

Happy New Year!

Dear Pro-life, Pro-family friend:

National Pro-life Conference

Conference participants were greeted in BC by some of the worst weather on record in the province – wind, rain and the resultant flooding. The drinking water was unpalatable and they had to resort to bottled water for a few days. Since it was a pro-life conference, and pro-lifers are a resolute group, most people took the difficulties in stride, and nevertheless enjoyed each other's company.

Hosted by Pro Life BC and co-sponsored by LifeCanada, Healing the Culture and Campaign Life Coalition (Canada), the National Pro-Life Conference was held in November in Vancouver, BC, where Father Robert Spitzer and Camille deBlasi Pauley presented a philosophy for "Healing the Culture" to create a society that values human life. They explained ten life principles needed to change our culture and they referred to four levels of achieving spiritual happiness. Other speakers included Rabbi Daniel Lapin and Dr. John Patrick. Workshop speakers included Jim Hughes, Pavel Reid, Natalie Hudson, Malcolm Roddis, Michael Pauley, and many others, speaking on a variety of life and family issues. Almost 400 enthusiastic pro-lifers attended the conference.

Campaign Life Coalition held its Annual General Meeting during the National Conference. Fifty people were in attendance, and Jim Hughes, CLC National President, opened the meeting with a spiritual talk. Minutes were reviewed, reports were received including those by Aidan Reid, Director of the Ottawa Public Affairs office, and Mary Ellen Douglas, National Organizer of CLC. Most of the Provincial leaders' reports were printed in the booklet, but Peter Ryan presented a verbal report



Dr. John Patrick, left, and Camille deBlasi Pauley, right, were just two of the speakers at the National Pro-life Conference held in BC.

on the situation in New Brunswick. Each CLC Provincial President in attendance was introduced, and John Hof, CLC BC President, was publicly thanked for all of his work on the Conference on our behalf. We then received updates on the issues currently underway: Federal election preparations, re-opening of the marriage issue, March for Life 2007 (10th Anniversary) and success of 2006 March, Life Chain, international agenda, CLC Youth, euthanasia, fundraising and 2007 National Conference in New Brunswick.

CLC also presented two workshops during the Conference which were well attended and covered a wide range of topics, including the background to the current abortion situation in Canada.

All in all, it was time well spent, and doubtless, everyone returned home refreshed and renewed.

Larry Henderson, RIP

At the end of November, former CBC anchor and *Catholic Register* and *Challenge* magazine editor Larry Henderson passed away at the age of 89. He was the first regular anchor of CBC's national newscast from 1954 to 1959, but we will remember him most, as Tony Gosgnach says in *The Interim*, "as a pillar of what a journalist should be."

While editor of the *Catholic Register* newspaper, he ensured life issues occupied a prominent place in that publication's coverage. He would often tap the expertise of Campaign Life Coalition when writing about abortion and other pressing moral issues. He rallied public support for Joseph Borowski in his battle against Canada's abortion laws. Henderson would attend CLC strategy meetings to gain even greater knowledge over time. He was a featured speaker at one national pro-life conference, advising other pro-lifers on media matters.

Henderson later became editor of *Challenge*, a Catholic magazine faithful to the magisterium. In recent years, Henderson battled both Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.



Members of the CLC Board include, left to right: (Back) John Hof (B.C.), Jim Hughes (On), Peter Ryan (N.B.), (Middle) Luc Gagnon (Que), Julius Yankowski (Alta), Dick Cochrane (Accountant), Aidan Reid (Director of the Office of Public Affairs in Ottawa), and (Front) are Denise Hounjet-Roth (Sask), Maria Slykerman (Man) and Mary Ellen Douglas (National Organizer).

While reminiscing about Larry Henderson's pro-life position and activities, we recall that he agreed to run Campaign Life Coalition advertisements (in the *Catholic Register*) in 1981, which warned, at that time, that entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, would lead to abortion on demand, homosexual marriages, adoptions by homosexuals, and the loss by women of financial support from their husbands."

Twenty-five years ago, we warned that this might happen....



Larry Henderson, left, receiving an award at a Manitoba conference with the late Joe Borowski, Fr. Alphonse deValk and Jim Hughes

The battle to protect marriage: lost for now but it continues

In the last federal election campaign, Conservative leader Stephen Harper promised that if his party was elected, he would bring forward a motion asking the House of Commons whether it wanted to revisit the issue of same-sex 'marriage.' Harper had said that this was necessary because the June 2005 vote was not a true free vote because then Liberal leader Paul Martin required his cabinet to support the enshrinement of same-sex 'marriage' in law. But Harper also said that homosexual couples who were already 'married' would not be stripped of their 'marriages' and that future same-sex couples would have the right to have their relationships legally recognized as civil unions.

For eleven months, pro-family and religious groups have lobbied the government to not cloud the issue of revisiting same-sex 'marriage' legislation. Unfortunately, the way the motion wording, Dec. 6 debate and December 7 vote went down, it allowed many MPs to argue that the gambit was a political manoeuvre. It was a huge letdown for the many groups that fought so hard to have the debate re-opened.

The motion read: "That this house call on the government to introduce legislation to restore the traditional definition of marriage without affecting civil unions, and while respecting existing same sex marriages." The government confused the issue by including the provisions of civil unions and maintaining the existing same-sex

'marriages' in the motion to revisit the question. They should have left off the items about civil unions and existing same-sex 'marriages'. Or, even better, the Tories could have worded the motion to read "That Parliament complete the process of public hearings across the country that was interrupted in December 2003."

Another option was to give Parliament the opportunity to consider the conclusions of a major study commissioned and approved by the National Assembly of France, which examined the issue in regard to its effects on children. That study found that children have a right to both a mother and a father and it therefore recommended homosexual 'marriage' should remain prohibited.

But the Harper government did not choose any of those routes. The wording of the motion posed a moral problem for some MPs who considered a vote for re-opening the SSM issue a validation of immoral policies recognizing same-sex relationships. There were some Liberal MPs who wanted to re-open the marriage issue and have a full debate on restoring the traditional definition of marriage, but could not, as a matter of conscience, accept the concept of any legal recognition of same-sex relationships. It was possible and preferable for the issues of civil unions and what to do about the existing homosexual 'marriages' to be dealt with in the new legislation that would have followed the passing of a straightforward motion to re-open.

Also, the government did not permit any amendments and severely limited debate to only the latter part of one day's events in the House. It was clear that Stephen Harper and his advisors wanted this issue to disappear; get it over with early enough so that most voters wouldn't have the 'divisive' debate fresh in their minds going into the next election, but late enough for social conservatives to remember that he had kept his promise to try to re-open debate on it.

The prime minister himself was not present during the debate that preceded the vote and only a relative handful of MPs from all parties, including the Conservatives, were present during the actual debate. Many pundits took that as confirmation that the Harper government was merely going through the motions of fulfilling its promise - a bone thrown to social conservative voters - rather than a serious attempt to restore traditional marriage. Most journalists reported that Harper desperately wants the issue to go away.

The motion lost 175-123 with nearly all but thirteen Tories voting for it, nearly all but thirteen Liberals voting against it, and the entire Bloc Quebecois and NDP caucuses opposed to the government motion. The margin of defeat was wider than expected because less than half the number of pro-family Liberals voted in favour of the motion as had voted against the establishment of SSM in 2005, in part because of the deliberately ambiguous wording. However, even if they stayed the course and voted with the government, the motion would still have been defeated.

The defeat of the motion meant that Harper had met

the cynical expectations of Parliament Hill reporters and political columnists. He slammed shut the door on bringing back the marriage issue again (“I don’t see reopening this question in the future”). However, pro-family groups, including Campaign Life Coalition, unanimously rejected the notion that the vote was decisive on marriage, since the wording of the motion required acceptance of same-sex ‘marriages’ already performed, and that was not a decisive position.

Unfortunately, Harper also said he had no plans to introduce a defence of religion act saying that it was not necessary at this time. This contradicts his previous, emphatic statements that C-38 did not actually protect those who hold religious beliefs opposed to same-sex ‘marriage’ – but what has changed since June 2005?

Unfortunately, by the time the government chooses to act, it might be too late: courts and human rights tribunals could very well act on their own before the government has time to pass legislation, or another party could be in power. Once again, the prime minister has taken the easy route and failed to show leadership on vital moral issues, preferring to play politics with them.

The Liberals, with their dismal voting record of 13 in favour of the motion and 85 opposed, and the NDP, and the Bloc Quebecois, each voting as a block against the motion, continue to accede to activist and political pressure on the issue.

Harper and social conservatives

It is quite obvious that Harper wants this issue to go away. It is also obvious that he is counting on the gratitude of traditional values voters in the next election. In January 2006, weekly church-going Christians tipped the balance of power to the Conservatives and Harper needs to keep them in his big tent to win the next election. While he has done some very good things - defunded radical special interest groups; brought some transparency to the judicial appointments process; kept his promise to revisit the marriage issue; has kept euthanasia and assisted suicide off the legislative table; and, we hope, is even attempting to address the age of sexual consent – on other vital issues he has allowed the status quo to continue: no legal protection for the unborn, and, by an ambiguously worded motion, accepting the legal recognition of homosexual relationships,

Both economic and social conservatives congratulate Harper and the Conservative government for what they have done on many issues, but the government has failed in protecting innocent human life and upholding the uniqueness of the traditional definition of marriage. Pro-life and pro-family Canadians must not lose sight of the bigger picture and blindly follow Harper or his party. They must continue to pressure the party, and continue the battle for the rights of the traditional family, along with the battle for the rights of unborn Canadian children. The issue will not just go away. It can’t, since the current situation defies nature, defies reason and will inevitably lead to great harm to our nation. The issue is

far from decided.

More Canadians who value life and family will make these issues priorities in their voting, and nominate or support candidates, regardless of party affiliation, who will uphold the sanctity of human life and family in all its aspects, and restore the uniqueness of traditional marriage.

Ottawa backs off on NB abortion funding

According to the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal*, federal authorities will cease their pressure on the New Brunswick government to fund abortions committed at private facilities. Ottawa and the province have clashed over the issue for years and the Liberal governments of Jean Chretien and Paul Martin threatened to withhold part of Ottawa health transfer payments unless the province covered the costs of abortions at Henry Morgentaler’s Fredericton abortuary. New Brunswick pays for abortions committed in hospitals but won’t pick up the \$700 tab for each abortion committed at Morgentaler’s abortuary. In 2005, federal health minister and former BC NDP premier Ujjal Donsanji created a panel to resolve the issue.

The clash, however, seems to have ended. Federal Health Minister Tony Clement told the paper that the whole issue is “off the radar.” Clement said the ball was in the province’s court. Provincial Health Minister Michael Murphy indicated that the province is not likely to change its policy: “To be very truthful, in the last two months it hasn’t come up on my agenda whatsoever ... There’s no plan for change that I know of at the present time.” We applaud the federal government’s respect for provincial funding prerogative and the province’s refusal to pay private abortion profiteers. Now if only we could get other provinces to follow suit — and all provinces to stop funding abortions committed in their government-run hospitals...

Pro-life group censored on campus

The Carleton University Students’ Association voted 25-5 to deny funding and services to any campus group opposed to abortion. This is a grotesque violation of the right to free expression and free assembly of students who hold pro-life views, is hugely discriminatory, a violation of one of the precepts of universities where different ideas and views are supposed to be voiced, and a threat to religious freedom. Saying that pro-life groups violate the “safe space” policy established by the university because they claim such groups are “harmful” to women, CUSA prevents “campaigns, distributions, solicitations, lobbying efforts, displays and events,” by Lifeline and other pro-life organizations on campus. Such actions, CUSA claims, “limit or remove a woman’s options in the event of pregnancy.”

The university’s pro-life group, Carleton Lifeline, is considering legal options, including appealing to the Ontario Human Rights Board. Lifeline President Sarah Fletcher



Long-time office volunteer and bus tour organizer, Mary Colangelo is wished a happy 90th birthday by CLC National President Jim Hughes.

said, "I think it pretty ridiculous that this governing body which is supposed to be representing all students would be declaring itself pro-choice because not all of the students are going to agree with them on that view." The *National Post* editorialized on CUSA's 'pro-choice' hypocrisy: "Their anti-anti-choice solution is to do what they can to penalize students who argue for a different choice. The new policy at least clarifies that CUSA is not 'pro-choice' at all, but flat-out pro-abortion."

This policy is egregious in itself. However, adding insult to injury, pro-life students will still have to pay into the student activities fee that funds the pro-abortion CUSA. Sadly, Carleton's actions are not unique; earlier last year, two University of B.C. campuses enacted similar policies.

Post-secondary institutions should hear from concerned citizens, but especially from graduates and donors. Please politely express your concerns to university officials and fundraisers, specifically informing them that you will not donate as long as the university or its students' union continue to endorse pro-abortion positions and discriminate against pro-lifers.

To their credit, Carleton University said that CUSA's decision will not prevent them from allotting space under its direct control to pro-life groups. In a press release the administration said it respects "CUSA's independent decision-making process," but added that the University "is not bound by the views or opinions held by the Carleton University Students' Association." The university goes on to state that "Student groups, both those recognized by CUSA and those that are not, have had and will continue to have the opportunity to book space on campus in accordance with Carleton's existing policies and procedures."

What the press release doesn't note is that CUSA's actions severely inhibit Lifeline's ability to operate fully in

student life, with limitations placed on them that are not placed on other groups. Sadly, university Director of Communications Doug Wotherspoon said, "The deliberations that have taken place this evening by the Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA) are an example of the health of public discourse on Carleton's campus." We find it disturbing that the administration would find CUSA's deliberations on silencing a group with a particular point of view contrary to their own to be healthy public discourse.

Action Item: To respectfully but firmly express your concerns, contact Dr. Samy Mahmoud, President and Vice-Chancellor Pro Tempore, Office of the President, 503 Tory Building 1125 Colonel By Dr., Ottawa, Ont., K1S 5B6, or call (613) 520-3801 or email presidents_office@carleton.ca.

2006 March for Life DVD

A 17-minute 2006 March for Life DVD is available for schools and other groups in order to promote the March. We are offering a special low price of \$10 per copy plus \$2.50 shipping and handling. A significant discount is available for orders of ten or more.

Yours for life and family

Jim Hughes
CLC National President



Cardinal Marc Ouellet, the Catholic Primate of Canada, addresses approximately 75 priests and deacons and their spouses, at the CLC Clergy Luncheon in Toronto in November. The Cardinal talked about the need to rejuvenate the culture of life.

As you can see from this newsletter, there are many issues that Campaign Life Coalition must address and on so many fronts. Please use the card and envelope enclosed in this package to financially support your local CLC organization.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

If you do not wish to be on our mailing list, please contact us at the address below.

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