



INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

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Historically, totalitarian governments have regarded the family as a threat. It is a threat to them because the family passes on tradition, culture and faith - all of which confront the state when it wishes to impose its own will on its citizens.

It is not just totalitarian governments however, that are enemies of the family unit: Western culture, supported by compliant government policies, also undermines the family.

Today's Western Culture

The culture in the West requires living on the edge, since it is careless about and/or indifferent to the future. What matters is material comforts, acquired here and now. Because of this desire for material acquisitions, all European countries (except France and Ireland) are experiencing aging populations, because of extremely low birth rates. Further, there are few societal restraints on behaviour in Western cultures. Cohabitation outside marriage is no longer frowned upon, but is the norm, even though it is less stable than legal marriage and involves more domestic violence. Illegitimacy and divorce are accepted and regarded as normal occurrences in most Western countries.

These monumental changes in our culture have been supported by compliant governments, which encourage this new culture by way of social and economic policies.

This is creating dark clouds on the horizon: Western societies must either face their problems head-on or perish. The problems include:



Co-Organizers:



Co-Conveners:





Demographic issues, no-fault divorce, increase in common-law relationships, high illegitimacy rates, and same-sex marriages.

Changes Required to Protect and Encourage the Development of Traditional Families

Economic Policies

Pro-Family Economic Policies

The rapidly declining population in most countries must be dealt with in order to protect the future of these nations. The best solution is to encourage and support the development of families, so as to ensure, not just an increase in the number of future taxpayers, but also the number of entrepreneurs and workers necessary to sustain the economy. For example, earned income left in the hands of the family, by reduced taxation on the family, is a genuine government investment, not only for stimulating the economy, but, also, specifically, for meeting the needs of families – a sure way to reduce child poverty.

An example of the efficacy of such a policy has been provided by France, which provides economic benefits for large families. Such policies have raised France's birth rate. At one time, France's birth rate was typical of European nations' only 1.5 children per woman of childbearing age. In a matter of a few years, with the implementation of pro-family policies, France, as of 2010, has a birth rate of 2.0 children per woman of childbearing age, and it now holds second place in the birth rates for European countries, with only Ireland having a higher birth rate, of 2.1, as of 2010.

Examples of some of the innovative economic perks provided by France for families are:

Calibrated reduction in taxation for each child. The more children a family has, the less tax they pay;

A monthly allowance of \$360.00 for families with three children. This grant increases when the children reach 11 years of age;

A tax deduction for housekeeping help;

Families have an option of receiving \$1,160.00 per month for 1 year after the birth of a third child or \$690.00 per month for three years after that birth;

Russia signed several restrictions on abortion into law in 2011, requiring abortion providers to devote 10% of advertising costs to describing the dangers of abortion to a woman's health and make it illegal to describe abortion as a safe medical procedure. Russia has a weeklong national campaign against abortion



called “Give Me Life” and a “Day of Family, Love and Faithfulness”. It also has established pregnancy centres in the major cities in order to provide women with positive alternatives to abortion.

Promotion of Traditional Marriage

In the last few decades, there has been a disastrous retreat in Western countries from traditional marriage. This has created extensive social and cultural problems, especially among the poor and working class who are least able to withstand the breakdown of the family. That is, couples with neither money, education nor connections have more difficulty, not only keeping their families together than more privileged couples, but are less able to cope with the fallout of the family breakdown.

It is essential, therefore, that efforts be made to encourage and strengthen marriage, especially among low income, married couples with children. An example of such a program is the Supporting Healthy Marriage (SHM) program provided by the US Department of Health and Services, which provides educational workshops and family support workers to assist couples which provides them with links to other services in the community. This program, according to follow up studies, has produced a consistent pattern and positive effects on couples’ relationships.

Another example of how marriage can be supported is by providing easily available and low-cost marriage counselling. These services should be tax-deductible and government subsidized. Also, educational programs on the importance of marriage should be made available to the public and especially in schools.

Restrictions on Divorce

It is well established that easier divorce laws increase the social acceptance of divorce. Easy divorce often leads to a predictable cycle of marriage, divorce and remarriage, and is referred to as “serial monogamy,” which is detrimental, not only to the adults, but especially to the children living in these serial relationships. In short, the very idea of lasting marriage, with its values of commitment and permanence, is severely undermined by easy divorce.

If society wishes that the stability and permanence of marriage be ensured, changes must be made to restrict the law on divorce. No-fault divorce promotes a lack of commitment and also undermines one’s obligation toward the other spouse. It trivializes marriage and the detrimental consequences of divorce, not just to the spouses themselves, but to the children and to society as well.

Promotion of Parental Authority in Education





The right of parents to have priority in regard to the education of their children is under severe attack in many countries, such as the UK, the US, Sweden, and Canada. Restrictions on parental rights contravene the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 (3) which provides that “Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.” It also is in contradiction to Articles 5, 14 and 18 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Parents must have the authority to pass on to their children their values, faith and morals. The state must not be allowed to manipulate and propagandize the children as tools to accept the state’s defined social policies.

Vulnerable children must be protected first and foremost by their parents and all attempts by the state to restrict parental authority must be challenged and disallowed.

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