[Download the pamphlet, Prostitution in Canada, in PDF format, which outlines the background on the prostitution law in Canada.]

Briefly, the former Liberal government had every intention of decriminalizing prostitution. For this purpose, it had agreed to establish a sub-committee of the House of Commons Justice Committee to review the prostitution law: it was expected that the Committee would recommend the law be decriminalized. The federal election in January 2006, however, interfered with the Liberals' carefully laid plan. The Sub-Committee which had the extraordinary experience of continuing its work through the life of two different Parliaments, was unable to come to a consensus, thanks mainly to the work of the Chairman of the Justice Committee, and member of the Sub-Committee on Prostitution, Conservative MP Art Hanger (Calgary - Northeast). (See REALity Jan/Feb 2007 "Political and Judicial Manipulation on the Prostitution Issue", p. 8.)

As a result of this political failure to strike down the prostitution law, a prostitute group in Ontario and another in British Columbia have commenced legal challenges in their respective provinces in order to strike down the law on prostitution.

The lawyer arguing this legal challenge on behalf of the prostitution group is Osgoode Law School professor Alan Young. Mr. Young is no stranger to bringing cases to court in order to change our laws to fit a more liberal perspective. In 2000, he defended a legal action in the Ontario Court of Appeal which allowed the use of marijuana for medical purposes. The Minister of Justice at that time, Allan Rock, liked the decision so much that he never appealed it to the Supreme Court of Canada. Mr. Young also brought a legal challenge of the marijuana law before the Supreme Court of Canada, arguing that it was unconstitutional for the government to prohibit the use of marijuana. Fortunately, the Supreme Court of Canada, in one of its rare applications of common sense, ruled against Mr. Young.

Now it seems that Mr. Young wishes to achieve the liberation of our drug laws indirectly, by way of challenging the prostitution laws in the courts. That is, if brothels and homosexual bathhouses are decriminalized, they then become remarkably efficient centres for drug trafficking, which has been the experience of those countries that have decriminalized prostitution. For example, because of criminal activity, especially drug and human trafficking, in and around Amsterdam's red light district, the authorities there closed down one third of the brothels.

This legal challenge to strike down the prostitution law, if successful, will result in very detrimental effects - practical, social, legal and health, that will undermine the social fabric in Canada. More specifically, it will have the tragic effect of damaging the health and well being of the vulnerable in our society, including young people and prostitutes and those in the communities in which they operate. Because of these serious implications, REAL Women, the Christian Legal Fellowship and the Catholic Civil Rights League have applied to intervene in the case. We have been fortunate in having a prominent and senior lawyer in Toronto, Robert Staley, act for us pro bono (without fee). The case is expected to be heard in Ontario in early March. No date has yet been set for a similar legal challenge launched in the British Columbia courts. We will update you as the cases proceed through the courts.

THE COURT CHALLENGES PROGRAM CANCELLATION UNDER FIRE

Four opposition-dominated House of Commons Committees, Justice, Heritage, Official Languages and the Status of Women ("Dishonesty and Duplicity by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women") to no one's surprise, have all recommended that the Court Challenges Program (CCP) be re-established.

The Conservative government has ignored this opposition fanfare, assessing it correctly for what it is: an opportunity to attack the government, as well as to demonstrate anger over the government's cancellation of the Program.

Certainly, the decision by the Conservative government to cancel this Program has caused more anger to those

holding a left-wing perspective in Canada than any other. This Program was initially established in 1978 to help minority linguistic groups, but was expanded in 1985 to include groups seeking “equality” under S. 15 of the Charter.

The reason for such left-wing anger is that the CCP was the single most effective tool at the disposal of liberal groups to fundamentally change the fabric of Canadian society. This is because the CCP allowed them to do an end run around a democratically elected Parliament and, instead, achieve their objectives by way of judicial fiat.

The CCP equality panel has been documented to be an agency controlled by feminists, homosexuals and other left-wing groups, who were also the sole beneficiaries of the Program.

For example the groups financed by the CCP were successful in the following cases:

having the abortion law struck down;

awarding same-sex benefits;

legalizing same-sex marriage;

amending the pornography law;

permitting marijuana to be used for medical purposes;

providing for compulsory union dues that permit union officials to use these funds for non-workplace, political purposes, such as grants to feminist and homosexual groups;

changing the evidentiary rules on sexual assault to the grave detriment of the male accused;

providing the defense of “battered wife” in murder cases of a male partner, available only to the female accused; and

enforcing feminist policies, such as pay-equity cases and family law cases dealing with custody and access, which gives marked advantages to mothers over fathers.

These examples are only a partial list of the troubling court decisions that have fundamentally changed Canadian society because of the interventions of groups funded by the CCP.

Attempt to Bring Cancellation of Program Before the Court

The political route, by way of the various House of Commons Committee “reviews” of the cancellation of the Program, have been exhausted. Thus, activists have decided to take the usual Canadian route to undermine legislation and government policies, by having the courts do the work for them.

Accordingly, four of the feminist activists who had appeared before the Status of Women Committee review of the Court Challenges Program, plus two other feminist activists, applied to the Federal Court on December 17, 2007 to intervene in a case already before the Federal Court, which deals with the disbanding of the language provisions of the Court Challenges Program.

However, on January 8, 2008, the Federal Court dismissed their application to intervene. Quite clearly the court did not wish to expand the case in order to include equality rights provisions of the Programme.

It seems that the feminist/homosexual activists who benefited so much from the CCP are now at an impasse. It is possible they will launch their own legal challenge of the CCP on the loss of the equality provision. If so, such a legal challenge will undoubtedly be financed by Canada’s labour movement (See “Tyranny of the Labour Movement”). They will probably delay their case, however, until the decision of the Federal Court on the language provision of the Programme is handed down. Other than that, they will just have to wait for the return of a Liberal government, which will, no doubt quickly do their bidding and restore this dreadful programme.

DISHONESTY AND DUPLICITY BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Even though three other of the opposition-dominated House of Commons Committees had already reviewed the de-funding of the Court Challenges Program (CCP), the opposition dominated Standing Committee on the Status of

Women was eager to review it once again. In doing so, the Committee decided, apparently, that integrity, honesty and proper ethics should not stand in the way of its obvious objective of recommending that the CCP be re-established.

To put it mildly, the entire proceedings of this Committee were perverse.
December 4, 2007 Hearing

At the December 4 hearing, there were seven witnesses, all but one of whom had a conflict of interest in regard to the CCP. That is, the witnesses either held prominent positions on the now disbanded CCP, or were members of the largest beneficiary of the CCP, LEAF (Women's Legal Education Action Fund). In some cases, the witnesses were in double conflict of interest. The only witness at the hearing without a conflict of interest was the one representing REAL Women of Canada.

It was significant that any conflicts of interest by the witnesses were never disclosed during the proceedings.

The hearing was chaired by NDP MP Irene Mathyssen (London-Fanshaw) whose actions as chair were appalling. She twice posed questions of the panelists without vacating the chair. She ignored the REAL Women of Canada witness countless times, but permitted the feminist activists on the panel to speak for extended periods of time without interruption. The witnesses at this hearing were as follows:

Shelagh Day: Ms. Day represented the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA)

. In her presentation, Ms. Day did not disclose the significant fact that she was the former chairperson of the Equality Rights Panel of the CCP. Ms. Day is also the former vice-president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC); former chair of the lesbian caucus at the UN Beijing Conference on Women; as well as a member of the Steering Committee of FAFIA.

During the Committee proceedings, Ms. Day stated that she was a proud feminist and lesbian, but failed to disclose that during her appointment as chairperson, that is, between 1994 and 2005 (according to CCP's 2004-2005 Annual Report), the CCP provided resources for 41 homosexual cases, as well as 140 cases for LEAF. The promotion of one's personal views, both feminist and homosexual, as chairperson of the Equality Panel of the CCP, was a betrayal of her responsibilities, as well as that of the Canadian taxpayers, who funded the CCP.

Sharon Mclvor: Ms. Mclvor was listed on the panel only as an "individual". In fact, she was also a former member of the Equality Rights Panel of the CCP. She is also a member of the Steering Committee of FAFIA, already represented on the panel by Ms. Day. In her testimony before the Committee, Ms. Mclvor claimed she had no other support for her legal challenge of the status of Aboriginal Women case, except that of the CCP. In fact, according to her website, Ms. Mclvor's case is receiving resources from the British Columbia government and the Service Employees' Union, which is, at present, also calling on its union allies to contribute additional resources to further her case.

Martha Jackman, National Association of Women and the Law: Ms. Jackman did not disclose in her testimony before the Committee that she was also a former member of the Equality Panel of the CCP. She is also currently a member of the Board of Directors of LEAF.

Doris Buss: She represented LEAF on the panel, although there is nothing on the website of Ms. Buss to state that she is actually a member of LEAF. Ms. Buss is the author of several papers on feminism and international law, including a paper criticizing the "Christian Right" in international politics (2003).

Elizabeth Atcheson: Although described on the witness list only as an "individual", Ms. Atcheson failed to disclose that she is, in fact, the current chair of the Board of Directors of LEAF, in addition to being one of its founding members. In fact, Ms. Atcheson was one of the co-authors of a paper written in 1984 recommending the principles behind the establishment of LEAF.

Carmela Hutchison: Ms. Hutchison, although representing the Disabled Women's Network of Canada (DAWN) on the panel, is also a member of the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA), already represented on the panel by Ms. Day.

In short, a handful of feminists, who had previously controlled the CCP, and who have been the largest beneficiaries of that Program, masqueraded at this Status of Women hearing as independent feminist groups, in order to give the false impression that they represented a large cross section of women. They, in fact, represented only a handful of interchangeable radical feminists operating under different hats, in order to push for the re-establishment of the CCP of which they were the largest beneficiaries.

Bias of NDP MP, Chairperson Irene Mathysen

As stated above, without vacating the Chair, the Chairperson, NDP MP Mathysen, posed several questions to only the feminists on the panel on behalf of the NDP party. She asked whether the disbanding of the CCP was detrimental to Canada's international obligations and reputation under the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This question was obviously pre-arranged since both Ms. Day and Ms. McIvor, as members of FAFIA, had appeared before the CEDAW Monitoring Committee in 2003 and 2005 with complaints about Canada's failure to supposedly promote the equality for women. Based on their complaints, CEDAW issued a report criticizing the Canadian government. It should be pointed out that the CEDAW Committee is largely a committee of feminist NGO's whose membership is comprised mainly of representatives of international radical feminist groups. CEDAW's criticism, therefore, does not carry any credible weight.

Status of Women Hearing, December 11, 2007

There were seven witnesses at this hearing as well. All were acknowledged feminists and three of the seven witnesses admitted their association with LEAF.

Because there was no dissenting voice present, which REAL Women provided at the December 4th hearing, this entire proceeding was a farce. The feminist witnesses laid it on thick and heavy, with both exaggeration and misrepresentation of the facts in order to allege that the CCP had been essential in achieving equality for women in Canada. This was music to the Committee's ears.

Lawyer Mary Eberts, one of the founders of LEAF, who had argued cases on its behalf, testified at this hearing that the CCP has "...served to complement rather than displace the legislative activity of the Canadian Parliament...". This was not the case, because CCP funding led to the courts overturning legislation to suit feminist objectives. Eberts also said (page 6) that the CCP "...makes possible an orderly and law-abiding approach to social change." That is, she conceded that the Courts make the final decisions on social change, not Parliament. This is orderly all right, but scarcely fair or democratic!

One of the witnesses, Carole Tremblay, representing Quebec Sexual Assault Centres, stated at (p. 14) that "When you deprive the women's movement, feminists...of this kind of recourse [to the CCP] everyone suffers. And that includes children and men". Spare us this insult to our intelligence, Ms. Tremblay.

Captain Jennifer Lynn Purdy, a member of the Canadian Armed Forces stated:

...as a white, able-bodied, upper-middle-class, Anglophone, heterosexual man, Prime Minister Harper, along with most of his cabinet, will never understand what it is like to be treated unequally in Canadian society. When he made these cuts he ignored the rights of everyone not lucky enough to share his own particular characteristics.

A rather large and egregious stereotyping of men.

The witness, Colleen Sheppard, an associate law professor at McGill University, who also teaches feminist legal theory, stated at page 3:

I applaud the committee for its concern with looking at women and discrimination against women from an inclusive and broad perspective. I think it will be important to ensure your deliberations are informed by consultations with a broad range of women from those communities. (emphasis ours)

The “broad range of women” to her, apparently means a broad range of feminist women.

The most incredible statement of all, however, came from lawyer Kathleen Mahoney of the University of Calgary, who said on p. 15:

... the Court Challenges Programme is very good public policy. It is in the public interest to maintain it and to improve it.... I would conclude that anyone who doubts this statement should look at the history of the cases funded by Court Challenges.

I would defy anyone to say that any one of those results is not in the public interest.

We can think of countless Canadians who would easily disagree with Ms. Mahoney’s ludicrous statement that the results of the CCP funded legal challenges have been in “the public’s interest”.

These entire proceedings were a farce. They were dishonest, duplicitous and unethical - and paid for by the Canadian taxpayer.

TAX MONEY STILL TOSSED AROUND WITH ABANDON

While the government bills are held up by the opposition in the House of Commons (see article “A Federal Election Around the Corner”), there are, nonetheless, actions that the Conservative government can take that do not require opposition approval, and will certainly be of great benefit to taxpayers. Some of the on-going abuses of taxpayers’ money are:

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

CIDA was established in 1968 on the personal whim of Prime Minister Trudeau by Cabinet Decree (Order-in-Council). CIDA’s purpose was to distribute Canadian foreign aid. There was no legislation, however, to limit or control CIDA’s activities, the agency is not accountable to Parliament, and it reports only to the Minister of International Cooperation.

As a result, CIDA, with a \$4 billion annual appropriation, has had a very questionable history. It has advocated for abortion, population control, and feminism in Third World countries and has also been used as a slush fund for the Liberal party to receive funds from corporations: upon making sizable donations to the Liberal party, such companies were awarded generous contracts by CIDA to operate overseas. (See REALity Sept/Oct 1994, p. 7 & 8, March/April 1998 p. 11, Nov./Dec. 2001 p. 10).

In addition, over the years, CIDA has expended billions of taxpayer dollars on many useless projects, where the law of unintended consequences has invariably predominated. For example, CIDA funded a bakery in Tanzania to bake bread, but there were no customers to buy any since it was foreign to the diet of the local residents! A businessman in Thailand in 1994 was funded by CIDA to build a garment factory. The businessman paid his female workers only a minuscule wage, much lower than they would have received in Bangkok, and the businessman ended up a very wealthy and happy man.

It is not that attempts have not been made over the years to control CIDA. Auditors General have repeatedly expressed frustration over CIDA's free-wheeling ways, and House of Commons Committees have recounted the many administrative problems at CIDA and its lack of accountability. For example, the agency has 1300 employees. All but 125 reside comfortably in the Ottawa-Hull region, even though CIDA is involved with 115 countries overseas. Despite criticisms, CIDA has gone blithely on its way, doing whatever it wants, whenever it wants with our money.

In 2007, the Senate released a report on CIDA called "Forty Years of Failure", which again savaged the agency. Fortunately, Prime Minister Harper is aware of this report and knows that CIDA is an agency wildly out of control. According to newspaper reports, Mr. Harper is now hard at work trying to reform CIDA. It is expected that the Conservative government will put in place new policies for CIDA which will emphasize economic development, including technical assistance and training and the improvement of agricultural productivity. This will be a worthy change in policy, if implemented.

Until these new policies are put in place, however, CIDA continues with business as usual. This is apparently what has occurred since the Conservative Minister of International Cooperation, Josée Verner became the Minister and acquired responsibility for CIDA.

Conservative Minister Josée Verner

Quebec M.P. Josée Verner (Louis-Saint-Laurent) was appointed the Minister of International Cooperation by Prime Minister Harper in February 2006. She held this position until August 2007, when she became the Minister of Heritage, trading places with Bev Oda (Durham).

Ms. Verner's Background

Ms. Verner, at age 49, has had a very interesting career. She spent 20 years in the communications field, and, at one time, worked for former Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa. She was unsuccessful in her bid for the Conservatives in the 2004 federal election. Subsequent to that election, Ms. Verner became a member of Stephen Harper's staff as a Quebec advisor.

Ms. Verner is a charming, attractive woman. Behind her Gallic charm and femininity, however, lies a hard-core pro-abortion feminist. At the National Conservative Convention in Montreal in February, 2005, Ms. Verner spoke stridently against the resolution to protect the unborn child, declaring that a women's right to abortion must never be taken away. Her remarks were met with an organized screaming ovation from the Quebec delegation which she led.

Ms. Verner has also recently run into some personal financial problems. In an on-going court case in Quebec City, her husband, Marc Lacroix, who is the owner of a Quebec City advertising firm in which Ms. Verner also has a financial interest, now held in trust, is being sued by one of his shareholders. The latter claims that Mr. Lacroix defrauded him by placing Ms. Verner on the company payroll for 11 years, paying her \$30,000 per year for supposed services, even though Ms. Verner never held a job in the firm, never did any work there, and her name never appeared on the company's organizational chart. She also never participated in social or training activities for the agency. In other words, the shareholder is alleging that placing Ms. Verner on the payroll was part of a deliberate scheme to defraud the minority shareholder.

Ms. Verner has also been in trouble in that her husband's advertising firm created ads for a Quebec City radio station which opposed the 400th Anniversary celebrations of Quebec. Ironically, Ms. Verner is responsible for these celebrations as the current Minister of Heritage.

The 400th Anniversary Committee for the Founding of Quebec has experienced serious organizational problems, in that four presidents have resigned since its inception in 2001 - the latest resignation occurring in January. The Committee has received \$85 million from three levels of government, including \$40 million from the federal government. Transport Minister Lawrence Cannon has stated recently in the House of Commons that this sum may be

increased to \$100 million. This information was provided when Mr. Cannon was defending Ms. Verner from Liberal and NDP criticism over the botched Quebec celebrations.

Further, there are reports of conflict of interest and unclear rules for awarding contracts by the Committee organizing the celebrations and for which Ms. Verner is responsible.

Ms. Verner says she is optimistic that the Committee will get back on track, and that she will be playing close attention to the Committee's efforts. This is not much comfort.

Josée Verner's Generosity to Left Wing Groups

While Ms. Verner was serving as the Minister of International Co-Operation, responsible for CIDA, one of the largest promoters of abortion internationally, International Planned Parenthood ("IPP") had its contributions doubled.

In the fiscal year 2005-2006, under the former Liberal government, CIDA gave IPP \$9 million. In the fiscal year 2006 - 2007, under the management of Ms. Verner, the IPP was the happy recipient of \$18 million. The purpose listed for this grant was "Sexual and Reproductive Health", which means abortion and population control.

In addition, the UN agency, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which U.S. President George Bush refused to fund for six years in a row, on the grounds that it cooperates with China's one child policy of forced abortions and sterilizations, was given a Canadian grant under Ms. Verner of \$44 million. The purpose of this grant was listed as "institutional support". The annual grant to UNFPA under the Liberals, although initially \$13 million, was raised, in 2005, to \$30 million annually in order to offset President Bush's refusal to fund the agency. Ms. Verner subsequently raised this grant extensively. (See: www.taxpayer.com/pdf/Top100.pdf)

Obviously, Ms. Verner is very kind to her ideological friends.

Ms. Verner as Minister of Heritage

On August 14, 2007, Ms. Verner became the Minister of Heritage with responsibility for the Status of Women. In less than a year in this portfolio, she has already left a large footprint.

In September 2006, the Conservative government changed the policies of the Status of Women in order to cease funding for advocacy (lobbying) and "research" by feminist groups. Since her appointment, Ms. Verner has been dutifully publicly affirming her government's policy on funding practices. We have reason to wonder, however, about Ms. Verner's actual actions in this regard. Our incredulity is based on the fact, that in December, a few days after Parliament recessed for Christmas (so that no questions could be raised in Parliament), Ms. Verner announced a grant from the Status of Women of \$1.05 million over three years, to establish, in collaboration with Quebec Minister for the Status of Women (which will contribute \$600,000), a project called the "Centre for Development of Women in Governance". Its stated purpose is to prepare women to take on key decision-making roles. According to Ms. Verner, the Center is to "[ensure] they [women] have the skills, resources and supports they need to fully engage in the democratic process... we are helping to promote women's full participation in the economic, social and cultural life of the country".

Make that "political" life of the country! This conclusion is based on the fact that this project was initiated by the Quebec feminist organization called "Women's Political Equality (Groupe Femmes, Politique et Démocratie)" whose objective is to push for more female political candidates, especially by way of female quotas. This organization is the same outfit about which REAL Women complained when the group's material was included on Election Canada's website during the January 2006 federal election campaign (see REALity March/April 2007,). The message in this material was clear - vote for and promote female candidates only. The material contained the usual feminist diatribes and myths. It should never have been placed on the supposedly "neutral" Election Canada website, as it was highly inappropriate for a feminist, political group and its ideology to be promoted there.

This is the same group that has now received a huge grant from the Status of Women to help “women” become politically active: make that “feminist” women politically active! At the Canadian taxpayers’ expense. REAL Women is taking a careful look at Status of Women funding under Ms. Verner. We will let you know in a future issue of REALity the results of our review.

CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS A NEW ADVISORY BOARD

REAL Women was immensely relieved to learn that the controversial Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, the inspiration of former business and media mogul Izzy Asper, has a new Advisory Board.

The former Advisory Board, selected by the former Liberal government, consisted mainly of feminist, homosexual and also old Liberal stand-bys, such as a former Liberal Prime Minister John Turner, former Liberal MPs, Cabinet Ministers and some Senators. The museum was intended to be a monument to former Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and his Charter of Rights.

In April, 2007, the Conservative government designated the museum as a “national museum” and agreed to provide the museum with \$1 million to assist the start-up costs and approximately \$22 million annually to cover its operating costs. (See REALity July/Aug. 2007, “What Kind of Human Rights Museum is This?” p. 1)

REAL Women was deeply concerned that the museum with its left-wing Advisory Board would be used as a powerful tool to champion the Liberal government’s interpretation of human rights, such as abortion rights, feminism, homosexuality, etc. with only some legitimate exhibits sprinkled here and there to give the museum the appearance of legitimacy.

The Conservative government replaced the Liberal dominated Advisory Board in October 2007 and these appointments have modified our concerns somewhat. The new Advisory Board consists mainly of experienced businessmen and women with no known bias on human rights issues. The Board members also include a professor of Canadian history and culture. One of the female appointments is former Chief Justice of the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, Constance Glube who had the courage to testify before the House of Commons Justice Committee in November 2005 that political appointments to the judiciary under the Liberals were based on political considerations rather than merit.

Another female Advisory Board member is Mary Gusella, a senior public servant and a former chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission who was called in to re-organize it in 2002 after the debacle it had become under former Chief Commissioner Michelle Falardeau Ramsay. Ms. Gusella has been Senior Advisor in the Privy Council office since 2002. She has also held many senior appointments in Crown corporations and was federal land claims registrar.

Public Consultation

It is reassuring that the new Advisory Board has now launched public consultations to help determine which human rights issues should be featured in the museum and how they should be presented.

We should be aware, however, that the museum also proposes to call in “academic experts” to help determine which human rights should be featured. One such academic expert is Constantine Passaris, a professor at the University of New Brunswick who was a former chairman of the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission. Need we say more?

Therefore, Canadians should provide input into the museum as soon as possible in order to offset any bias that may be included in it.

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights will provide a web site for public consultation which is not yet available. We will provide the web site in the next issue of Reality.

In the meantime, please write to:

Mr. Arni Thorsteinson, Chairman to the Advisory Board,
1560 CanWest Global Place,
201 Portage Ave.,
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3K6.

Or contact the museum by phone: (204) 944-2476 to provide your input.

P.S. Thanks so much to our wonderful members who wrote to Prime Minister Harper about our concerns on the Museum for Human Rights as it had formerly been organized. Your concerns were clearly listened to!

THE TYRANNY OF LABOUR UNIONS IN CANADA

Canada is one of the few nations in the free world that requires employees to pay union dues whether or not they wish to join the union. The European Union, Sweden, the UK and the U.S. have all decided that it is a basic human right for employees to decide themselves whether to join a union. This is not the case here.

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that employees in Canada must pay union dues, and further, that unions may use these compulsory union dues, which are not taxed, at the unions' discretion, for other than work place purposes. As a result, millions and millions of dollars of union dues have been used by the unions to fund left-wing groups and projects which are anti-life and anti-family. For example, in September 2006 when the Conservative government cut off funding by the Status of Women for advocacy (lobbying) and so-called "research" for feminist groups, the unions stepped in to assist these feminists.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) donated \$100,000 and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) donated \$25,000 to be divided equally among four national women's organizations:

the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW);
the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada;
the National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL); and
the Feminist Association for International Action (FAFIA).

PSAC is also contributing \$15,000 to the Federation des Femmes du Quebec, the key women's "equality" organization in Quebec. The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) has committed \$30,000 to the four national organizations as well as to the Ontario Association of Transition and Interval Houses and the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care.

Unions in Canada have become very wealthy institutions in their own right with billions of dollars invested abroad as well as in Canada - again to be used for their own purposes - all financed by the tax free compulsory union dues.

Unions are not required to account publicly for their spending of this money, nor disclose the salaries of their leaders and their many perks. It is a free for all for union leaders in Canada.

Because these compulsory union dues have been used to further abortion on demand (including Morgentaler's many court challenges), same-sex marriage, and other issues so destructive of family life, REAL Women has taken a keen interest in the labour movement in Canada.

In this regard, we have recently completed an in-depth analysis of the labour movement in Canada. The paper, however, is too long to be included in our newsletter REALity. However, the paper has now been posted on our website, The Tyranny of Labour Unions in Canada, for those interested in reading it. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact our National Office and they will be pleased to forward a copy of this paper to you for only a nominal fee to cover photocopying and mailing expenses.

Although unions are important for collective bargaining purposes and work place issues, they should not be entitled to use the compulsory union dues for non-work place issues, nor should employees be compelled to pay union dues if they choose not to do so. Unions have far too much power and influence in Canada and this must be curtailed.