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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

Maurice Vellacott, MP
Saskatoon-Wanuskewin

Vellacott opposes 1938 German law that chased persecuted home-schoolers to Canada

For Immediate Release

March 22, 2010

OTTAWA – A German home-schooling family is seeking asylum in Canada, and they are appearing before the Immigration and Refugee board in Alberta Tuesday to make their case to remain here.

Another German home-schooling family, seeking refuge in the United States, was recently granted permission to remain there. The law that these home-schoolers are being persecuted under is a 1938 piece of Nazi legislation. The law about compulsory school attendance from 1938 (Reichsschulpflichtgesetz) was the first general regulation in the German Reich without exceptions and with criminal consequences in case of contraventions (Habermalz, 2001: 218).

“Canada has a strong legacy of parental rights and home schooling has been an accepted expression of these rights in Canada,” notes Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon-Wanuskewin). The family has already been in Canada for a little while and the mother is reported as saying that her two sons are thriving in Alberta: “For us, it’s a gift, a real gift to be able to home-school our children.”

Parents have different reasons for choosing the home-schooling option. For these parents, the primary reasons were freedom of conscience and concerns about the medical well-being of their children, reports their lawyer, Jean Munn.

“I commend these valiant parents for the commitment and devotion they have to the best interests of their children,” said Vellacott.

“I hope the Immigration and Refugee Board in Albert gives a favourable hearing to this case,” he added.

(See more information about home-schooling in Germany here:
<http://www.hsllda.org/hs/international/Germany/201001260.asp>)

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