

# **PARENT STANDING QUIETLY for REFORM – a FEDERAL OFFENSE?**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, September 26, 2007**

Syracuse, NY (Hanley Federal Building) – On **Thursday, Sept. 27**, at app 11 AM, John Murtari, plans to stand quietly on the Federal Plaza. He will be holding a small placard with a picture of his son along with those of other parents and the words, “Sen. Clinton Help Us.” He anticipates Federal Officers will place him under arrest and take him to jail as was done on Sep. 13<sup>th</sup>. Murtari, a former Air Force Pilot says he was used to seeing pictures of a quiet demonstrator arrested by police in other countries, but didn’t expect it here. Why?

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, Federal Magistrate Gustavo DiBianco issued a broad stay-order to Murtari, a local parent’s rights activist. He was not to even walk on the public Federal Plaza without prior permission of the Court. This strong order was requested by the local US Attorney’s office. It was in response to two prior incidents in which Murtari had used kid’s sidewalk chalk to write on the ground of the Plaza, “I Love Dom” & “Sen Clinton Help Us”.

Murtari asserts that using chalk on the public ground is not a crime, had been allowed before by Federal Building officials, and that such a broad stay away order made the exercise of a civil liberty such as free speech, a federal offense. The order was issued over his objections and he is scheduled to stand trial in Federal Court on October 3<sup>rd</sup> over these incidents.

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. Last year 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/>

During recent Court appearances Murtari apologized to the Judge for violating his order, but also 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.

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.

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:**

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

[www.AKidsRight.Org/clinton](http://www.AKidsRight.Org/clinton)

An electronic version of the release is available at:

<http://www.AKidsRight.Org/clinton/release39.pdf>