

# Children's Rights, U.N. Style

When most people hear the term "children's rights," they think of the right to basic necessities and the right to be protected from abuse. But that is not what the children's rights movement is all about. Herewith some observations by Arthur J. Delaney on what the Western nations succeeded in doing in Beijing. Art is the president of the Greater Philadelphia/ South Jersey Chapter of the Catholic League.

Paragraph 108 [e] of the final document might be called a farewell to parents.

*108 [e] Prepare and disseminate accessible information, through public health campaigns, the media, reliable counseling and the education system, designed to ensure that women and men, particularly young people, can acquire knowledge about their health, especially information on sexuality and reproduction, taking into account the rights of the child to access to information, privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed consent, as well as the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents and legal guardians to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in conformity with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration..."*

Notice how children's rights are placed not only first but above parents' rights and not just physically but metaphysically! According to the above wording, parents really have no rights at all. If children's rights to access information, to privacy, to confidentiality, to respect, to informed consent precede parents' rights to

provide...appropriate direction and guidance, there is little need for such rights, if indeed there is any substance to their rights! The child's action will already have been completed *before* such guidance can be given! Parents cannot override the child's decision, they can merely add their *opinion* to sex educators, condom distributors and abortionists, and that, *after* the fact! Indeed if confidentiality and privacy are respected, how will parents even know if their opinion is needed?

In a final blast of insolence the paragraph clearly states that "in all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be the primary consideration." It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the courts will have no difficulty granting the state the right to determine the best interest of the child! They have already done so in the matter of abortion.

Additionally parents ought to be seriously concerned with the exact meaning and extent of such notions as "public health campaigns," "media," "reliable counseling," and the "educational system." What precisely do all these concepts involve and to what extent? Given the agenda of those who sponsor such notions, it ought to make every parent leery.