

Common-law wife wants \$50M from ex

by UPI

MONTREAL -- Quebec's marriage laws are being challenged by a Montreal woman seeking \$50 million from her wealthy ex-common-law husband. The woman, who can't be identified under provincial law, lived in luxury with servants with the man for 10 years and they had three children, her lawyers told the Globe & Mail. One of her lawyers, Marie-Helene Dube, said the man has been paying child support since they split in 2002, but claims the woman has been deprived. "She got accustomed to a certain very high lifestyle, which she will never be able to afford on her own," Dube said. Under Quebec's Civil Code, common-law couples who split don't have the same rights or financial benefits as married couples who separate. A lawyer representing the man, Pierre Bienvenu, told the newspaper the law protected his client. "The position of our client is that he and his spouse had the right to make the choice they made not to get married," Bienvenu said. "We're not hiding behind the law, we're simply acting in accordance to the law." In Quebec, 35 percent of couples live together without being legally married, compared with 13.5 percent in the rest of Canada, the report said.

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