

# C-FAR NEWSLETTER

## CITIZENS FOR FOREIGN AID REFORM INC.

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### All In The Famiglia

**Joe Volpe!** Yesterday's immigration minister, today's leadership contender, current holder of the coveted "Teddy" award. The **Canadian Taxpayers Federation** awards the **Teddy** annually to the "government, public office holder, civil servant, department or agency that most exemplifies government waste, overspending, over-taxation, excessive regulation, lack of accountability, or any combination of the five." Given the field of contenders to choose from, it's something Volpe can point to with pride. Less publicized than **Diamond Joe's** expense account and immigration work, is his unflagging commitment to Canada's spreading desert of censorship: He greeted the spoofing **Libranos** poster by sulking about ethnic stereotyping and calling the **Conservatives** "Klansmen" for laughing at the **Gomery** send-up. His instincts were just as blighted when Canada's mainstream media got hold of a story about improperly issued temporary residence permits among overseas Sikhs. Volpe advised a huge audience at a *gurdwara* "not to air their dirty linen in public, but to keep it 'inside the family' or risk damaging their community. ... 'Whichever community member is giving the media this negative information should be ashamed of himself.'" (**Globe and Mail**, March 31, 2005) Is it any wonder children connect with Joe? Under 2004 political financing laws, corporate donations to leadership contestants are strictly prohibited. How touching to think that Joe's visit to Toronto's **Bialik Hebrew Day School** during the last election so impressed little **Rebecca** and **Matthew Shechtman** (11-year-old twins) and big brother **Noah** (14), that six months later all three would donate \$5,400 -- the allowable maximum -- to the Volpe war chest. (School director **Uri Korin** doesn't remember Volpe giving any speech at the school, but concedes that it's possible he might have spoken to a class) The kids' parents, former **Apotex** pharmaceuticals vice-president **Allen Shechtman** and wife, **Mary**, also donated the maximum \$5,400 each. **Apotex** chairman **Barry Sherman** and wife **Honey** (sister to Mr. Shechtman's wife) donated the maximum, as did all four of their kids (including one under 18). **Apotex** president **Jack Kay**, wife, **Patricia**, and two children (including one under 18) each donated the maximum. **Apotex** vice-president **Craig Baxter** and three family members all donated the maximum, as did **Apotex** vice-president **Michael Florence**. Asked about the unfortunate optics, Volpe said, "Apparently these kids just connected with me; they loved what I did. ... When they heard I was running for the leadership, they said 'What can we do?' ... Volpe said the Shechtmans were disappointed their donations had received such negative publicity." (**Edmonton Journal**, June 2, 2006) We're all disappointed, it's illegal to make a donation on behalf of someone else or to act in collusion with others to get around the act's limitations. While at first insisting there was nothing technically wrong with accepting donations from 11-year-olds, Volpe did return "the children's" \$27,000 in the end. (Come to that, when Sikh mass sign ups propelled **Ujjal Dosanjh** into power, the media were so frightened of appearing insensitive that it's safe to assume no one scanned the lists to see how many children had managed to scare up ten bucks)

*Anyhoo*, a week later, a virtuous Volpe announced that he was posting the names (and ages) of all contributors and demanded that the other candidates meet his new-found ethical standards or bow out of the race. But while Team Volpe was still endeavouring to put a shine on the piggy bank contributions, **NDP MP Pat Martin** asked the **Elections Commissioner** to investigate whether individuals sought to circumvent fund-raising restrictions. He told the media: "The **Liberal**

**Party** is like an egg-sucking dog; ... they dig under the fence to get at that money and they just can't be cured. With an egg-sucking dog, all you can do is put them down." True to censorial form, Volpe's lawyer, **Steven Polak**, dispatched a letter to Martin demanding that he retract "false, malicious, and slanderous statements about Mr. Volpe and contributions to his leadership campaign." Less than an hour after receipt, Martin met with reporters to "clarify" his position. Slipperier was the anonymous wag who put up a *tour de force* web site, **Youthforvolpe**. "Welcome To Youth For Volpe. -Formerly **Children of Apotex Inc. Executives for Volpe**. ... Classy. Articulate. Even tempered. These are just some of the qualities that make Joe Volpe our choice for Liberal leader. ... If you'd like to donate to Joe's campaign like so many other youth have done, all you need to do is fill in the following information: Is this credit card [ ] Your Mommy's? [ ] Your Daddy's? [Some of the recommended ways for youth to help Joe include] Skip going to university. A year of university costs upwards of \$5,400, which would be better spent on Joe's campaign. ... Try taking a new generic prescription drug! Each dollar you spend helps raise money for Joe Volpe's leadership." Not surprisingly, this tripped Joe's auto-censor: "Volpe's campaign had the site shut down without knowing, it seems, who put it up: 'Hi Everyone,' wrote **Brenden Johnstone**, who is with the Volpe campaign, in an e-mail to other leadership campaigns. ... 'My Office has had the website suspended through **CIRA** [Canadian Internet Registration Authority] and **CDNS** [Canadian Domain Name Services] and it will be down as soon as 6 p.m. I think the issue with the website has been dealt with.'" (**Globe and Mail**, June 2, 2006) Well, not quite. When pressed, **CIRA** would claim that the site was pulled down as a matter of routine housekeeping because it realized, entirely by chance, that it had been registered under that ubiquitous sophomoric pseudonym, **Mike Hunt**. It later emerged that all the registrars, domain servers and providers somehow got the idea that they might be sued. Whatever. As the Volpe HQ e-mail establishes, **Team Volpe** was perfectly comfortable with, and at least attempted to, stifle free expression. Again. Political satire has a noble pedigree, although not, perhaps, to men eager to prove themselves worthy successors to the little thug from Shawinigan. The master of the genre, **Jonathan Swift**, said "his satire points at no defect, but what all mortals may correct." Don't try to explain it to Joe. At the time of writing, Youthforvolpe is still mirrored at:  
<http://www.youthforvolpe.no-libs.com/>  
<http://www.bluebloggingsoapbox.com/volpe/youthforvolpe.html>  
<http://www.youthforvolpe.blogspot.com/>

### Working Harder For Less Than Ever

Between 1981 and 20 1, **Canada** took in about 3.6-million immigrants -- over ten per cent of the current population. Since 1980, poverty rates among immigrant households have increased dramatically while the so-called healthy immigrant effect has reversed (they are now less fit and much more frequent visitors to doctors than the native-born). That immigrant fortunes and fitness should tank just as source countries shift to the 3rd World makes for poor optics when so much depends on everyone cheerfully swallowing the big multiculturalism pill. It must be costing *someone* somewhere, but gosh, who? According to a new report called **A Tale of Two Economies** by **Andrew Jackson**, national director of social and economic policy for the three-million-member **Canadian Labour Congress**, real earnings for half of all Canadians have not improved in a quarter century. "The past twenty-five years saw remarkably little progress for most Canadian workers. While real (inflation-adjusted) **GDP** per person has risen by about 50% since the early 1980s, driven mainly by

increased productivity, workers' hourly wages have been remarkably stagnant,' Jackson reports. 'Remarkably, between 1981 and 2004, the real median hourly wage -- half of all workers earn more, and half earn less -- barely budged. This means that the bottom half of all workers experienced stagnant or declining hourly wages. [Just one reason we'd hope the unions would oppose calls for an amnesty for illegals] So, who are the politicians and the media talking about when they fill Canadian newspapers and web sites with all their talk of prosperity? 'The fruits of recent economic growth have gone overwhelmingly to the more affluent,' Jackson concludes. 'It is well-known that income inequality has increased, but less well-known that this has been driven most by the rising share of the very highest income groups. Over the course of the 1990s, the share of all taxable wage and salary income going to the top 1% -- roughly those making more than \$150,000 per year -- jumped from 9% to 14% of the total, and the share of the top 1/10th of 1% rose even more sharply. Even the proverbial middle-class of reasonably secure, salaried workers have shared remarkably little in Canada's increased prosperity, increasing their real incomes mainly by working longer hours, as individuals and as families.'" (**National Union of Public and General Employees**, May-22, 2006) If they can afford a family: "The average Canadian family with a combined income of \$60,903 annually now pays out 46.7% of that, or \$28,467, on all forms of taxation. That's \$6,300 more per year than that average family spends annually on food, shelter and clothing combined." (**Toronto Sun**, May 28, 2006)

### Aid Follies

It seems curious for Canada to be vilified as a cheapskate in the foreign aid game when we roll out the welcome mat for about three times as many people (per capita) from aid beneficiary nations as anyone else. But according to the mythology, immigrants don't actually cost us anything. One of the few shifts in a foreign policy implemented by the former **Liberal** government was a plan to pare down "development assistance" from 155 to 25 nations by 2010 with beneficiaries selected according to their record of fiscal prudence. As if to prove that bureaucrats can't read, 14 of the 25 are in Africa. As even Nigerian president **Olusegun Obasanjo** admits, "Corrupt African leaders have stolen at least \$140 billion from their people in the decades since independence." (**The Independent**, June 14, 2002)

Today, 300-million Africans are said to be living on less than a dollar a day -- twice as many as in 1995. At the end of May, Ottawa announced an increase of \$40 million in financial support for humanitarian and peace assistance to that oasis of financial accountability, the Darfur region of western Sudan. But others want a chance to dip from the well -- Harper has just bumped up aid to Afghanistan by \$15 million for agriculture and water projects. Ironical when one of the chief gripes about the presence of Canadian troops in Afghanistan is that they interfere with opium growing. Canada has pledged close to \$1 billion to Afghanistan to 2011. "The minority **Conservatives'** first budget followed through on a Liberal plan to double foreign aid with annual eight per cent increases between 2001 and 2010-11 ... 60 per cent of the new money is being pipelined to Africa. This year, the region will receive about \$1.5 billion of Canada's \$3.1 billion in official development assistance, according to the **Canadian International Development Agency**." (**Embassy**, Canada's foreign policy newsweekly, June 7, 2006) In 1899, **Rudyard Kipling** "called on the West to 'Take up the White Man's burden' to seek peace in the world, end famine, and vanquish disease. Kipling assumed that the millions living in Africa, the Middle East or India where he had spent many years were never going to achieve these lofty goals on their own. ... **William Easterly**, a world-weary and world-wise professor of economics, long experienced in the great game of foreign aid, suggests that a real tragedy is one in which the West has spent \$2.3 trillion on foreign aid over the last fifty years 'and

still had not managed to get twelve-cent medicines to children to prevent half of all malaria deaths.' The name of Easterly's book is **The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good**. ... Foreign aid hasn't solved any of these problems or provided a framework in which many nations will ever achieve a sensible economy, integrated with the rest of the world. [Moreover] in a recent **Stratford** public policy intelligence report, **Bart Mongoven**, put forth the view that 'the American public broadly is beginning to view poverty -- whether that in affluent countries or in highly indebted, poor countries -- as almost impossible to solve.' With a remarkably refreshing clarity, Americans now view poverty in developing countries 'as the result of a combination of failed states, corruption and cultural problems.' [But importing the denizens of such states will improve the quality of life in Canada beyond all recognition?] Mongoven warns that advocates for poverty reduction 'have set about attempting to change how they talk about poverty, and to change the way people, particularly in affluent societies, think about it.' Governments are no longer going to be identified as the agents to end poverty. They have failed. Instead, poverty is going to be recast as 'a human rights violation.' This, of course, raises the question of whether a job is a human right. From a socialist point of view, it is. ... Guess who a liberal amalgam of do-good organizations are going to call upon to end poverty? ... What organizations such as **Oxfam**, **Evangelicals for Social Justice**, **Human Rights Watch** and **Amnesty International** have realized is that corporations can be pressured in ways that governments cannot. This kind of pressure is already at work by various environmental organizations that use boycotts, smear campaigns, and other tactics to hijack and divert corporate profits to their own agendas." (**Canada Free Press**, June 8, 2006) **Colonel Saunders** presents the **Central Mogadishu Fortified Water Treatment Plant**. Never mind who signs the cheque, one way and another it will still be extracted from our pockets.

### Let Them Eat Cod

"A **Conservative** call to help workers from the Maritimes move west has provoked the ire of **Liberal** MPs. ... **Tory MP Brian Jean** set off the row Thursday when he said the government should develop a strategy to relocate unemployed Atlantic Canadians to Alberta, either temporarily or permanently. His northern Alberta riding includes Fort McMurray, which some Newfoundlanders refer to as their own province's third-largest city because so many of them are working there. Jean told the parliamentary committee on human resources development that Ottawa should make it easier for job seekers from the east to move to his job-rich province. New Brunswick **MP Jean-Claude d'Amours** called Jean's suggestion 'unacceptable,' and said East-coasters are not cattle to be herded from one part of the country to another. [More to the point, can **Liberal** MPs afford to let the **Atlantic Opportunities Money Pit** die a natural death?] Nova Scotia **MP Geoff Regan** and New Brunswick **MP Andy Scott** also condemned Jean's comments. Regan said the suggestion was insulting, while Scott said Atlantic Canadians need investment in their local economies, not bus fares out West. ... Newfoundland and Labrador's current unemployment rate is 14.8 per cent, while Alberta's is 3.4 per cent." (**CBC**, June 9, 2006) Meanwhile, **Canadian Natural Resources Ltd**, "which might employ 3,000 construction workers for several years, is looking into importing temporary workers from the depleted oilfields of northeastern China. Some Calgary analysts have already suggested that the entire oilsands may be built by Chinese labour." (**Canadian Business**, May 22-June 4, 2006) And after all, look what happened the last time Canada imported Chinese labour to work on a mega-project.

*Happy Dominion Day to All Our Readers*