



**BC Association of Specialized  
Victim Assistance &  
Counselling Programs**



**Ending Relationship  
Abuse Society of BC**

**April 25, 2008**

**For Immediate Release**

## **HIGH-PROFILE MEN SPEAK OUT IN A NEW, NON PARTISAN FILM TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

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**Vancouver, BC, April 25, 2008**—Men in high-profile leadership positions from across BC have come together to speak out about violence against women in a ground-breaking non-partisan new film: *Men Speak Up: Ending Violence Together*.

Participating in the 35-minute film are Wally Oppal, Attorney General of BC; Jim Sinclair, President, BC Federation of Labour; Ujjal Dosanjh, Federal Liberal MP; Evan Adams, MD, Aboriginal Health Physician Advisor; Steve Hunt, Western Canada Director, United Steelworkers Union; and 10 other leaders (see list in attached backgrounder).

The film combines news footage from recent cases of domestic violence homicides in BC with short interviews about the importance of men speaking to other men to challenge societal attitudes about violence against women.

Two provincial organizations collaborated to produce the film, the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs (BCASVACP) and Ending Relationship Abuse Society of BC (ERA). The BCASVACP is an umbrella organization for 200+ programs that serve survivors of domestic and sexual violence. ERA's members work with men who have abused their partners.

"For decades now, women have been working to educate the public about violence against women. We know that the vast majority of men care deeply about the well being of their mothers, their sisters, spouses, children and friends," says Tracy Porteous, Executive Director of the BCASVACP. "This film is about creating opportunities for men to become part of the solution."

"Imagine a world in which the majority of men—who do not use violence—spoke out against actions, behaviors and attitudes that lead to the abuse of women," says Dr Harry Stefanakis, Chair of ERA. "I don't think we would see nearly the levels of violence that we do now."

"Violence against women cuts across all socio-economic lines and affects every community," says Attorney General Wally Oppal. "British Columbians need to be aware of the seriousness of this issue and what they, and their community, can do to help in the fight against violence against women."

"The labour movement has a proud history of speaking out on issues of social justice, and so I was very pleased to be part of this video," says Jim Sinclair,

President of the BC Federation of Labour. “I hope the message will be loud and clear—violence against women is simply unacceptable, and it is up to men to be part of the solution.”

The goal of *Men Speak Up* is to provide inspiration and guidance for men who want to be involved in ending violence against women, with the ultimate goal of creating healthier and safer communities for everyone.

The film is an offshoot of the Renewing Resources project, also managed by the BCASVACP and ERABC. Renewing Resources is a one-year violence prevention initiative focused on the forestry, mining and fishing industries, working in partnership with WorkSafe BC, the BC Federation of Labour, and the United Steelworkers Union. Free workshops will be provided to assist corporations and unions in their response to employees dealing with violence in relationships. This initiative offers industry an opportunity to invest in healthy relationships and a safer workplace environment.

Renewing Resources received a \$150,000 Partners in Prevention grant from the Ministry of Community Services. The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General contributed \$18,000 to the production and distribution of the video.

### **The Film Premiere**

Friday, April 25, 2008

Simon Fraser University, Harbour Centre

Terasen Theater, Main Floor

515 West Hastings Street, Vancouver

**Speaking at the Premiere:** Hon. **Wally Oppal**, Attorney General of BC; **Ujjal Dosanjh**, Federal Liberal MP; **Jim Sinclair**, President, BC Federation of Labour; **Doug LePard**, Deputy Chief Constable, Investigation Division, Vancouver Police Department; **Steve Hunt**, Western Canada Director, United Steelworkers Union; **Harry Bains**, NDP MLA for Surrey-Newton; **David Ravvin**, ERA Board Member; **Debbie Andersen**, Community Programs Branch, MCS; **Bruce Foster**, Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division, MPSSG; **Tracy Porteous**, BCASVACP.

### **Event Agenda**

Reception 10:00 am - 10:20 am

Speakers 10:20 am - 10:45 am

Film Screening 10:45 am - 11:15 am

Q and A 11:15 am - 11:30 am

Media trailers for broadcast will be provided. Refreshments will be served.

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**For Logistics at Film Premiere:** Sarah Leavitt, Communications Coordinator, BCASVACP, 604 633-2506, ext. 14

**For Comment:** Tracy Porteous, Executive Director, BCASVACP  
604-633-2506 ext 11 or [porteous@endingviolence.org](mailto:porteous@endingviolence.org)