

Parent sentenced in Federal trial for chalking “SEN. CLINTON HELP US!”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, March 19, 2008

Syracuse, NY (Hanley Federal Building) – On March 18th, John Murtari, a local Family Rights activist went on trial before Federal Magistrate David Peebles. His alleged offenses were:

Two incidents of using kid’s chalk to write “I LOVE YOU” to his son and “SEN CLINTON HELP US!” on the ground of the Federal Plaza in January in violation of judicial orders. He has been held in jail since Jan. 29th.

During his trial Murtari spoke of the need for Family Law reform and protecting the Civil Right of mothers, fathers, and children to be secure as family. A need to control the ease of parent/child splits that presently occur due to divorce, separation, or the actions of social services. He tried to make a comparison to the actions of the black 'Freedom Riders' from the 50s who would peacefully sit in the front of a bus, accepting arrest to call attention to the injustice of segregation. What if black people used chalk to ask their Senator for help and wrote “I AM EQUAL.”

He was found guilty on both charges and was sentenced to 55 days in jail. He expects to be released on Friday March 21st and looks forward to seeing his son for the Easter holiday.

Murtari is coordinator for an Internet based group, AKidsRight.Org. Made up of mothers and fathers who feel unjustly separated from their children. The trial should last less than two hours. The group hopes to have a good number of Moms & Dads present and is encouraging them to also visit the local offices of Senator Clinton, located in the same building.

Murtari’s group, AKidsRight.Org, hopes that a local meeting between group members and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) may be near. Local and national members have been calling and faxing the offices of Senator Clinton regarding the recognition and protection of their Civil Right to raise their own children. The group hopes this simple act will demonstrate their love for the kids and their deep convictions that serious reform is necessary.

The Group would like Senator Clinton to respond to their petitions for Congressional Hearings into the need for National Family Law reform and potentially a Family Rights Act, by meeting with local parents. The Group is hoping for Congressional Hearings into Family Law reform so that group members affected by the present patchwork of laws across the nation will have a chance to tell their stories.

The Group’s web site highlights the NonViolent philosophy and practice Martin Luther King used to break the grip of segregation. It hopes a similar attitude will help bring

reform and also healing to parents who are often involved in bitter child custody disputes with each other or social services.

Mr. Murtari, a native of Lyons, New York and an Air Force Academy graduate with a Masters from Syracuse University, is a local coordinator for the group. He is the President of a small Internet startup company located in Baldwinsville, NY. In 2006 he was involved in a hunger strike which gained national attention and caused a movie producer, Mr. Angelo Lobo, to visit Syracuse and interview Murtari in jail. Lobo includes footage of Murtari in his upcoming film, "Support?", on the failures of the Nation's family law system. Film trailers including Murtari are visible at <http://www.supportthemovie.com/>

In contrast to the bitterness and anger which is normally associated with protest efforts and family issues -- Murtari plans a positive attitude. He says they are NOT there to condemn Senator Clinton as a "bad person" or as someone who doesn't care about family or children's issues; however, as a natural part of the political process they want to show their concern over the issue and to increase her sensitivity to their cause.

For more information:

John Murtari, Group coordinator, (office: 315-635-1968,x-211)(cell: 315-430-2702).

Mr. Ransom Reynolds, Asst. US Attorney (315-448-0705)

Ms. Joanne R. Scheafnocker, Group public relations (916-560-8892)

Mr. Jay Biba, Regional Rep. for Senator Clinton: 315-448-0470

Background information, copies of court orders, at the web site:

www.AKidsRight.Org/clinton

An electronic copy of this release can be found at:

<http://www.AKidsRight.Org/clinton/release43.pdf>