



# Union should be ashamed: Brodbeck

## MGEU seeking to hide ID of members at Phoenix Sinclair inquiry

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**The Union Centre on Broadway and Smith Street in Winnipeg on Tuesday, Aug. 23, 2011. (Winnipeg Sun)**

The Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union doesn't want the public to get the whole truth and nothing but the truth from the upcoming commission of inquiry into the tragic death of toddler Phoenix Sinclair.

The MGEU is calling for a publication ban on the names of any social workers who testify at the inquiry, including a ban on any pictures or video of them in the news media or in social media.

The inquiry hasn't even started yet and already one of Manitoba's biggest unions wants this thing to be a whitewash.

In a letter sent out to media outlets this week, lawyer Garth Smorang — acting on behalf of the MGEU — says he will be asking commissioner Ted Hughes for the ban at the next hearing Sept. 19.

Apparently the MGEU doesn't believe its members should be held accountable in any way shape or form for this avoidable death.

Instead, they want their members to be protected and given some type of special treatment.

That's a laugh. I don't recall anybody at the Taman Inquiry into the death of Crystal Taman getting that kind of immunity. None of the cops, lawyers, bar staff or other witnesses got that type of protection.

None of the players in the Tory vote-rigging scandal inquiry in 1998 had their names protected, either. Every politician, political staff, accountant and party member who testified had their names in the paper and on TV. Why should this be any different?

Phoenix Sinclair died in 2005 after months of physical abuse at the hands of her deranged mother Samantha Kematch and her common-law husband — freak No. 2 — Karl McKay. Both were sentenced to life in prison with no eligibility for parole for 25 years.

Sinclair was routinely beaten, abused, choked and shot at with a BB gun. The five-year-old was forced to eat her own vomit.

Yeah, freaks.

The inquiry was called four years ago but couldn't begin until the criminal prosecution portion of the case was concluded. However, the Selinger government has unnecessarily delayed it by several additional months, no doubt to avoid having the inquiry in full swing during the fall election.

It's expected the inquiry will expose massive holes and incompetence within the child and family services system, something that will surely cause great political embarrassment and harm to the current government.

And it will likely cause harm and embarrassment to those working in the system who failed to ensure Sinclair was in safe hands, despite obvious signs she was not.

But that doesn't mean they should have their identities protected.

It's judgment day, people. And everyone who works in the system should have to account for their actions. If you screwed up, you should have to face the music, just like everybody else. After all, a little girl was tortured and killed here.

Besides, if you did nothing wrong as an MGEU social worker, you should have nothing to worry about. Get up on the stand, give your testimony, answer the questions in cross-examination and go home. Why would you want your name protected if you didn't do anything wrong?

In order to get to the bottom of this unthinkable, gruesome crime, everything must be on the table. No stone should be left unturned. And nobody should get the kind of immunity the MGEU is demanding for its members.

Shame on you, MGEU, for even asking.

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