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SJ Telegraph-Journal | Provincial News
As published on page A5 on February 3, 2005

TAX FIGHT Court grants abortion foe month to prepare case

BY NINA CHIARELLI
Telegraph-Journal

A federal court has granted a Fredericton man another month to prepare his fight against the Canada Revenue Agency.

David Little, 59, did not enter a plea Wednesday when he appeared in federal court in Fredericton to answer to charges that he has not completed or signed income tax returns for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Instead, he asked the court for a one-month continuance so he can prepare his fight against the federal government on the grounds that using tax money for abortions goes against his rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

He will appear again on March 2 to answers the charges.

Mr. Little, who appeared in court on his own behalf, said Wednesday he will spend the next month mounting a legal defence fund to support his fight in court, and start up a political action group within the St. Thomas More Society of Canada, a group he founded to stop publicly funded abortions.

"Between now and then it's quite likely we're going to file (charges) on our own behalf . . . to bring a case against the federal government, the minister of national revenue for the unconstitutional use of tax money for abortion," he said.

Mr. Little admits he has not filed taxes in seven years. He said he has, in the past, offered to pay the federal government the portion of his taxes that weren't funding abortion, but federal officials ignored him.

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"What we want to do is bring sufficient pressure upon the government to just end publicly funded abortions," he said.

However, David Perry, of the Canadian Tax Foundation, said Wednesday there is no mechanism for figuring out what portion of a taxpayer's taxes funds any particular program, except for Employment Insurance premiums, Canada Pension Plan levies and airport tax.

"The idea of government is, that as a citizen you contribute to a general fund, which is used the way the community feels is appropriate. There's never a link between the taxes you pay and where government spends its money," he said.

Moreover, he said similar cases across Canada, some involving tax money paying for nuclear proliferation, have never succeeded.

"It's been tried on occasion, never successfully in Canada," he said.

Mr. Little said since his fight became public he has received numerous calls from supporters across Canada who are also considering not filing their taxes to protest abortions paid for by the government.

"I'm pretty heartened that finally some people have publicly joined me. There's kind of an aura of intimidation, which I've never understood," he said.

New Brunswick has faced criticism from federal Health Minister Ujjal Dosanjh, who said Tuesday he has no choice but to invoke a dispute avoidance and resolution process since New Brunswick continues to violate Canada's Health Act by refusing to fund abortions done in private clinics.

Mr. Dosanjh refused to speculate on how quickly he will act. But under the new resolution process agreed to at a first ministers conference last fall, both New Brunswick and the federal government would appoint a representative - to work alongside a mutually agreeable third panel member - to hear and rule on the long-standing dispute.

Under the Health Act, financial penalties can be administered.

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