



Catholic Civil Rights League

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Monthly highlights

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League challenges grant for vulgar rock album

The Catholic Civil Rights League May 20 called on Heritage Canada to explain its grant to Vancouver punk rock band "Living with Lions" for its new album.

The album "Holy S**t" is subtitled "The P** Testament." The CD package is designed to resemble a Bible, featuring liner notes written in the style of biblical verses. The last line of the band's acknowledgements read, "We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage", the standard acknowledgement for work granted funding under Heritage programs (see our press release of May 19 online at ccrl.ca).

This type of funding is administered by Heritage Canada through the Foundation Assisting Canadian Talent on Recordings (FACTOR), which provides loans and grants to Canadian individuals and groups in the music recording industry to promote and foster Canadian talent. In our letter to Heritage Canada, copied to Prime Minister Harper and Heritage Minister Rob Moore, we pointed out that this is hardly the type of work Canadian taxpayers expect to see adorned with their government's logo, and asked for better oversight

Thanks to the negative publicity we helped generate, the band is recalling all copies of the disc. It plans to re-issue the disc but without FACTOR sup-

port and hence without the government logo. Most of the money will be returned.

Let the League know: Articles, cartoons and advertising that you believe have anti-Catholic content should be sent to ccrl@ccrl.ca to help us respond in a timely way.

League intervenes in Quebec case at SCC

On Wednesday May 18 the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada heard the case of the Drummondville, Que. family seeking an exemption from Quebec's program in ethics and religious culture (ECR). Thanks to your generosity, the League and its coalition partners appeared as intervenors, represented by Jean-Yves Cote. Lawyers Mark Phillips and Guy Pratte appeared on the family's behalf. League director Jean Morse-Chevrier attended.

The case, which attracted many intervenors, centres on the right of parents to withdraw their children from the course, which replaces the Catholic, Protestant or non-religious moral instruction previously offered in Quebec schools. (Until the course was implemented in 2009, more than 70 per cent of parents chose the Catholic option.) The Association of Catholic Parents of Quebec was advised of more than 1,700 requests to various school boards for an exemption, none of which had been granted.

The program and its mandatory nature conflict with the fundamental right of parents to direct the religious education of their children. As Jean-Yves said: "The role of government is to support the parent in his work as an educator, not to replace him." Our coalition, the Christian Coalition for Parental (from page one)

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Rights in Education (RCDPE) included the Association of Catholic parents in Quebec (APCQ), the League, Faith and Freedom Alliance and the Association of the Coptic Orthodox Community of Greater Montreal.

The lawyer for the Attorney General of Quebec argued that the course is neutral on religion, presenting various viewpoints. However, Catholic school trustee associations and other educational groups that intervened say the program tends to promote relativism and the questioning of beliefs at inappropriate ages. All emphasized the right of parents to be granted exemptions from material that conflicts with what is being taught in the home. The Supreme Court reserved its decision, which could take several months.

Michael Coren wins League award

The League is pleased to announce that it has chosen author and journalist Michael Coren as winner of this year's Archbishop Adam Exner Award for Catholic Excellence in Public Life. The award will be presented at the League's annual dinner in Toronto June 2, which will feature a keynote address by Donald DeMarco. An article about the talk and the event will be featured on our website later in June.

"Through his prominent defence of Catholic teaching in his writing and broadcasting, Michael has provided strong correction to the myths that many continue to believe about our faith, and also to the bias that we often see in media coverage of faith-based issues," said League President Philip Horgan. "It's a pleasure to recognize Michael's work in the media and how much it has helped promote better understanding of Catholicism."

League supports March for Life

The League, long-time supporter of the national [March for Life](#), thanks all march participants for the important witness they provided May 12-14 in calling for greater protection for human life from conception to natural death. Several young League members attended the March on CCRL's behalf, and we provided some advertising support to na-

tional organizers Campaign Life Coalition.

"The League has been involved in civil rights issues for over 25 years, and we regard the right to life as the most fundamental of all rights," said Joanne McGarry, League executive director. "It's the basis of all the other important rights and freedoms. Because of that, it's gratifying to see so many young people involved with the march, and with pro-life work in general."

League applies to intervene in Whatcott appeal at SCC

OTTAWA, May 4, 2011 – The Catholic Civil Rights League has applied for leave to intervene in the Supreme Court of Canada appeal between the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and William Whatcott, who has faced numerous human rights filings in Saskatchewan under Section 14 of the province's Human Rights Code because of his public leafleting and picketing on various homosexual rights questions.

In its application for leave to intervene, the League noted its long-standing opposition to Section 14 and its counterparts in other provinces. "In the CCRL's view, hate speech should be a matter solely for the courts in criminal cases; government tribunals ought not to be permitted to regulate expression. Of particular concern to the CCRL have been the instances where human rights commissions have labeled the expression of unpopular opinions as "hate speech", and thereby penalized those expressive activities. The burden of human rights commissions' intervention in the marketplace of ideas is, in the CCRL's assessment, felt particularly by religious communities, since allegations of "hate speech" often involve opinions based on religious beliefs," the application stated.

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