

OP ED

"Op Ed" — old time newspaper term meaning the page opposite the editorial page. This page has traditionally been held open for opinion pieces, letters, and comment from various sources.

Family Violence Getting control

Often when I speak to abused women, the story is the same. Oh, the circumstances may vary — the length of the abusive relationship is different, the form of abuse is different — but the women all wind up with the same message. They all, in one way or another, allowed their abusive partner to have and to maintain control of them. Sometimes the controlling behaviors are subtle, but usually, the controls are overt.

Most of these women spend a period of time in anger. Rage, even. It may appear to outsiders that they are angry at their abuser, angry at their family for not helping them or angry at the system which they believe failed them. These women are always angry with themselves. They are enraged that they put up with being beaten or other forms of abuse and thought that was part of being loved. They are enraged that they thought they didn't deserve any better treatment from their chosen mate. They are enraged they chose so poorly. They may even be enraged that they wasted so much time on a relationship and a man who was so undeserving. They are enraged that their love and support was not enough to break through the walls their abusive partner is surrounded by.

In retrospect, these women realize their lives could have been much different. Certainly they don't regret everything because there were many good times. After all, their partner wasn't abusive all the time. They may have children whom they cherish and friends they would not have made if the relationship hadn't existed.

Still, there is regret. Dealing with that sadness is probably the most difficult thing an abused woman must confront. It is the sadness that turns to rage. And it is the rage that can turn a woman against other men.

For a long time I was angry at him. Even then, I knew I was more angry at myself. That anger was just being transferred to him. For a long time I thought that I had to make our relationship work, that I was responsible for his happiness, and that I had to accommodate his needs. I loved. That wasn't wrong! But I can only be responsible for my own happiness. I gave it everything I had. That wasn't wrong! But I need to choose the right persons and give to them. I need to learn to walk away from abusive relationships when the red flag first begins to rise.

I am still in the process of taking control of my life as are some of



my friends. As we struggle, we examine our relationships with our children to see if we are being used, we examine our relationships with other women to see how they fit our futures and we examine each man who comes into our lives for signs of controlling behavior patterns. Some of us have withdrawn from men for a time to assess our own needs.

Some of us don't even know what makes us happy because we have spent our lives pleasing others and that has given us a measure of satisfaction. I have accomplished a lot with my life, yet, I wonder. I experience joy from writing, my children, my work and through helping others.

What is it that will ensure a contentment and an inner peace that will last a lifetime? Gaining control of your life and making decisions which will be positive in meeting your own needs are in the forefront.

Feel free to contact Jacie in confidence by directing letters to her attention at Halton Hills This Week. All correspondence will remain confidential. Jacie can be reached in person through the Distress Centre at 877-1211. If you are in crisis, call the Distress Centre or 911.



**Garth Turner MP
Halton-Peel**

So, we get that vote on the constitution after all. In my view, this is a good thing, and the decision is one I've been wanting for month.

Nobody should forget that this is the people's constitution, not the politicians'. The voters of Canada should have an historic opportunity to turn thumbs up or down on this package of changes which will affect the way the country is run.

There will be referendum and a month-long campaign preceding it. There will surely be lots of people trying to influence the final outcome of the vote. The separatists in Quebec, of course, are against the constitution for obvious reasons — they want Canada to fail.

But others may also come out in opposition. Women's groups have complained that there is not enough "gender equality." Labor boss Bob White has already said a vote against the deal is not a vote against Canada. Other don't like the look of the new Senate. And the Reform Party has so far refused to say if it will be in favor or in opposition,

Parliament Hill report

while the three traditional parties all back the accord.

Let's face it. The deal is a compromise. And no compromise will make everyone happy. I don't mind telling you I have some personal problems with what was worked out. I still don't think Ontario is equal to Saskatchewan or Nova Scotia, and have a hard time with a Senate that pretend they are. I have trouble with a constitution that enshrines social programs, but not property rights. I'm concerned about premiers who are saying now they'll stack the Senate, based on the sex of the senators. And I question whether or not average Canadians want a House of Commons with 40 more MPs.

On the positive side, however, this is a real opportunity to get the whole issue behind us, so we can concentrate on improving the economy. If passed, it will quell the fires of Quebec separatism. Canada will remain a united, federal country and that can only be good as we compete for global trade.

Finally, let's not forget that if the Constitution can be changed once, then it can be changed again. If this batch of amendments turns out to be too much or little, then future politicians can go back and tinker.

Personally, I will vote "yes" on the referendum, for the reasons I have just given, and despite my misgivings about some things. But while I will support the deal, I am not going to spend the referendum campaign telling people how they should vote.

Politicians don't have a corner on

patriotism, and people will have to make up their own minds. The deal will be successful, or fail, on its own merits.

But during this campaign, I will work very hard to ensure as many people as possible understand what changes involve, what the consequences of them will be; and the potential fallout of a "yes" or "no" vote. I'll attempt to do this in a number of ways, which will be spelled out in this space in the coming weeks.

During October, I'll be having a series of public information meetings all across this riding, where we can discuss the proposed changes, exchange views and get printed material. In addition, I'll be hosting live phone-in shows on local cable television, and speaking to as many service clubs, church organizations and community groups as I can.

In many ridings across Canada, people are in the process of forming committees to actively promote the "yes" option. If you would like to be involved in such an organization, then give me a call. If you belong to a club or group which would like me, or someone else, to speak on this subject, also call. And if you have an evening free when one of my meetings is nearby, please try to attend.

Finally, I want to know what you think about these proposals, and this process of getting people involved. Any ideas on how we might better inform voters would be appreciated. Please call: (416)873-4673 or toll free 1-800-668-4322.

Pay equity "Orwellian": FCP Deputy leader says

Dear Editor,

After implementing "pay equity" in Ontario, which in fact was initiated by the provincial Liberals, the NDP government is starting an "employment equity" program.

"Pay equity" was devised as a master plan for centralized wage control. Through this legislation the government can intervene in the private sector to determine the "value" of each job and accordingly impose a certain wage.

To complete the Orwellian scenario, the government

needs to control "who" gets a job and "where" the job is needed. What the government calls "employment equity" will serve this purpose.

May the good Lord save us from political philosophers such as those governing Albania, Cuba and Ontario, who did not learn from history and do not perceive that centralized control of the work force can only lead to economic and social disaster!

Giuseppe Gori
Deputy Leader
Family Coalition Party of Ontario

For Pete's Sake

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