

UN Family Day Conference in the Czech Parliament

Prague, Czech Republic, 22. May 2014

A conference in the Parliament of the Czech Republic on May 22, 2014 in observance of the International Day of Families was organized by UPF-Czech Republic, UPF-Germany and other Czech partner organizations.



The conference was under auspices of the Permanent Commission for Family, Equal Opportunities and Minorities of the Czech Parliament with the support of the Czech-German Fund for the Future.

The opening speech was delivered by the deputy speaker of the House and deputy chair of the Permanent Commission for Family, Equal Opportunities and Minorities of the Czech Parliament. In his opening speech he emphasized the importance of the family for a healthy society. Family has a historical value and is a basic stone of each society. However even though in today's Europe nobody persecutes the family young people do not hurry to establish the family and the family is not a value in today's world. To establish a family is not a matter of economics only. The reasons for this fact are different. In Czech Republic the fatality is 1,42 %. In a recent research among young women focused on the priorities of life they named first the education, career and family was on the third place. The function of family is not only to reproduce but mainly to create home, safety and place where people love each other. The economics is the secondary. People should be proud of the family. Family should recover its status in the society. If we have children the nation can continue and prosper.



Next was **Mr. Martin Hořák**, representative of the Czech-German Fund for the Future. He named two factors why this conference is of a great value. First, people can meet from two countries and second the significance of the topic. It was not for the first time when we support such a conference he said. We are happy to support this conference because family is connected with the future.

Dr. Juraj Lajda on behalf of the UPF Czech Republic pointed out the fact that this conference has not only the dimension of the theme itself but also an



international dimension which is very important, especially in the case of the relationships between Czechs and Germans. He welcomed the German guests and also other participants from Austria and Slovakia.

Similarly spoke also **Christian Hausmann**, president of UPF Germany. He expressed gratitude for organizing this conference. The theme of family is a hot topic in many nations and also in the European Parliament. Nowadays the family is no more a natural phenomena as it was in the past. The state tries to intervene into family matters. It is in many countries like this. People doubt if family is a good institution.



The first panel called „Problems of the Contemporary Family“ opened **Dr. Jeroným Klimeš**. He is known in the Czech Republic as an experienced clinical psychologist, especially in the area of divorce, marriage problems and adoption of children. He mentioned that people do not want to have children. Usually because it is more convenient without children. They like to enjoy their lives. It is not an economical problem as many times people think and say because the highly developed countries have a very low birthrate. He pointed out if this trend continues the nations will diminish and finally die out. Some decades ago the motto was one child for father, one for mother and one for the nation. Now this is no truer.



Next speaker was a guest from Germany **Dr. Stefan Fuchs** from the Institute of Demography in Bonn. He explained the trends of the family policy. The question is who should educate the children – the state or the parents? This is a very hot problem, especially in Europe when many activists try to persuade the public that the state and so called experts and professionals can do this job better than the parents. This tendency is very dangerous because it is the same like communist ideology. The second panel focused on „Significance of the Family for the Society“.



Mrs. Helena Klímová, honorary Vice-president of the Rafael Institute spoke about the families after holocaust. Each human being has a soul. She spoke about the consequences when parental care is missing. Family is the place where the personality of each human being is formed and created.



Next speaker **Dr. Roman Joch**, director of the Civic Institute spoke about family as a place where we can learn what is freedom, equality, authority and also hierarchy. The family creates a base for emotional development, economical independence, education, social and health care and cultural and free time activities. Therefore we should do our best to establish good and functional families.



The last speaker in this panel was **Mrs. Gisele Muenster** from Germany, representing the Initiative Church from down. She mentioned that the Catholic Church should open more for the family. The pope Franciscus will make a research what people think about the family in autumn. What is family? In a traditional family father took care for finances and mother for the household and children education. This concept of a traditional family is being changed nowadays. Since 60s of the 20th century there is another development of family concept which engenders the traditional family. She mentioned the counter conception possibilities, education opportunities for women, young

People prolong their youth etc. All these new trends bring also new problems. Family is a unique whole. Everybody in family can develop in the best way. We should support the family. Then also the society will function better.



The third panel was called „Marriage and Parenthood“. **Dr. Jana Jochová**, vice-president of the Committee for the Defense of the Parental Rights spoke from her own experience. If she had not a family and children she could not speak on this topic. The greatest value is freedom. I wanted to maintain the freedom for my children she explained. She mentioned Gabriele Kuby who speaks about the gender ideology which she connected with the sexuality. As an activist she was against the one and only way of sexual education at schools in Czech Republic. They succeeded and the concept of sex education offered by state was not approved.



Mrs. Hildegard Piepenburg, chairwoman of the Family department of UPF Germany spoke about the definition of the traditional family. She mentioned that against the state supported children education program arises a growing opposition. The science confirms the differences between sexes and natural education of children by parents. This is the best way how to prepare the best environment for children education. This cannot be substituted by the state. We should avoid any ideology and particular interests in the children education. According to the UPF concept family is a school of love.



The final speaker in this panel was **Mr. Dan Drapal**, vice-president of the William Wilberforce Institute. Historically, family starts with a wedding as a rite. Family and marriage is more than friendship. Family means distribution of roles. But this becomes doubtful nowadays. Even though father loves his child he cannot milk the child. Also a single mother can take care of the child but cannot educate him as a father. The boys need some father figure in their education. It cannot be substituted. Mothers and fathers have their specific functions and value. If the family is weak the society can be easily manipulated. If family is strong people cannot be manipulated easily. For a good family we need to sacrifice something. Both men and women.



The last panel was devoted to Family and Media. **Dr. Michaela Freiová** editor-in-chief of the Res Claritatis magazine spoke about the image of the family in media in the 90s of the 20th century in Czech Republic. Women in the household were considered to be inferior. Only a paid job has value. Children's care should be entrusted to the institutions and kindergartens. Marriage based on the equal role of man and woman is a stereotype which has to be changed. TV and media started to propagate family concept similar like in communism. This phenomena exists also in the West in neo-Marxist form. Media do not publicize what is going on but what people should think and do – it reminds the time of reeducation like in communism. Christian values are ridiculed. She pointed out that the attack on the family is basically attack on the religion which tries to maintain the traditional values.



The last speaker was **Birgit Kelle** from Germany, president of the Initiative Frau 2000 plus. She mentioned that the traditional family is not often in media. Most of the journalists do not live in traditional families, are not married and have no children. All the journalists think they have the truth. The women in media are often the feminists. Model of a traditional family is considered as a stereotype which should be changed. They want to create a new family. The reports are about

a successful single mother taking care of her child. But they do not speak about the break of family which happened before. Nobody enters into marriage with the idea he or she will become a single mother. They want first tolerance and then acceptance. She was many times stopped to speak in media. But now the silent majority can be mobilized.

The conference was for the first time in the Czech Parliament which means that the topic is of a great importance. We could prepare the conference in cooperation with the UPF Germany and other partner organizations which made the conference very successful. Especially the partnership of the UPF Germany gave the conference an international dimension. Among the participants there were people from Austria and Slovakia as well.

In the conference it was clear that the traditional family is in danger and there are ideological attacks on family and therefore the family must be protected. The silent majority has to wake up. A neo-Marxist ideology trying to destroy the traditional family comes mostly from the West. The East has experienced communism and is more careful. The people are aware of the effort of the state to take away the rights to educate the children and organize the life style of people. Some of the 81 participants expressed their gratitude for the conference and appreciation for the high level standard of the speakers. Several of them who participated in a similar conference in the Senate a few days before shared that this conference was better.

Juraj Lajda

