

Saskatchewan minister says homosexuals unfit to adopt

REGINA (CUP) — A human rights group is calling for the resignation of Saskatchewan's Minister of Social Services after he said homosexual couples should not be allowed to adopt children.

"I don't believe homosexuals should be allowed to adopt children in this province, and that is the state of adoption right now," Grant Schmidt told reporters at the provincial legislature October 29. "We have more stable families lining up for adoption and we believe we should do what's best for children."

When a reporter asked Schmidt why homosexual couples would be less stable than heterosexuals, Schmidt answered, "go and find out for yourself."

Following this comment, Schmidt's chief of staff, Len Schnell, escorted the minister away, telling reporters, "Okay, guys, end of the programme, he answered your questions."

"(Premier) Grant Devine ultimately has the responsibility for what his minister said, and the premier has got to come out and explain what his stand is," said Peter Millard of the newly formed Coalition for Human Equality.

"Are there two classes of citizens? Does he agree with his minister of social services? And if he doesn't, he must take steps remedy that. The obvious thing is to remove Mr. Schmidt," said Millard, who is also chair of the Department of English at the University of Saskatchewan.

But Schmidt said in a CBC-TV interview his policy is supported by the rest of the Progressive Conservative government caucus.

Mona Acker, a professor at the University of Regina's School of Social Work, said research shows gay and lesbian couples are as adept at parenting as heterosexual couples.

Acker quoted studies done between 1979 and 1981 based on interviews with 37 heterosexual and 43 lesbian mothers. The studies concluded the children of lesbian mothers had the same psychological makeup and male-female behaviour as children of

single mothers and heterosexual couples.

Wayne Rorke, the coordinator of the Saskatchewan Adoptive Parents Association, said gay and lesbian adoptive parents would be welcome in that organization.

"We don't discriminate," he said.

Research shows gay or lesbian couples adept at parenting

Though Schmidt has apparently written off the gay and lesbian vote for the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan, he has support in some quarters.

On October 16, Schmidt and Premier Devine were presented with a pro-family award at the founding convention of the Victorious Women of Canada in Saskatoon. The organization was formed after a split in the controversial family-issues group REAL Women of Canada.

A press release said Schmidt was granted the award partly because he ensured gay rights legislation was not implemented in the province.

According to Vonda Kosloski of Victorious Women, the minister "defends innocent children who have no one to defend them from a militant homosexual lobby group."

Victorious Women opposes adoption rights for gays because

it claims a high proportion of gay people have been exposed to the AIDS virus and will transmit the disease to the children through "wet sneezes" and the exchange of body fluids.

"This is a total fabrication," said Nils Clausson, executive director of AIDS Regina and English professor at the University of Regina.

"There is no scientific evidence to prove, and actually quite a lot to disprove, that the virus is transmitted through casual contact," said Clausson. "Statements like these show the level of fear and hysteria there is in the general public over this disease, and how much of an effort organizations like ours have to make to supply information and education to the general public."

"Groups like (Victorious Women) use issues like these to support bigotry against gay and lesbian liberation."

Millard said the Coalition has gay, lesbian, and heterosexual members, and is expanding.

"We want to reach the real moral majority in Saskatchewan," said Millard. "We see ourselves as ultimately including church groups, unions, single parents, and others who are concerned."

Millard said the Coalition will lobby for changes to the Saskatchewan human rights code to make it illegal to discriminate against people on the basis of sexual orientation.

"Sexual orientation is not a prohibited area of discrimination in Saskatchewan, as it is in Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and the Yukon," said Millard. "If it were, Mr. Schmidt could be charged with counselling to break the law."

What is the Gazette?

Come learn about the Gazette at a forum on the Gazette Constitution, Tuesday, 12:30 p.m., in room 220 of the Dal SUB.

Copies of the Gazette Constitution are available at the Gazette, 3rd floor, SUB. All Dalhousie students are welcome.



Shoppers Drug Mart & Home Health Care Centre

**• 7:00am-11:00pm daily
(9:00am opening Sundays)**

- Free Prescription Delivery In Southend
- Convenience Food Basket
- Full-line medical & surgical equipment & supplies
- Sub Post Office
- Photocopier
- Pregnancy Testing

Fenwick Medical Centre
5995 Fenwick Street
Halifax, N.S. B3H 4M2 421-1683



'Tis the Season for
LEATHER

GLOVES
Kid Leather
Deer Skin
Sheepskin
Pigskin

LUGGAGE
Attaches
Portfolios
Knapsacs
Suitcases
Garment Bags
Carry-ons

SLIPPERS
Sheepskin
Deerskin

LAYAWAY NOW

- Fine Leather Garments
- Men's Fashion Footwear
- Leather Luggage

429-4934

5472 Spring Garden Road.



**THE TANNERY
by
D.J.
LIMITED**

Drivers Wanted.

Call
453-3333



GRECO
Pizza On Time...
Or Pizza On Us!