

Think of monarchy on Victoria Day, says republican group

Goal is to help open the public's eyes to truth about the monarchy

Toronto, May 19, 2006 - This year, Citizens for a Canadian Republic is asking Canadians to break with tradition and think of Victoria Day as more than just another statutory holiday.

"We've found that the more Canadians know about the monarchy, the less they want to keep it." says the group's national director, Tom Freda. "There are so many aspects of the institution that just no longer reflect Canadian values." he adds, "One of our mandates is to point that out to the public."

Among the facts the group wants Canadians to ponder:

- Contrary to our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which expressly forbids discrimination on the basis of race or religion, our constitution supports the part of the Rules of Succession which denies any Roman Catholic, Jew, Hindu, Muslim or anyone not a Protestant from becoming Canada's head of state. Even marriage to a Roman Catholic automatically makes one ineligible to become Canada's head of state.
- The Charter forbids discrimination on the basis of gender, yet, if Canada's head of state, Queen Elizabeth II, had a younger brother, she would not have become Queen.
- The Charter also guarantees freedom of thought and protects individuals from being compelled to make statements contrary to their personal beliefs or opinions. Despite that, new Canadians who believe that the monarchy is inegalitarian or undemocratic are forced to swear an oath of allegiance to the reigning monarch or be denied citizenship.
- Canada is an independent nation. Yet, Canadians have no right to choose who becomes head of state of their own country. When the Queen's reign ends, ***Prince Charles automatically becomes Canada's head of state, whether we like it or not.***

To mark Victoria Day this year, a dedicated contingent of CCR's 200 member Toronto chapter will be conducting a peaceful, sidewalk march through Toronto's downtown core. During the march, the group's Toronto chapter president, Ashok Charles, will lead other new Canadians in a ceremony recanting the portion of the Oath of Citizenship that declared their allegiance to "Queen Elizabeth II and her heirs and successors". To acknowledge their allegiance only to Canada, they'll then reaffirm their commitment to the remainder of the oath requiring fulfillment of their duties as a Canadian citizen.

Mr. Charles hopes this symbolic action will prompt an examination of Canadian values in regards to democracy and citizenship.

EVENT DETAILS

DATE Monday, May 22, 2006 (Victoria Day)

TIME Approximately 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM (Gathering at 11:30)

LOCATION Starting at the front lawn of the Queens Park Ontario Legislature building, the march will wind through Toronto's core, ending at Queen's Park roughly an hour later. (Route is available to media on request.) This event is approved by Queen's Park and Toronto Police.

SPEAKERS Guests will be political science author Randall White, civil rights lawyer and UN war crimes tribunal investigator Charles Roach and CCR National Director Tom Freda.

ABOUT CITIZENS FOR A CANADIAN REPUBLIC

Citizens for a Canadian Republic is a registered non-partisan, not-for-profit organization advocating the Canadianization of the head of state since 2002. More information is available at CCR's website.

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