

The Hon Kevin Andrews MP

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service; Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Where are our politicians coming from? What are their beliefs, motivations, agendas and allegiances? It is impossible to know the whole truth about politicians' interests, but much can be gleaned from the public record. Researcher **Chloe Martin** presents a series of information sheets on the religio-political affiliations of Australian politicians.

Biography

Born 9 November 1955, Sale, Vic.

Educated at St Patrick's College, Sale where he was Year 12 Dux and School Captain. He holds BA, LLB degrees from the University of Melbourne and an LLM from Monash University.

From 1979-85 he was research solicitor and then judge's associate to Sir James Gobbo, and from 1985-1991 worked as a barrister specialising in health law and bioethics. In 1991 he was elected MHR for Menzies and has since held the ministerial portfolios of Ageing and (since 2003) Workplace Relations and Employment.

In his spare time he and his wife, Margaret, conduct marriage education seminars. (Michelle Grattan 'A quiet man's revolution', *Melbourne Age*, 13 Nov. 2004)

Of note

- Co-founder and Secretary, Lyons Forum, a now-defunct 'club' for Coalition right-wingers. (Grattan op cit.; Niki Savva 'The God squad', *Age*, 2 Apr. 1997)
- Seconded a motion by Paul Filing, MHR (Moore, WA), seeking to end all Australian trials of the RU-486 'abortion pill'. (*Right to Life News*, Sept. 1994, 2)
- Sponsored 1996 private member's bill overturning Northern Territory's euthanasia legislation. In one interview, Andrews controversially claimed that '[w]ith the advancement of pain relief, there was no need to fear an agonising death'. (Marion Frith 'Demystifying death as a step towards valuing life', *Age*, 2 Jul. 1996)
- Strongly supported 2004 *Marriage Amendment Act*, confining legal marriage to heterosexual couples. (*Australian Christian Lobby Newsletter*, June 2004, 1)
- Currently spearheading the Howard Government's 2005 industrial relations reform package, dismissing criticism from many sections of the community including Christian churches. (Linda Morris 'Churches warn family time and rights at risk', *Age*, 11 Oct. 2005)

Connections

Australian Family Association (AFA)

'... the AFA is Australia's leading family advocacy group.' Created by the late B.A. Santamaria's National Civic Council, the AFA is very active in the fight for the traditional heterosexual family to the exclusion of all other family models. Leading lobbyists against recognition of same-sex relationships and adoption rights, and in favour of extensive film and television censorship.

- 1982** Scheduled speaker at AFA public awareness meeting re IVF at Geelong, 2 Dec., sharing platform with Dr Joseph Santamaria (*Advocate*, 18 Nov. 1982)
- 1985** Presented AFA submission re *Family Law Act* reform to Australian Law Reform Commission (*The Australian Family*, Dec. 1985, 4)
- 1992** Contributed article 'The Family, Marriage and Divorce' to AFA journal (*The Australian Family*, Dec. 1992, 18-28)
- 1994** Scheduled speaker (with Margaret Andrews) at AFA International Family Conference (*New Life*, 2 Jun. 1994)

Endeavour Forum (EF) (formerly Women Who Want to be Women)

'Endeavour Forum was set up to counter feminism, defend the unborn and the traditional family.' Agitates against the rights of single mothers, any availability of abortion, and favours homosexual behaviour being deemed 'a manifestation of a psychiatric disorder'.

1996, 2000, 2001, 2003 Scheduled speaker, EF meetings
(*EF Newsletter*, Sept. 1996, 1; Oct. 2000, 1; Nov. 2001, 1; Apr. 2003, 1)

2001 Scheduled chair, EF meeting (*EF Newsletter*, Jul. 2001, 1)

Family Council of Victoria (FCV)

'...support for the institution of the family.' Far right political lobby group, fights for men's status as the head of the 'natural' family. Seeks to equate homosexuality with rapists, child abusers, paedophiles. Believes that: 'For years now the public school system has been force-feeding our children a steady diet of pro-homosexual propaganda'. Family Councils exist in several states.

1994 Featured speaker at the launch of the FCV, photographed with the chairman Dr Joseph Santamaria (Jane Cafarella 'Traditional family best, says council', *Melbourne Age*, 19 May 1994)

1997 Scheduled speaker, FCV Forum on the Family, 19 May (*Salt Shakers Newsletter*, Apr. 1997, 11)

2004 Speaker, FCV annual conference, sharing platform with Dr Joseph Santamaria, Brigadier Jim Wallace (Australian Christian Lobby), Andrew Evans MP (Family First Party) and Bill Muehlenberg (AFA) (Helen Woodall 'The Family Council conference', *New Life*, 3 Jun. 2004)

Right to Life Association (RTLA)

'Abortion is entrenched in our culture with government funding provided through Medicare and through government hospitals. We need to lobby politicians and educate the community about this dire situation...' Fights for abortion to become illegal in all circumstances, and against IVF, embryonic stem cell research, and the availability of RU-486.

1982, 1984, 1986 Speaker, Right to Life Association annual conventions (*Right to Life News*, Sept.-Oct. 1982, 10; Sept.-Oct. 1984, 4; Oct.-Nov. 1986, 2)

1984 Speaker, Australian Federation of Right to Life Associations annual national convention, Brisbane (*Advocate*, 12 Jul. 1984)

■ Early in 1981, a 'Right to Life Disabled Action Group' was formed in Melbourne, its secretary being a Margaret Andrews (*Right to Life News*, Mar.-Apr. 1981, 13, with photograph)

■ Kevin and Margaret Andrews are members of the Board of Advisors of Life Decisions International, an American-based organisation specifically formed to oppose the sex and health education work of the Planned Parenthood Federation:

<http://fightpp.org/show.cfm?page=advisors>

One of the Andrews' fellow Board members is long-time anti-abortion activist Joseph Scheidler, author of *99 Ways to Close an Abortion Clinic*.

Other

Andrews has addressed a number of other similar gatherings, e.g. Melbourne University Pro-Life Club (*Salt Shakers Newsletter*, Jul. 1997, 8); and was a scheduled speaker at the Trends 2001 conference, whose guests also included Gordon Moyes (Christian Democratic Party), Bill Muehlenberg (AFA) and Peter and Jenny Stokes (Salt Shakers). (Trends 2001 flyer, in *Salt Shakers Journal*, Sept. 2001)

As far as possible, all information has been derived from the original sources specified in the text. Various collections of documentary and online information have been consulted.