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FALL 1986

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Ft. McMurray, Alberta Pro-Choice Victory

On October 20th, the voters in Ft. McMurray, Alberta (300 miles north of Edmonton) went to the Polls to elect municipal candidates; to fill vacancies on the local hospital board; and to give their opinion on whether or not a therapeutic abortion committee should be established at the Ft. McMurray's only hospital.

The referendum became a key focus of the municipal election campaign. At the present time, no abortions are provided at the Ft. McMurray hospital which means there is no access to abortion in this whole region of northern Alberta. Women must travel long distances to Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Calgary or the United States.

The campaign involved a widespread publicity blitz by pro-choice and anti-choice activists. Billboards, leaflets, buttons, newspaper ads and bumper stickers appeared. The Ft. McMurray chapter of CARAL sponsored an excellent candidate for election to the hospital board. Judy Moynihan ran for the Board on a programme of family-centered maternity care, the need to address the health concerns of youth, a preventative approach to health care, effective delivery of health care services to the native community and outlying areas and the establishment of a Therapeutic Abortion Committee. All candidates for the hospital board were called on to express their attitude to the setting up of a TAC. Despite a vigorous campaign by the anti-choice movement, their efforts were unsuccessful. Judy Moynihan and several other pro-choice candidates were elected. The results of the referendum showed a clear majority in favour of a Therapeutic Abortion Committee.

Anti-Choice Sex Ed Report - More Uncritical Reporting

This fall issue of PRO-CHOICE NEWS contains an article on the Human Life Research Institute's anti-sex ed report which received fairly widespread uncritical reporting. (See "Anti-Choice Research Group Promotes Report Against Sex Education".) Since we've gone to press this wholly-biased report has gained further ground. Recently, the Ontario School Trustees Association published information on the report without explanation of its bias, and the October issue of "Canadian Family Physician" includes an article "How important is Sex Education" based on the same information (p. 3535).

We're asking our supporters to inform us of other places this material surfaces - and to send us copies of anything published on it. It's important that this material be counteracted whenever it appears by objective information on the value of sex education.

Public Speakers on Choice Wanted

CARAL receives constant requests for speakers on the pro-choice position from schools, community and religious groups. If you are an experienced speaker and would be interested in volunteering for this important work - or are interested in learning how to make a presentation, please write to:

CARAL, National Office
344 Bloor St. West, Suite 306
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 1W9

or contact your local chapter.

The Toronto CARAL chapter is organizing a Speakers Workshop soon and would like to hear from people interested in attending. Please call (416) 961-1507 for more information.

Write to the New Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

We have a new Minister Responsible for the Status of Women in Ottawa, the Hon. Barbara McDougall, and we feel it is very important that as many of our supporters as possible write to her to express concern about the present crisis in abortion access in Canada. We have included a sample letter and, because politicians pay far more attention to personal rather than form letters we ask you to re-write or re-type the sample letter, changing it as you wish to reflect your own personal style.

Failing that, please add a few personal comments to the sample letter or, if time prevents, just send the letter as is, making sure to add your own return address. But do send it. The politicians do count the letters they receive as a strong indicator of public opinion and we know there are busy anti-choice letter writers.

We'd like you to copy the letter as well and have friends and relatives get in their views as well. Imagine the impact if every CARAL member wrote a letter - and there are now over 15,000 of you! Remember that **NO STAMP IS NEEDED**, but you must put M.P. after Ms McDougall's name on the envelope.

If You're Moving

Please let us know. Include your name, previous address and new address and telephone.

You and Direct Mail

You may not be aware that we occasionally trade our mailing list with other groups in order to inform a larger number of people about our work. We consider this very important but we do limit the number of trades to a few non-profit organizations each year on a one-time basis. HOWEVER, IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR NAME INCLUDED IN ANY TRADES, PLEASE NOTIFY THE OFFICE IN WRITING.