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OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

REMARKS BY
THE HONOURABLE
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OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Child Honouring Luncheon

Government House
Victoria, BC
June 29, 2006

HAdeC: Major Donald G. Crocker.

Raffi Cavoukian, Professor Sharna Olfman, Dean of the Faculty of Education Dr. Budd Hall and Chair Faculty of Education Alumni Chapter Ms. Wendy Gedney, Member of Parliament Denise Savoie, Councillor Helen Hughes, Mae Burrows, distinguished academics, educators and all those willing to see children lead the way:

It is a great pleasure to welcome you all to British Columbia's family table today as we observe the release of the justly renowned Raffi's remarkable anthology: "Child Honouring: How to Turn this World Around". Raffi and I met some years ago on Mayne Island when he provided me with the main elements of the covenant that is the foundation of a Child Honouring philosophy which informs all the work we address today. The covenant is a profound statement which emerged from his many decades as a beloved children's troubadour and is testament to the sincerity that has long informed all Raffi's work and songs. In his countless children's songs, Raffi has never 'talked down' to his young audience, instead he has sought to uplift, inform and educate his listeners in works that are at the heart of today's celebration!



We see compromised children around us, yes in other nations but even here in the relative luxury of our exceptionally fortunate home too. Poverty, homelessness, neglect, violence, obesity, mental illness and other symptoms threaten children even in our own largely advantaged society. We are charged with recognizing, respecting and honouring the dignity of each of our fellow human beings regardless of their age, and in this case children in particular. Child Honouring is required reading for every person who is determined to improve our world. With expert and well researched leadership available on every page, Raffi and Professor Olfman as Editors have assured a broad selection from noted experts on the whole gamut of honouring children in a time where honour is being questioned as a societal value and its quality often overlooked as a contributor to the well-being of the human family.

Far from handing the world to children, the covenant outlines nine principles by which those in current leadership and other authoritative positions can assure that the next generation is equipped with the necessities required to live full and happy lives. Our essential humanity is expressed in the covenant's holistic embrace of a consciously nurturing society, in which every act expresses an ethical, non-violent caring environment where all children are safe and respected. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has written a foreword to the book where he outlines our responsibilities to all people, from the youngest, through youth and beyond with a responsibility to inspire basic moral values of love, compassion and a universal duty to instil honesty and peace as fundamental to world continuance.

We are all delighted at the involvement of the faculty of Education from

the University of Victoria in this great 'coming together' of unique, child-driven philosophies and forces which are firmly anchored in the conviction that education is essential to human excellence.



Some of the changes taking place around our world seem to be being propelled by nature itself. Perhaps in response to the great threats surrounding us, Mother Nature is taking a hand in re-balancing the 'scales' of human values. For example, we see men and women working in closer partnership than has been the case for most of human history. We are aware that with more women added to traditional decision-making processes there is an increase in collaborative, more peaceful outcomes. Most of us are quite aware that unless we learn to live more lightly on the land, that we have the capacity to destroy it. Physicist Stephen Hawking recently predicted that the human family is condemned to leave this planet, to find another beginning. Yet, if we have the good sense to follow

Raffi's Child Honouring philosophy toward a compassionate revolution, we can infuse honour and respect into every human institution, most particularly into the lives of our children. I think this vast change in the human paradigm provides us all with a good chance of preserving this precious planet and all the lives it contains.

I was privileged to assist at the opening of the Peace Forum in Vancouver last week, as I know many of you were also on hand, seeking new directions toward a more peaceful world. I believe that if we have the good sense to follow Raffi, his friends and associates, along with that notable generation of 'Baby Beluga' grads into the future, that our combined actions will have a winning effect on developing a more socially responsible global civil society.

As a grandmother and now great grandmother, I could wish for nothing more profound than that we follow Raffi's directions toward a new world where all children, like all people are honoured. As Lieutenant Governor, on behalf of our fellow-citizens, I am indebted you all for the care that has been taken in developing and communicating this philosophy of Child Honouring drawn the collected wisdom of humanity that places respect for oneself and one's children and all the peoples of the earth in humanity's cradle.



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