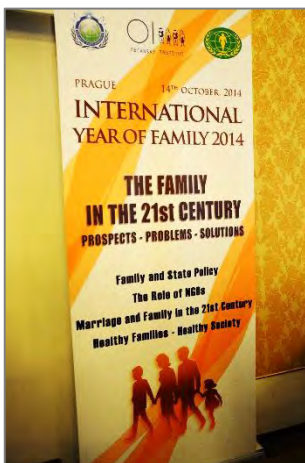


ELC 2014 – “The Family in the 21st Century”

Prague, The House of Parliament, Czech Republic, 14. October 2014



Following the successful conference on Family and Society in the year of the 20th anniversary of the Family Day proclaimed by the UN which was organized together with the German UPF chapter in May 2014 in the Czech Parliament, the Czech UPF chapter convened the European Leadership

Conference in the House of Parliament in Prague on the 14th October 2014.

The topic was „The Family in the 21st Century“.

The purpose of the conference was to give argumentation equipment to the parliamentarians, make connections with the pro-family oriented NGOs and other organizations and last not least to educate the civil society. We can say all these three goals were in some way fulfilled.

Speakers included educators, researchers, parliamentarians and activists from 10 countries all over the world - Austria, Holland, France, Germany, Slovakia, Switzerland, the UK, Czech Republic, Korea and the USA.

The conference was under auspices of 3 members of the Czech Parliament - Mrs. Nina Nováková, Radka Maxová and Jiří Mihola and in cooperation with the WFWP and Civic Institute.

In the opening remarks Juraj Lajda, secretary general of the Czech UPF reminded the importance of this conference which follows the conference in May in Prague and in Geneva in June 2014.



The deputy speaker of the House **Mr. Jan Bartosek** in his opening speech emphasized the need to restore the family values in our society. Unfortunately the family breakdown has direct consequences on the nation and

spiritual health of the society. The marriage and family are important for the future of the nation and our children. In order to reach these values some sacrifices are necessary.



Mrs. Nina Nováková, MP welcomed the conference as the instrument for exchange of different and diversified opinions and appreciated the fact that also representatives of other thought streams

are in the audience. She mentioned that when there is no or little communication between people of various approaches there is a danger of extremism. In the European Union there is a polarization on the issue of family. Every state which does not want free citizens is an enemy to a well-functioning family. Each



totality wanted to disintegrate family. There are still people who have will and enthusiasm to save the family. We can witness there are still functioning families which have a big potential. The healthy politics and economy is built up on the families. If the families are strong also the state can be strong.



Dr. No-hi Pak representing the East Europe UPF emphasized the values of the founders of the UPF Rev. Dr. Sun-myung Moon and Dr. Hak-ja Han which is a prosperous family. They sacrificed their whole life for this goal.

Family is a place where a new life is created. When human beings are born, they cannot function by themselves, but are destined to live connected to the network of love known as “the family”. In the family we can learn about love and relationships. It is a school of love. Finally, the family is the basic unit that makes up a social community. We live together as families to form even greater social structures beyond the family level and thus protect one another. When the family, as the most basic form of community, is healthy, then society too becomes healthy and peace is realized.



Mrs. Radka Maxová, MP and chair of the Commission for Family, Even Opportunities and Minorities was the final speaker in the opening session. She appreciated that many people came for this conference which

means that they are concerned about the family issues. She said that it was the topic of the family and protection of children why she joined the political life. She mentioned the fact that the family is in crisis all over the world. The young people hesitate to

marry and have children. The natural desire of women to have children is suppressed because the society pushes them to make career and to maintain a family is very expensive. Family becomes a burden. For her family means warmth of home, father and mother and feeling of security.

The first session concentrated on the topic „Family and State Policy“. Mrs. Nina Nováková made a clear explanation to sexual education. Education is not mere handing over the knowledge and information but at the same time a purposeful aspiration to shape the character of the being. Education is not neutral. In the Czech Republic the sexual education is separated from the family education. The question is who should do the sexual education – parents or school? The parents have the right to offer their children moral and religious education. On the other hand there are 250 000 incomplete and divorced families in the Czech Republic. How can they educate their children? That is why the school should be somehow involved in the sexual education. According to Mrs. Nováková the sexual education should be a part of the ethical education which includes the education in its complexity.



Antoine Renard, president of the Catholic Association of Family Organizations in Europe made a clear distinction between the family and social policy. First, family is a natural and fundamental unit of the

society. It is a unit not a group of individuals (more than singles). For the future we need to have a goal but this goal is not seen and people are individualistic. There are 1 million divorces in Europe every year and 50 million people live alone. Children from divorced families have two-three times more problems than those who live with their parents. Family breakdown brings suffering, violence and youth delinquency. The adults feel lonely and in



France 80-90% of the social assistance (some 6 bil. Euro) are spent for the support of the broken families. In business term the social aspect of the society means expenses whereas the taking care of a family means an investment for the future. Social problems are problems but family issues are the solution.

words protection of family means also a protection of children. There is a big problem of cohabitation. If we have a crisis of family there is a problem in the education. He suggested the balanced education with moral and ethical values and especially the cultivation of heart. Family breakdown diminishes the educational contribution of the Family Government and schools have to compensate: this are enormous social costs.



Next speaker in this session was the member of the European Parliament from Slovakia **Anna Záborská**. There is no European family policy, she said. Everything should be decided by each nation. According to the basic rights of EU the right to

marry is according to the national laws of each state. EU suggests that the maternity and parental holiday should be shortened. It denies the unsubstitutability of the family and next generation is not seen as the stability factor of the society. If we have a low birthrate new economic problems will emerge in the next generation. Women are seen as manpower and taking care of children is not valued and appreciated. She emphasized that family of a man and woman is a guarantee for a sustainable society. A good example is the family business because it is a long term process seeking not for an immediate result but searching for both economic result and maintenance of the family. Family policy should penetrate to each area of human life.



The second session focused on the „Role of the NGOs in Strengthening the Family“. **Richard Kane**, president of the Family week project spoke about his own experience. 20 years ago he initiated a National Marriage Week project

which later widespread into 26 countries. The idea was to improve the relationships in a marriage and do something practical. NGOs should have courage to do something which can have impact on the society. This project could show why marriage is better than cohabitation because it means a deeper internal and external dedication whereas people who cohabit can easier finish their relationship. The NGOs should encourage the politicians to support the stable families and provide them with statistics and arguments.



Mr. Heiner Handschin, permanent representative to the UN in Geneva mentioned in his speech that we should respect also the rights of the children which means to have a good family. In other



Mrs. Marie Oujezská, director of the National Family Centre in Czech Republic spoke about their activities. These family centres are initiators of the family policy on practical level in villages, towns and cities. They advocate the policy which appreciates good

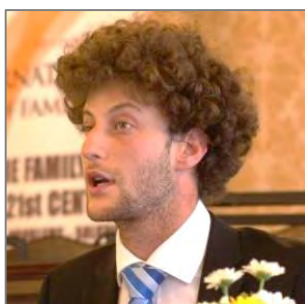


functioning families. Often they have to justify their existence. People think that they deal with the free time activities or with socially nonfunctional families. The government should have apart from the social and employment policies also a family policy. We are missing the mission statement of a parent. Usually people have a very clear definition what is expected from them in their job but this is missing when they come home. The functioning family is a source of a prosperous society.



Joseph Gundacker, president of the Famileinforum, Austria emphasized the importance to present a positive image of the family life in the society. The problem with

European family policy is that it considers only the material wellbeing of family and pays almost no attention to the family relationships. The divorce statistics and the statistics about violence and sexual abuse in families show only the number of divorces and abuses. They don't tell us the real story. Most people still search for stable relationships and the right partner, but they don't know how to build a trusting relationship and create a stable family. Without parents, there would be no children; they are the bearer of human capital, the carrier of love, life and lineage. But parents are considered as being not important anymore for the development of a child. Women are told today that their job is more important. The solution is really to



make a family policy appreciating the families, parents and children.

Jan Gregor, vice-chairman of Young Christian Democrats in Czech Republic and representative of the young generation

pointed out that the family is in crisis and there are 2 reasons for that: the gender ideology and family policy. Gender ideology tries to redefine the family. Accordingly the family is considered as a part of politics not as a private sphere. The ideological roots of this viewpoint are in the Frankfurt school. It says that we cannot know objectively the reality, it is a product of a man. The reality exists only in language. If we change the language also the reality can be changed.

Genderism and communism have the same starting point. European Union has no family policy. Concerning family there are many interest groups behind. The family in EU is viewed only from the point of view of employment and according to that the family policy is made. His suggestion is to pay a continuous attention to the family policy, tax reduction for good families and acknowledgement of the taking care of family as a productive work and recognition of family as an autonomous unit.



The third session was dedicated to the topic. „What Do Family Values Really mean in 2014“. The session was opened by **Jeff Fontain**, director of the Schuman Centre for European studies from Holland. According to him the traditional family disappeared from most places. Instead we

have simple parents, same sex couples etc. The governments should try to prevent divorces because it costs a lot of money for the whole society. Then he asked why the politicians do not address this issue. Because the next election will be in 4 years. The speaker claimed that sustainability means defending the motherhood. People want to defend sustainability in the economic sense but not to defend the motherhood. According to him the guarantee of true sustainability is the family.



Next speaker, **Mrs. Gabriele Kuby** warned before the gender ideology which is wide spreading very rapidly. It is a political strategy to destroy the family. Man is a raw material and can decide about his design – this is the concept of freedom. Legal

recognition of any sexuality means a change of Christian value system. The gender ideology destabilizes the differences between men and women. The loss of identity of an individual leads to the loss of the identity of family and nation. It separates sexuality from the futility. This effort is based on the change of the language and terminology. Most parents reject the teaching of genderism. They want to have a family but nobody teaches them how to make a good family, was the conclusion of the speaker.



Juraj Lajda UPF secretary general in Czech Republic compared the value system in the West and East after the Second World War In the 1960s there was a sexual revolution in the West but the previous communist countries in the East were

fighting for their freedom and democracy and were trying to find the way how to overthrow the communist regime which looked at that time impossible. There was a big hope after 1989 when communism collapsed and people had hope that now a better society will come because the doors to the West opened. To a great disappointment of many people among many good things also the bad things came from the West and now there is a crisis of the family which reminds the Marxist ideology with which we had made the tragic experience 50 years ago. Now both West and East are challenged to solve the problems of the family breakdown and decline of moral values. It is important that the pro-family organizations work together.



Karl-Christian Hausmann, vice-president of CDU Stuttgart from Germany spoke about the situation in Germany. There are many families that must have a double income and both parents have to work. Children must go to the kindergarten and be

out of the house the whole day. Politics is not oriented on the wishes of people. Women are considered as labor force. Mother's role and taking care of children is not valued. To take care of one child costs the state in Germany 1200 euro. If the mother, on the other hand, is at home she will receive from the state only 150 euro. It is important to change this trend and situation. The speaker also mentioned recent survey in Austria where the young women under 29 years old would prefer to stay home with their children if the husband could earn enough money for the family.

The topic of the last session was „The healthy families as a foundation for a healthy and prosperous society“. Carolyn Handschin, Director of the office of UN Relationship and president of WFWP mentioned that many international mechanisms skip “Family”; jumping from "Individual" to "Community". A healthy family is a family which contributes something to the society. The family should guide the members to be such contributors to the society. The speaker mentioned the historic First Human Rights Council Resolution on "Protection of Family" passed on June 26, 2014. The result was reaffirming that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection, reaffirming that States have the primary responsibility to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all humans, recognizing that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children... (who) should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding, convinced that the family, as .. the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community



Matyáš Zrno, vice-president of the Civic Institute in Prague outlined the situation how family is presented in the media.. In the Czech media there are mostly young journalists and editors who have no family, no children and no experiences with the

education of children. They try to pick up sexy topics and a traditional family is a boring one. The society does not have positive examples of good families that would form the society. Alternative forms of coexistence are more attractive for the journalists. The speaker introduced one example when in the Czech media a very little attention was given to the big demonstration for maintain the traditional family in Paris.



Final speakers was **Mrs. Lynn Walsh**, director of the Office for marriage and family UPF in New York. She said that there is little mention about marriage and family in the UN. There is a great emphasis on sexual activity w/o reference to family protecting and

empowering nontraditional sexual practices, rejection of bi-polar view of gender, gender roles, what's best for children and experimenting with new sexual and childrearing approaches. Finally we are coming to redefining love, sex, marriage and being human. Marriage is far more than a piece of paper, she emphasized. Children raised in intact married families

are more likely to attend college, are physically and emotionally healthier, are less likely to be physically or sexually abused, less likely to use drugs or alcohol and to commit delinquent behaviors, have a decreased risk of divorcing when they get married, are less likely to become pregnant/impregnate someone as a teenager, and are less likely to be raised in poverty. It is important to clarify the purpose of marriage, family and life.

After each session was a discussion. In the final discussion it has been recommended to create working groups with experts and people who want to support the family and are open for further cooperation. Many people from the audience showed an active interest how to improve the situation and what can be done, especially how to change the image of a family in the media or how to change the gender politics to family politics.



