

EDITORIAL

Be informed

With just over three weeks to go until the October 26 referendum it is becoming more important that people know what they are voting for -- or against.

While we respect the views that each side is putting forth, it is important for the general public to understand -- even if only vaguely -- what is contained in the Charlottetown Accord.

It is not an easy document to read.

Full of legalese and political double talk, the Consensus Report on the Constitution does not make for a good evening story.

As an example: "A provision should be added to the Constitution stipulating that the Government of Canada must provide reasonable compensation to the government of a province that chooses not to participate in a new Canada-wide shared-cost program that is established by the federal government in an area of exclusive provincial jurisdiction, if that province carries on a program or initiative that is compatible with national objectives."

And while the Consensus report maybe a tough read, voting without reading it would be like taking a driving test without having driven a car -- very irresponsible.

As voters, none of us can afford to listen to the rhetoric spewed out by the the two sides in the referendum debate.

As the weeks leading up to the October 26 vote pass, we can all expect the rhetoric and fear-mongering to reach a fevered pitch.

We urge you to get a copy of the Consensus Report on the Constitution, read through it and then start asking questions on it.

Go to public meetings about the referendum and ask questions there as well.

The bottom line is that an informed voter will not be swayed by the rhetoric or by the personalities behind the rhetoric.

That was then...



Built in 1849 by the Episcopal Methodists, now St. John's United Church, the structure -- seen here in about 1914 -- featured a 50-foot spire with a bell. Photo courtesy of the Esquesing Historical Society

Reader responds to letter

The following letter is written in response to Giuseppe Gori's letter published in Halton Hills This Week, September 26, 1992.

Dear Mr. Gori,

Giuseppe, Giuseppe, Giuseppe! Once again you have ably demonstrated your ignorance and intolerance toward any member of society who does not meet with your political agenda. I am referring, of course, to the spousal benefits awarded recently to homosexual couples.

You define this ruling as an assault on society, and an attack on the family. It is, in fact, neither. It is merely a decision mirroring the progressive open-mindedness that most Canadians wish to observe, consistent with enviro-awareness, anti-racism, gender equality etc. I chuckled while noting your Gallup poll statistics. You, as an educated man, must be aware of the ease by which statistical accuracy can be compromised, if not downright fabricated.

Why should homosexual couples (male or female) be denied any basic rights that a heterosexual couple may have? They are still people, humans, regardless of their sexual orientation. They are no different than the immigrant representing us, or the native Canadian sitting beside you. Why, I bet you even know a gay person! You probably wouldn't admit it though. Homosexuals must be allowed all rights allowed to non-homosexuals, just as we must practice equality among other facets of society (eg. sex, race). It's called tolerance, Giuseppe, anything else is inhumane.

Granted, a problem with biological reproduction may be evident among gay and lesbian couples, but I don't think homosexual practices are going to extinct humanity. Their orientation should not preclude them from beginning a family, if they so wish. If two people love each other, and wish to begin a

family, you and I have no right to deny them it, any more than we can deny anyone the right to work, to purchase a car, to pursue a hobby. Let them have a family. Tolerance.

Ah, the family. Let me quote you, in your September 26 letter.

Since the primary roles of a family are: 1) forming a community of persons, 2) serving life, and 3) participating in the development of society, then, a "nuclear family" can be defined, in a simple way, as a single parent or two parents with children. In today's society, children may be natural or adopted, of only one parent, from a previous marriage or out of wedlock. In addition, an "extended family" can be defined as including any person related by marriage, blood or adoption.

Biology aside, I defy you to judge why it is that this definition can apply only to heterosexual couples. Read it again. It obviously applies equally to homosexual couples. Why, then, in the event of death or injury, should spousal benefits not apply to the remaining member (no pun intended)? Furthermore, how can you define this as an attack on the family? Rather, it is in defense of the family, the cell of society, as you call it.

I find it difficult to understand how a deputy leader of a provincial political party can legally promote homophobic hatred towards certain members of our society. One is reminded of a small, mustachioed European political leader some 55-odd years ago who promoted hatred against a particular sect of society. We learned then that political hatred is a formula for disaster.

I applaud the Human Rights Commission in their decision, for they provided just that -- fundamental human rights. How dare anyone deny anyone else just that? Wake up Giuseppe, your agenda is fatally flawed.

Sincerely,
Cameron MacLean

Family Violence Help is necessary and effective

By Jacie B. Palmer

We all need help from others sometimes. Seeking help is not an admission of your own inadequacy. It gives you the chance to take a look at yourself and to have the opportunity to review future options and obstacles which must be overcome and recognize changes that must be made.

It takes real courage to allow another person to help you with the difficult problems in life -- like accepting yourself as you are. A dear friend of mine visited recently and, although we've known each other for thirty years, we rarely see each other because our homes are separated by thousands of miles. During this visit she remarked that she'd always admired me because I've always been so comfortable with myself. I have to admit I am. Often I can be too hard of myself but I'm getting better at that, too. At the same time I want to grow and develop as a human being.

Help! I've always prided myself on the fact that I could tackle projects, achieve results and be successful in my own eyes, at least. Yet a few years ago I realized I needed help. I was terrified! At one point I felt no-one could help me. I felt hopeless. But help I finally sought and found and much to my betterment.

In our society most of us are too wrapped up in business, stress and commitments to take a look at ourselves and recognize our own needs. Most mothers talk of running from school to work to ball games to gymnastics and finally home. Fathers, too, are running around in all directions trying to fight fires, maintain home, attend to kids and often leave no time for themselves after commitments. Tired out! Too many commitments!

There is nothing wrong with taking a "time-out." Sometimes that may involve a job switch to a less stressful position, a vacation alone or with your mate or a move of some type. These all involve change -- and change takes

courage. Today, because of the recession and job losses many families are facing enormous changes and the challenges that accompany these economic times.

A minority in society choose to take a look at themselves and allow growth and development to enable them to be better human beings. That is the most difficult form of change. Taking a look at yourself

challenge. Revealing one's inner thoughts and ideas to a stranger or a group of strangers may not be easy -- but for a better you -- it is absolutely worth it.

Choosing to make each day of the rest of your life the best it can be is up to you. You have to decide. You must make that choice. Yes, it's scary! Yes, you may shed tears -- lots of them. Yes, some of your relationships will likely end -- that's perhaps the scariest part.

But I can guarantee that if you choose to work towards understanding yourself, if you choose to accept help from others, if you choose to take a cold, hard look at your life -- you will reap the benefits of more satisfaction, contentment and peace. Your life will become more fulfilling.

Asking for help -- admitting we're hurting and in pain -- is not easy because we want to feel "in-control" of our own lives. As you seek help -- admit your need -- you will be blessed with a new, dynamic, wonderful you! If you want to live a high quality, fulfilled life don't be afraid to take that step to obtain some help. It's not a crime to need help -- it's an opportunity of a lifetime.

Life should be enjoyed -- not survived!

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.



and dreaming of the person you would like to become is difficult. We can never measure up to our own expectations and those who hold Christian or other religious beliefs are often extremely hard on themselves when they make a mistake.

Trying to assess what it is that will truly make us happy -- rather than what we believe will make us happy -- is challenging. I was afraid I'd be disappointed in me. -- But -- boy, am I glad I took up the

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