

Imagine a Country Embracing Its Christian Heritage

Frank Hilliard

Member, CHP Canada

All of us in the Christian Heritage Party dream of Canada returning to its original Christian heritage. At times it seems like an impossible task as we are assaulted daily with ever more obnoxious forms of woke mindlessness. And yet, there is a country that was much further down the road to perdition than Canada, where priests were murdered, Christians assaulted, churches turned into stables and women forced into industry.

The country I'm talking about is Russia, formerly the Soviet Union, which was—for decades—officially atheist and anti-Christian with a sky-high abortion rate.

Since the fall of Communism and the rise of a new group of nationalist leaders, Russia is rediscovering its Christian heritage.¹ At home they are renovating cathedrals. On the battlefield (*Editor's note: ignoring, for the purposes of this article, the issues and ethics of the war in Ukraine*) Christian icons often fly over the front line beside the Russian tricolour and priests hold services for soldiers.^{2*}

These renewed beliefs are also reflected in new and existing laws and in a dramatic turning away from abortion and towards the family as a life goal. Let's start with that issue. Here's Wikipedia:³

Since the 1990s, abortion in Russia has been in steep decline. Abortion halved in the period between 1990 and 2000, going from 4 to 2 million abortions approximately.

Abortions per 1000 women aged 15–49 went from 114 to 55 between 1990 and 2000. In 2010, this was reinforced when total live births surpassed the total number of abortions in Russia for the first time in the 21st century. In 2013, 1 million abortions were performed, or 28 abortions per 1000 women aged 15–49. In 2021, the number had reached approximately 400 thousand, decreasing by a factor of 10 since 1990, with the rate per 1000 women aged 15–49 dropping to 12.

Decreasing by a factor of ten! There is something behind this, partly the improved standard of living caused by economic growth since 2000 (Russia's unemployment rate in April, 2024 was 2.6%). But there is something else, a deliberate state policy favouring traditional families led by a father and mother. Here's a summary of these family-friendly policies⁴ from the website Move to Russia.⁵ Note: costs in Russia are greatly below⁶ those in Canada. For example, the cost of living, including rent, is 161 percent higher in Canada than in Russia.

Maternal Capital Program: This provides financial support to families with first, second, and subsequent children **First child** — 630,381 RUB (**eq. to \$7,000**) **Second child** — 833,025 RUB (**eq. to \$9,200**) **Third and subsequent child** — 833,025 RUB (**eq. to \$9,200**) The amount is indexed annually and can be used for improving housing conditions, education, and other family needs.

Childbirth Allowance: This provides a one-time payment to families with newborns: 24,604 RUB (eq. to \$270) + personal gifts, which varies from the region (for instance in Moscow the gift box is provided with all needed clothes and accessories for newborn or compensation in the amount of 20,000 RUB — eq to \$220). An additional one-time payment to families with low wages. The amount varies depending on the number of children and the region.

Parental Leave: Paid leave to both parents for childcare up to 1.5 years of age. The parental leave payments are paid in full until the end of the 1.5-year term, even if the person goes back to work earlier. The maximum amount to be paid is 49,123 RUB per month (eq. to \$480), which is calculated as 40% of the average salary level for the previous 12-month period.

Child Benefits: Monthly payments to families with children up to 18 years of age. This amount varies depending on the income and composition of the family.

Family Housing Program: This provides government subsidies for families to purchase or build their own homes. The program is targeted towards families with children and grants the right to use a mortgage with a special 6% interest rate (when the actual interest rate for Russia is 12 — 15% for a mortgage).

Family Counselling and Support Services: Free counselling and support services are available to families to help them cope with various challenges, such as marital conflicts, financial difficulties, and parenting issues.

Protection of Children: The Russian government has strengthened laws to protect children from abuse, neglect, and trafficking. Child welfare services are provided to support vulnerable families.

Promotion of Traditional Family Values: The government also promotes traditional family values through public campaigns and educational programs. Same-sex marriage is not recognized in Russia.

That last line speaks as loudly as all the others in the list. Opposition to same sex marriage is not a lost cause when the largest country on Earth is opposed to it.

Canada used to be a Christian country, and it can be again. If Russia could turn itself around, and it appears to be doing so, Canada can too.

****A note from CHP leader, Rod Taylor: I thought it important to share with our readers this article from Frank Hilliard on some of the social trends taking place in Russia. While much public opinion in Canada regarding Russia is focused on the Ukraine War, this highlighting of Russia's moral awakening in the areas of life and family are good news stories we ought to be aware of. In Canada, 112 churches have been burned or vandalized by the 'cancel culture'. In Russia, they're renovating cathedrals. In Canada, schoolchildren are being indoctrinated with sexual perversion. In Russia, promotion of sexual perversion is illegal.⁷ Much of Russia's history under communism and its shameful abuse of human rights and freedoms is to be condemned, but we ought to celebrate any steps being taken anywhere to return to Christian values of life and family.***

Footnotes

¹ images2.corriereobjects.it/methode_image/2017/10/06/Esteri/Foto%20Gallery/EST04F1_1928003F1_28_MGZOOM.jpg

² static.themoscowtimes.com/image/1360/1a/KMO_192140_00140_1-3.jpg

³ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abortion_in_Russia#Statistics

⁴ www.movetorussia.com/family-policy-in-russia

⁵ www.movetorussia.com/

⁶ www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/compare_countries_result.jsp?country1=Russia&country2=Canada

⁷ www.cnn.com/2022/11/30/europe/russia-upper-parliament-lgbt-propaganda-law-intl/index.html

The Christian Heritage Party of Canada

www.chp.ca • NationalOffice@chp.ca • 1-888-VOTE-CHP (868-3247)

PO Box 4958, Station E, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5J1

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