

Welcome to the fourth 2010 issue of *The Philanthropist*. This issue discusses public policy and how various parts of the charitable and not-for-profit sector participate in public policy making – and how it should be done. It is an area in which the sector has generally failed to have substantial and sustained influence.

Before I focus on the content of this issue, I would like to acknowledge the passing of **John Hodgson**. Both his legacy and the man deserve recognition, and *The Philanthropist* will be honouring him and his work for the sector in an upcoming issue. It is fair to say that the existence of *The Philanthropist* itself is a direct result of his efforts. But when you add the legacy of Imagine Canada and his work with countless organizations, you just start to understand how important John Hodgson was for the charitable and not-for-profit sector. It may sound clichéd but nonetheless true to say that “John will be missed.”

This issue begins with an introductory piece by **Susan Carter**, describing how the sector has perceived its role in the development of public policy. She builds on a 2005 survey of Canadian organizations and their involvement in public policy. **Elizabeth Whitmore**’s article reviews how a number of organizations perceive their success in public policy. Both of these articles essentially view the role of nonprofits and their success from the vantage point of nonprofits organizations themselves.

Two articles look at the advancement of individual rights in an international context. **Tara Collins** and **Landon Pearson** write about using the International Convention on the Rights of the Child to advance policy changes in Canada while **Netsai Mushonga** describes the campaign for a gender-sensitive constitution in Zimbabwe.

The success of the sector in influencing public policy has been sporadic. What can be done to improve the sector’s success? Two articles attempt to answer that question. **Sean Moore** makes the case for more expertise and suggests how this may be obtained. **Liz Mulholland** writes about what is meant by good public policy and how to avoid pitfalls. And, Bob Wyatt and I continue the public policy discussion and the success of the sector in the **Point/Counterpoint** column.

Picking up on the discussion in the spring issue about the big challenges to the sector, we have an article by **Mitchell Temkin** on community leadership.

We are also pleased to include in this issue the first instalment of the testimony that **Blake Bromley** gave to the Air India Inquiry. Even with the lapse of several years, his testimony is of interest because of the light it sheds on the funding of terrorism.

Our columns offer a broad array this month:

- **What's the Law** features a recent article by **Terry Carter** and **Theresa Man:** "The Evolution of Advocacy and Political Activities by Charities in Canada: An Overview."
- **What the Numbers Say** by **Lindsey Vodarek** and **David Lasby** provides some hot-off-the-press data about policy engagement across the sector.
- In the **Social Media** column, **Havi Echenberg** explores some of the implications of social media for the structure and operations of sector organizations.
- In our new **How We Account** column, **Steven Salterio** and **Patrick Legresley** have a very illuminating article on the lessons learned from the Voluntary Sector Reporting Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting Transparency that you may have seen advertised last month. We plan to include this column as a regular part of *The Philanthropist* in the future, as a place for articles and commentary on issues of accounting, auditing, financial management, and risk management.
- Finally, we have book reviews: **Liz Mulholland's** review of *The New Federal Policy Agenda and the Voluntary Sector – On the Cutting Edge*, which features six essays from the 2006 Queens Conference on the Third Sector; and, **Archana Sridhar's** review of *Contributing Citizens*, Professor Shirley Tillotson's history of the rise of community chests.

We are grateful to the Muttart Foundation for their valuable contribution and support of this issue. Please take a look through this collection of articles and columns, register (for free) on *The Philanthropist* site, share the articles and columns with others, post comments, or propose new articles. (Depending on your preferred format, you can also download the entire issue and print yourself or send it to your local print shop.)

Best wishes for 2011. I hope you have made it through the coldest and darkest part of the Canadian winter – a good chance to catch up on back issues of *The Philanthropist!*

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