

Lower Island NEWS

An independent democratic socialist newspaper serving the Lower Vancouver Island area for 32 years

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Volume 33 Issue #3

September 2016

Victoria, BC

The World Social Forum 2016: Montreal, Quebec

“Another world is needed. Together it is possible”

Photostory by Heather Tufts

The energizing drum beats resounded through the bustling streets of Montreal in an ambiance of celebration. An expressive dance troupe staged poignant messages about climate change with stunning and emotive choreography. Innovative street theatre enacted humorous yet provocative depictions of colonialism and capitalism. This was the artistic backdrop to an international gathering of social movements, organizations and activists at the World Social Forum (WSF), Quebec style.

The hundreds of workshops were a convergence of ideas framed within Indigenous rights, alternative economics, climate justice, environmental protections, feminism and international peace alignments.

Historically world social forums have taken a strong stand against social inequality and the destructive elements of neo-liberalism, colonialism and capitalism. As a delegate at the forum, I experienced an exciting opportunity to see significant interconnections between many social justice issues as we threaded together information, outcomes and plans.



Naomi Klein gives the keynote speech, focusing on the need for system change to confront the urgent impacts of climate change. Climate change is a social justice issue and energy democracy is a challenge to corporate power.

In her dynamic keynote address, Naomi Klein was able to synchronize overlapping issues relating climate change to social justice and Indigenous rights. Social movements need to challenge the status quo, deconstruct the mythology of jobs versus environment and work towards “energy democracy”.

She defended the media-blighted Leap Manifesto as a community consensus document which encourages a power-sharing model within system change.

When Klein challenged the Trudeau-

led government to undertake substantive change through “policy not image”, there was raucous applause. She also spoke about the urgent need to provide an alternative vision to corporate extractivism as we attempt to undo the damage of investor-state trade deals.

With an increasing commitment to alternative economies where “climate jobs” are many and varied, we can understand that integrated solutions are possible.

A panel of women which converged to discuss the gendered impacts of the extractive industry was equally inspiring. The spiritual relationship to land, food security, family and community embraces the identity of many women who are caught in the crossfire as land defenders. Private property is not conceptualized within many Indigenous communities and powerful women resist colonial leadership to regain their personal sovereignty as decision-makers.

The women expressed a disturbing vulnerability to harassment and violence in industrial boom towns or where mining companies have expropriated land for resource extraction overseas. Within the feminine aspects of earth/moon/water the belief system of “take only what you need” is shattered by predatory extraction projects.

Women want voice in the process of “free, prior and informed consent,” in recognition of an innate relationship to Mother Earth.

As a mining justice activist I have been exposed to many horror stories about the operations of Canadian mining companies overseas. At the forum we debated the need to campaign for regulations around operations, mitigation and restoration, more stringent corporate taxation policies, and the reality of fair and just transitions to sustainable economies.

Marginalized communities in Ecuador have prepared a visionary document called *Buen Vivir* (living well) which proposes a sustainable concept of minimal growth to combat climate change, address displacement poverty and to diminish the global market imposition of the profit-driven extractive industry. The north-south relationship around mining has been predominantly destructive to Indigenous communities and so resistance movements have arisen in many countries.

Some Canadian First Nations land defenders see blockades as the only “urgent action” option for protection against industry while others aspire to community empowerment through consultations. However the diversity of tactics and opinions stemmed from a united vision of land protection.

Sylvia McAdam, a co-founder of Idle No More is a firm believer in direct action. She was a strong presenter on an Indigenous women’s panel about Sacred Water where she reflected disparagingly on the unchanged status of the Harper omnibus bills. She recognizes that in law, acquiescence or silence implies consent and that grassroots people need to take action to protect



The recent assassination of Honduran environmental activist, Berta Caceras, is honoured. Her death prompted international outrage, as well as a flood of tributes to a prominent and courageous land defender in Honduras.

their land and water.

McAdam has written about Nehiyaw laws so that people may understand and live by them to revitalize Indigenous nationhood. She places no value on the colonial court system.

With a different view, Eriel Deranger from Fort Chipewyan Nation was an especially passionate and articulate speaker. Her nation is currently suing Shell Canada for breaching a Tar Sands Impact agreement while challenging Shell’s application

for permits to build new tar sands projects.

The newly proposed projects would contribute to further erosion of fragile ecosystems and critical wildlife habitat. Meanwhile the boreal forest which is essential for carbon sequestering is being destroyed. She reminded us of the cultural genocide imposed by an industry that continues to denigrate the life-style of Indigenous peoples in Alberta.

It was pleasing that the *Declaration on Turn to World Social Forum, page 2*



Informal conversations that develop are an important way to connect at social forums. The World Social Forum is a convergence of diverse organizations and activists who are passionate about social and environmental justice.

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World Social Forum, from page 1



Colonization and debt can be a heavy burden. Street theatre presents how countries can be entrapped by political and corporate assistance programs that are neither sustainable nor sovereign.

the *Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) was referred to in several sessions at the forum. At this point however, there appears to be no strong legal consensus as to how much weight the declaration contributes to legal disputes because of significant variables.

NDP MP Romeo Saganash attended the forum to speak to the need for implementation.

Saganash is currently on a speaking tour to raise awareness about UNDRIP which he believes would be strengthened by his private member's Bill C-262. By moving the status of UNDRIP from adoption to implementation it would give the declaration appropriate legal status.

Delegates at the forum applauded the concept of implementation as the necessary next step whereas the Liberal government remains opposed to these changes.

On the international stage the difference between climate justice and "carbon colonialism" was unpacked at the WSF. Some speakers were highly critical of carbon trading within market systems, arguing that cap and trade is a mechanism whereby

industry can pollute on the backs of developing countries. This system permits those in compliance to green-wash emissions whereas they are not reduced at source.

A discouraging analysis of the Paris climate negotiations revealed an increasing influence of market interests. World bank investments affect trading decisions while polluters can still buy their way out of carbon emission reductions.

Isaac Osaka from Nigeria reported incidents of fraudulent claims of reduced emissions in his country while the "great climate robbery" impacts agriculture through offset land grabs.

In Mozambique industrial farming is presented as one solution to climate change whereas in reality local, sustainable farming has been seriously diminished. However the consensus was that polluters must pay through a reasonable carbon tax system.

As I wove myself through the maze of workshops I created an imaginary being in the middle of an enormous social justice map. The pathways were inextricably linked to multiple issues and led to challenges and solution-building.

I was both overwhelmed and inspired as I realized that we were there (in the thousands) to help build a better world. I embraced the opportunity to participate in renewed international understandings about human rights by deconstructing colonialism, militarization and market-driven systems.

The discovery of a courtyard resting place called "Dear Capitalism" evoked peaceful reflections and creative messaging while delegates shared their visions of change. "Dear Capitalism...you're fired!"

In an informative workshop, biologist Jim Thomas spoke about GMOs and extreme genetic engineering. He stressed that the technology of synthetic biology is advancing much more rapidly than people realize. We have the capacity to identify and manipulate genetic pathways in plants and insects but without understanding its effects on bio-diversity.

Synthetic biology can modify seeds, grow seedless pharmaceutical crops in vats and alter or adjust insects such as mosquitoes. While it is possible to wipe out malaria it is equally possible to spread disease with genetic engineering.

Corporations preach "climate smart agriculture" and impose controlled solutions to hunger without oversight. Whereas some countries are disturbed by this rapidly developing technology, Canada has blocked United Nations resolutions which would diminish the unethical impacts of synthetic biology.

This rapidly evolving environment which can manipulate data, gives corporations dangerous levels of power over food security, diseases and pharmaceuticals through genetic engineering. Military uses of biological technologies remain in question although the capacity for germ warfare is a clear and present danger.

This is the first time that the World Social Forum has been held in a North American city and it was not without controversy. A significant number of delegates from countries in the global south were not able to attend due to unjustified visa delays or denials at Canadian Embassies in targeted countries.

"This is surely a major development which attacks the integrity of the WSF as a global space that has been respected by every government of the South wherever the WSF has so far been held," said Brid Brennan of the Transnational Institute. "This action on the part of the Canadian Foreign and Home Affairs is surely part of the major attack we are witnessing globally on the rights of people to move as well as on the criminalization of social movements and human and environmental defenders."

Many speakers at the forum admonished the reduced potential for international solidarity due to the absence of many progressive and activist delegates. It appears unlikely that another WSF will be held in Canada with such unacceptable limitations.

This is merely a miniscule glimpse of the Montreal forum which offered hundreds of workshops and activities. The topics were finally grouped into convergences where each presented their consensus-based resolutions during the final two days. Participants were encouraged to consolidate concrete action plans in the summary.

I left feeling overwhelmed, excited, inspired, exhausted and hopeful.

In my view, part of the solution is obvious: transition power to young, eco-feminist, Indigenous, peace-making women and watch our world change! In the revived spirit of Idle No More and the mantra of the World Social Forum: *Another world is needed. Together it is possible.*



Solidarity with the people of Palestine. The World Social Forum endorsed BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) and denounced the Canadian government's denial of temporary visas for Palestinian delegates.



A panel of women discuss the gendered impacts of predatory extractivism. They embody identity to land and food security as protectors of family, and women are vulnerable to sexual harassment in industry-based communities.

Esquimalt and West Shore New Democrats!

If you live in Esquimalt, View Royal, Colwood or Metchosin, you are in the new provincial constituency of Esquimalt-Metchosin.

The Founding General Meeting of Esquimalt-Metchosin will take place Saturday, September 10

Registration, 10:30 a.m.; Meeting, 11 a.m.
Place: Colwood Community Hall (Children's Hall),
2219 Sooke Road (near Kelly Road).

For more information, e-mail esqmetndp@gmail.com.

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Kinder Morgan Town Hall:

Think of what the children will face

By Starla Anderson

A Town Hall meeting was held at the Victoria Marriott on August 23 to give citizens an opportunity to express their views about the proposed twinning of Texas oil-giant Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline from Edmonton to Burnaby. This project which would add almost 1,000 kilometres of new pipeline and triple its carrying capacity from 300,000 barrels per day of crude oil and refined petroleum to 890,000 barrels per day. (Elizabeth McSheffrey in the *National Observer*, August 9, 2016)

Protests began immediately after the December 2015 National Energy Board recommendation that this project proposal be approved by the federal government. The protests focused on the lack of input from First Nations communities, citizens from communities that would be affected by the pipeline, and environmental organizations. Ironically, the recommendation came at about the same time that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Environment and Climate Change Minister Catherine McKenna, and a multi-party delegation were attending the Climate Change Conference in Paris where Canada committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030.

In January, Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr hastily scheduled hearings to be held throughout this past July and August in communities that would be affected if this pipeline were to be approved: Kamloops, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Langley, Burnaby, Vancouver, North Vancouver, and Victoria. Fifteen days of Round table discussions focused on issues raised by such stakeholders as business, government, non-governmental organizations, and Indigenous groups. Town Hall meetings for public presentations were also held for individual citizens to express their views on the proposal.

Minister Carr appointed a three-member panel to listen to and report back on the views that were heard in these meetings: Kim Baird, Annette Trimbee, and Tony Penikett. The Ministry website states that "All three have extensive experience in issues the panel is supposed to address: to consider the views of communities along the route; to 'meaningfully consult' indigenous peoples and, where appropriate, to accommodate their rights and interests; and to assess not just the direct emissions from the pipeline, but the so-called upstream pollution from the oil fields."

Victoria's Town Hall meeting, the very last of these meetings was held in the hotel's Pacific Ballroom—a room that held only 200 of the almost 400 who had come to the hotel expecting to be participating. The meeting was scheduled to be held from 4 - 8:30 pm but was extended until 10:00 with many of the 180 who had signed up to give presentations not able to get into the venue because of both capacity limitations and time constraints. Still, the 52 who spoke to two of the panelists were well prepared with researched arguments and passionate

appeals. (Tony Penikett wasn't present at the Town Hall; participants were informed that he was at home in Whitehorse but no further explanation was given.)

All speakers were vehemently opposed to Kinder Morgan's proposal to pipe bitumen (diluted with toxic chemicals) from the Alberta tar sands to be loaded onto tankers in BC's Vancouver harbor to pass through the Salish Sea to Asia. The primary theme of the evening was that we as a society owe it to future generations to make the transition to sustainable energy if we are to keep the planet viable for any kind of life. Alexis White from Saanichton firmly stated, "Not to transition from fossil fuels is a crime against humanity."

Many speakers referred to the National Energy Board's inadequate criteria for recommending that the project be approved without considering the context of Climate Change and the commitment that Canada made in Paris. Presenter John Manley reminded the panel that Trudeau said during his campaign that decisions will be based on science and that scientists tell us we must get off of fossil fuels. "We can't meet the agreement and also expand use of fossil fuels."

Several spoke of both upstream and downstream Greenhouse gas effects of the tar sands industry. Marilyn Good talked about how there is pressure from China to build this pipeline to move the heavy oil—in exchange for free trade. "China's air is already so polluted that people wear masks when they go outdoors."

Another speaker added "When the Chinese refine and burn the products from the tar sands, those Greenhouse emissions don't just pollute China; the emissions also come here."

Many speakers referred to oil and gas tanker spills and pipeline breaks that have devastated the eco-systems of North American rivers (the Athabasca, the Kalamazoo and recently the North Saskatchewan), and oceans (the north Pacific on Alaska's south shore, the Gulf of Mexico). Despite billions of dollars spent in toxic chemical "clean-ups," the shoreline of Prince William Sound has yet to recover from the 1989 Exxon-Valdez tanker spill.

Arlene Wilkinson spoke about cleaning up Crescent Beach and White Rock Beach after a 1972 spill at BP's Cherry Point refinery in Washington state and the decimation of crabs, oysters, fish, and clams on the beaches of West Vancouver when two tankers collided in English Bay.

A former vice president of an Ontario College told of how she travelled along the Athabasca and saw the devastation from the Tar Sands; another speaker told of the high rates of cancer among the Indigenous peoples of Fort Mackay—and the deformed fish found in the surrounding lake waters.

Saanich activist, Judy Gaylord, spoke of former Esquimalt-Saanich Liberal MP David Anderson who had convinced Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau back in the 1970s to ban tankers in the Inside Passage but that ban was lifted when Harper's Conservative government was elected. Charles

Campbell, a member of the Dogwood Initiative executive, said that the present Prime Minister Trudeau made the promise of a tanker ban during his election campaign but that this is yet to be seen.

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous speakers expressed that in this era of Truth and Reconciliation, the government needed to do nation-to-nation consultation with First Nations when making decisions about corporate proposals to mine and/or transport natural resources on their territories. Susan Smitten, executive director of RAVEN Trust, said that the lack of respectful consultation is not acceptable. Prime Minister Trudeau has committed to a new relationship with First Nations but the federal approval of Site C Dam does not reflect that — the Moberly and West Prophet First Nations are still fighting court battles to save their Peace River territories from the Site C Dam.

Sandra, a Métis from Athabasca, brought attention to the Lakota Sioux who were presently blocking pipeline construction near their reservation in North Dakota: "We have to give up our addiction to fossil fuels. 17 million litres of bitumen were spilt in Alberta during four years alone." She went on to say that the people of Burnaby already know how oil spills affect communities—in 2007 250,000 litres were spilt when a construction worker broke a section of the Kinder Morgan pipeline. Diane White pointed out "Once the bitumen is loaded onto tanker ships, Kinder Morgan's responsibility is finished."

Paul and Monika Petrie live on the Pender Island transit route to be taken by the additional 400 tankers each year through Boundary Pass and Haro Strait where the orcas live. Paul Petrie said that "The current level of risk is not acceptable, let alone considering such an increase in tanker traffic. This is a most difficult turning point and what could protect it from tanker collisions?"

Another Pender Islander, Mary Brar, said "I am a snorkeler and today I speak for the sea life that can't speak for itself—watching the demise of sea mammals affects me; the interconnectedness of humans with sea life is far too great to allow this project. I ask the panel: What is your criterion for what is important in life?"

Local artist Ann Hansen made her presentation with a painting of oil splattered ocean water and oil splattered seals. She asked the panelists just to meditate on her painting for the 3 - 5 minute time allotment presenters were given.

Most speakers concluded their presentations with appeals to Canada's energy corporations to make the transition to alternate sources of energy: geo-thermal, wind, solar, tide, and that government should be committed to fund retraining for clean energy jobs, as well as investing in infrastructure to support the public's efforts to end our addiction to fossil fuels.

It was forcefully argued that if Ottawa stopped subsidizing the fossil fuel industry and took leadership in the transition, we

would restore our environment. "The fossil fuel and auto industries have tried to block electric cars for years but this is a turning point—fossil fuels are going to have to make way for renewables." Eric Doherty, an environmental consultant, asked: "Is destroying everything that humanity values economically viable?"

Ian Brown said that there would be 126,000,000 tons of new greenhouse gas if this proposed Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain project is allowed to go through—almost twice as much as all the ships, trucks, cars, buses, and other modes of transportation generate in a year (64,000,000 tons). He pointed out that the world is already paying the costs of Global Warming: High River, Alberta flooding, Fort McMurray fires, laid off loggers because of pine beetles devastating forests, the drought in California. These events are reason enough not to increase Greenhouse gases.

Herb Whitney, a resident of James Bay, pointed out "We're in an earthquake zone and the tankers heading to Asia will encounter typhoons. They will be travelling through commercial fishing zones so where will the contaminants be released? The glaciers in Antarctica and Greenland are melting, ocean levels are rising and islets will become reefs and shallows, making it more dangerous. Larry Bizzari received a standing ovation when he adamantly pronounced, "It doesn't matter what decision the government makes—we are not going to let the pipeline go through."

Victoria MP Murray Rankin stated, "I can assure you that this community is resolutely opposed to this project ... it is lunacy to play Russian roulette with our coastline." He rhetorically asked how this proposed Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain project could be reconciled with the Climate Accord recently signed by the Prime Minister. When asked by another speaker how many at the meeting would work to stop the project, the full room of 200 stood up. (Sheila Malcolmson, MP for Nanaimo-Ladysmith and Alistair MacGregor, MP for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford also spoke.)

A speaker who had travelled from the West Coast of the Island to be at the Town Hall told the panel, "I was paddling in Clayoquot Sound this morning in the fog and I needed a compass to find my way. We are living in a fog and need a compass to take us in a new direction ... those of us present at this Town Hall are your compass." He pointed out that the noise from shipping was already affecting the whale population — he appealed to the panelists to realize that they are not bystanders: "You must exercise your powers to influence cabinet."

Writer Gary Geddes highlighted the irony of the name of the corporation wanting to build an additional pipeline to move chemically diluted bitumen from the Tar Sands to the Coast and then across the Pacific Ocean to Asia in tankers. He told the panel that "In German, kinder means children, and morgan means morning. Think of what the children will face."

Citizens frustrated at being shut out of Kinder Morgan panel

Over one hundred people denied right to speak at Ministerial Review Panel's last stop

VICTORIA -- Hundreds of people showed up on August 23 to take part in what was the last stop for the Kinder Morgan Ministerial Review Panel's short summer tour, but many were shut out when the hearing room reached its 260 person capacity.

"The police emerged from the meeting room to say that it was already over-capacity," said Dogwood Organizer, Dave Mills. "Some people were pretty angry at being denied the opportunity to join the meeting."

Mills, along with 12 others, had driven three hours down from Northern Vancouver Island to attend and speak at the hearing.

Attendees estimate more than 150 people were turned away from sitting in on the hearing, directed by police to wait in the hallway as officers implemented a one for one exchange with anyone leaving.

The three member panel, appointed by Minister of Natural Resources, Jim Carr, was formed in June to hear from community members on issues the NEB failed to consider when it approved the Trans Mountain Pipeline proposal back in May. They are to report their findings to the federal cabinet by November 1.

The panel, which has been strongly criticized for being hastily organized, has been on tour for the last several weeks, making stops in what the Ministry considered the areas most affected by the proposed Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion including the BC cities of Kamloops, Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Langley, Burnaby, Vancouver and Victoria. North Vancouver was originally overlooked, but then added once the tour was underway.

Victoria was its last stop, making it the final opportunity for representatives

from First Nations, local government, and NGO's, as well as the public at large, to voice comments on the proposal.

At the public hearing, more than 400 people flooded the Marriott Inner Harbour Hotel with 181 signing up to address the panel directly.

Frustration further mounted by 8:30 p.m. when only 37 of the speakers had had their opportunity to present to panel members Annette Trimbee and Kim Baird (panel member Tony Penikett was no-

ticeably absent, leaving the day prior for a scheduled trip to the Arctic). Baird announced she and Trimbee would stay until 10 p.m. in order to accommodate a few more speakers. Every person who spoke was opposed to the project.

As time wound down, requests came from several members of the audience that the panel should stay another day in Victoria to allow those shut out of the process their opportunity to speak. Panel Chair Kim Baird did not respond.



It's our opinion

It's time to provide a living income, as a human right

Wherever one finds comfort on the political and economic spectrum – left, right or centre -- all views tend to agree that things aren't working today. In fact too large a percentage of the viable workforce isn't working at all.

There is no shortage of possible fixes. Global economists promote international trade and economic "growth". Nationalists promote global withdrawal and internal economic strategies. Centrists would reshape current models to promote "fairer" distribution of assets and profits.

Recently another "economic good" solution was put to the vote in Switzerland. If the negative effect of unemployment can't be resolved with more jobs, then what would be wrong with paying people, whether or not they were employed?

You got it! Pay employable people even when they are *not* working. Provide incomes from the State to the unemployed – around \$2500 monthly was the suggestion in Switzerland – an expensive cost of living country by most standards.

The idea was voted down, having no more chance at the Swiss ballot box than a baby seal awaiting a fatal clubbing in exchange for its profitable pelt.

But the concept of a societal guaranteed income obligation is not new or impossible. The idea of limiting access to income and life sustaining resources only to those whose labour can yield a profit to capitalistic corporations, is an idea which is rapidly being stripped of credibility. Technological progress yields fewer job opportunities and more unemployed and non earning citizens.

The way forward must now imagine that any humane society must shoulder the burden of providing life sustaining resources and income for all citizens, regardless of their employability, employment status, age, gender, health, race, orientation, etc.

In North America this particular imagined way forward is anathema to today's red meat entrepreneurs who continue to want to greedily sell the rope that is beginning to strangle them – a visionary thought more accurate than the visionary outcome of "trickle down" economics.

In Finland and the Netherlands, and in other more socially advanced countries, the idea of guaranteed income is taken more seriously. There are growing examples of socially progressive policies that grow society rather than growing the private profit of a few capitalists.

The economic model that we live with in Canada is failing both as a social model and as a business model. We're not the worst example of today's economic failings but we are struggling.

It is not the purpose of this editorial to debate the technical pros and cons of economic and social models that can or cannot fund or allow guaranteed incomes. Although current political discussions about redistribution of wealth, capital and income demonstrate a healthy raised consciousness about societal fairness, the purpose here is to ask more fundamental questions.

However the present economic models are tweaked and adjusted, the facts are that the current systems leave millions of people without food and shelter. Without security and the means of support. As a reader of this paper you will have walked along city streets, daily, where people are sleeping in bags and boxes at night, begging for subsistence quarters during the day.

Do you find that experience acceptable? Does it hurt you? Does it make you angry? These images, drawn so graphically in Dickensian novels, make us reflect in horror about what used to be. Images of depression era USA are the stuff of endless TV documentaries. Planners and pundits vow "never again" as we do, again, enable Dickensian and Depression style economic holocausts.

Part of the economic relief model has leaned heavily on the private charity model. We were told that by combining financial and volunteer resources – thousands of points of light, etc. – poverty could be eliminated. The War on Poverty, in whatever shape it is imagined, has increasingly become a War on the Impoverished. You don't believe it?

By regularly criminalizing people reduced to sleeping on the streets, of course society has declared war. Our society has declared war on itself. Our society has become a society of petty judges that gives the Spanish Inquisition a run for its money. Via Twitter, Facebook, Social Mediums and comment columns we judge, exploit, identify heroes and condemn the unworthy.

And the unworthy are those without incomes. Those without resources. Those without jobs. Those without health. Those without friends.

Most signs are that our private profit societies are not happy places. Citizens are not happy. The uncertainties of where the next paycheque might come from are more than many can handle. Anger and frustration bring vicious judgments, impacting the weakest in society.

And the weakest can always be identified as the "economically weak". Largely the weakest are not the physically weak or the mentally challenged. They are the income challenged.

Our economic systems attach value to the individual measured by their financial wealth. If there are insufficient dollars attached to you, you are of insufficient

The Lower Island NEWS

The *Lower Island NEWS*, in its 33rd year of publication, is an independent news-feature tabloid newspaper, published as often as financially possible, by the Lower Island News Society, Box 311, 2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC V8T 4E8.

Signed articles are the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Lower Island NEWS* or the Lower Island News Society. Articles submitted for publication are subject to editing at the discretion of the Editor.

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Printed at Web ExPress, Coquitlam, BC
Canadian Publications Mail Agreement #40008124

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value. You are a lesser person. You are a weaker person. Sink or swim. Our economic model has no intention of throwing a state funded lifeline. It never did. It never would.

Social security and state or private pensions, as sustainable income sources, are increasingly devalued or eliminated. Take a look at the recent abuse of pension funds in the closure of one of Britain's largest retail chains or the elimination of the pension rights of so many US workforces in the past few decades.

An interesting economic anomaly exists in the study of famines. Population starvation so often has not resulted from an actual shortage of food. Starvation has been caused by a failure to distribute and provide access to the food that actually exists.

The denial of access to food is caused by an absence of money – i.e. valuable tokens of exchange. When money is made available the food gets distributed and people are spared starvation. Simple. The global economy has the resources and money to feed everybody. The North American and Canadian resources are simply not being properly distributed.

So, whichever economic model we choose to support and whichever group of disadvantaged we choose to help or deny, the fact is that without guaranteed income for all, in our societies, regardless of their employability, the streets will inevitably fill further with people begging for a living.

If we truly want to work toward housing and feeding all of our neighbours, then it is time to move away from supporting the "protestant work ethic" that has excused and driven centuries of societal poverty. It's time to provide a living income, as a human right, even to those who don't work at tasks that generate temporary private profit.

The human experience tends to show that, unencumbered by the chains of a waged and salaried existence; the human spirit is freed to be its most inventive, creative, intelligent and generous. -- JRL

600 crosses at Harris Green



Tony Sprackett

Photo by Tony Sprackett

On the morning of June 1, the activists pictured, along with some others, erected 600 crosses on the lawn at Harris Green, in Victoria. Six hundred represents the number of drug overdose deaths expected across BC this year. Yes2SCS (Safe Consumption Site) organized the installation, and continues to lobby all levels of government to open and implement more services such as InSite in Vancouver.

How risky is it?

By Dale Perkins

We want a guarantee on everything.

It might vary from one's religion to one's investments. We don't like taking chances on the results. And it produces hesitant, risk-adverse people who won't tolerate disappointment or accept unexpected outcomes.

It likely has something to do with aging – the older we get the more important it is that we not get taken advantage of, or shocked by not getting the outcomes we anticipated. So we invest in sure things; perhaps the only exceptions are lotteries and tickets or gambling opportunities – where so many think nothing of handing over mega bucks to slot machines or operatives working the tables – even our neighborhood grocery clerks. “Hey, we might get lucky – and \$20.00 isn't that much. So why not give it a go?” But on other matters, a different mantra is heard.

Many of us decry our grandkids and their peers for riding recklessly on those skate boards, doing terrible stunts on concrete stairs and railings. “Don't they know they could get hurt?” we mutter aloud. And we take them by the hand and guide them carefully across streets, or scold them for their high risk living.

However, for us bona fide adults, we play it safe, and make sure we get the outcomes we script into our lives. Now some of us are realizing that the admonishments to play it safe pervade almost every aspect of living – from investments to religion (as I've said above).

With religion it comes in the form of theology and preachers promising “heaven when we die” or salvation from all our errors and mistakes we foolishly committed now and then. “Standing on the promises” warble the evangelical Christians, and each and every religion of choice have guarantees for obedient followers if they “mind their 'Ps' and 'Qs' and don't go astray by taking unnecessary risks.”

And investments are another hot bed of cautious practices – don't get caught handing over your precious savings on high risk ventures. Play it safe and only buy gold (for instance), or “blue chip” stocks. Legions of investment counsellors make their living insuring us wary customers don't take unnecessary risks and end up destitute.

Therefore, we take out insurances on everything we own, and whenever we fly or drive somewhere – that's normal and simply the right way to live. Not only is having no insurances unwise, in some cases it's illegal. Making sure we aren't taking risks has become a way of life, and the vast majority of us good citizens play by those standards and envelop our lives with countless insurances. And should we never use those insurances, we still feel justified because we “played it safe”.

With voting and election strategies, something similar is the bedrock of practices – we want to vote for the one who stands the best chance of winning. Or once elected, they will guarantee outcomes and results. Failure to deliver on the promises can be suicidal for incumbents running again – we electorate won't forget or be fooled again. We abhor politicians who seem risky or unpredictable – we don't want to risk making a mistake or taking chances. Better to be safe than sorry.

Most phenomena in the natural world seems to counteract this tendency towards safety and no-risk-living. Suddenly the climate does extreme convulsions, and ice-caps melt and raise ocean levels and islands and coastlines are flooded. Droughts deplete water tables, or flash floods turn streets into rivers. Ocean reefs turn into dead zones, aquatic species disappear.

There don't appear to be any safe-zones, and all our good planning and insurances aren't protecting us the way they once did. Life has become extremely high risk, and there are no safe hiding places for us anymore.

What to do now?

If it is possible for us to act “in concert” on this, then recognizing it isn't a question of whether something is risky or safe? The important thing is realizing when something is right and the correct thing to do in and of itself. Without determining in advance on necessary outcomes those actions become the direction we need to go.

What we do and decide has to be done must have integrity in and of itself (and not because of guaranteed outcomes). If, for instance, we have faith in a particular value or principle it will be because of its basic integrity; and it simply feels right. Since there are no outcomes that can be determined in advance, then acting on the basis of those values is the best thing one can do.

Religions that promise outcomes need to be jettisoned; only those that offer actions and social behaviour which lead to compassion and kindness among peoples need be considered. And investments? Which ones offer the greatest social good and provide economic activities which enhance communities and populations, they must receive our support. And voting and elections – which candidates and Party offer commitments and platforms which electors realize have the most promise to enhance the society and commons, they need our support?

Again, there never are fool-proof guarantees, and there always will be certain risks which are inevitable. Safety is never the goal; only social well-being and happiness are.

Dale Perkins is a retired United church minister-living in Victoria

Friends of the Lower Island News

Another three months have gone by since we produced and mailed our last issue to you. We regret having such long times between issues--it is certainly not for lack of material for our amazing writers to write about--but merely, as you have no doubt guessed, the ever rising cost of producing and mailing the paper to you.

We are committed to producing at least four issues a year for as long as we can. And we are continually grateful to readers like you who donate to the paper.

Keeping this paper financed is an on-going challenge, and we are always on the lookout for potential new advertisers. so if you know of a business--small or large--that might like to get its name in front of our progressive readers, please contact me at dale_young@telus.net.

Below is the latest list of Friends of the *Lower Island News* who have given donations in the last three months:

Anonymous	\$200
David Olsen	\$ 20
William Wilson	\$ 20
Geoffrey Weston	\$ 30
Red Hens	\$ 30

If you like this issue of LIN, want it to continue to be published, and can afford to give something, please consider becoming a supporting donor and send us a cheque, whatever amount you can afford. All donations will be appreciated.

Donations may be sent to the Lower Island News Society at Box 311, 2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC V8T 4E8 and will be acknowledged in the paper. Please indicate if you prefer to be “anonymous”. Unfortunately we can't take credit card donations or give tax receipts. Thank you!

Dale Young, Editor, for the Editorial Board

We the 99%ers against the 1%ers

Because of the strong influence 1%ers have over governments, their income taxes have been significantly reduced. As a result, the income tax burden on We the 99%ers has been increased. The concept of a progressive income tax policy is being seriously eroded.

Tax cuts to the 1%ers account for the rapidly increasing wealth gap developing in Canada between the rich and everyone else. As this gap increases, it will result in increasing social unrest and social instability. The public's reaction to increasing inequality will initially be peaceful demonstrations.

As We the People become increasingly stressed from rising costs for goods and services, the demonstrations will increase in frequency and size. This will place a great burden on our police forces which are not designed for such general public unrest.

Our governments are aware of this as reflected by the increasing militarization of our police forces. As public unrest continues to increase, the police will be supplemented by the Canadian Armed Forces and, if necessary, by prearranged US Armed Forces.

What proactive steps can our governments take to prevent a class war from developing?

Gerry Masuda
Duncan

How much do we need?

We live in a time where big is not big enough and high has to be higher and more has to be multiplied with more but this never satisfies, so our dream reaches out for even more, higher, bigger, faster ... The greed of humans, who are never satisfied.

When I heard about the two proposed strip mall shopping centres opposite of Sidney at Sandown and Gateway, a story from Leo Tolstoy came to my mind: “How much land does a man need?”

You remember the story? There was the peasant farmer Pahom, who was able to obtain 40 acres of land; however, this land did not bring him satisfaction. He wanted more. He ruined the relationship with his former friends and neighbours and

purchased 125 acres of land. Still this extra land did not bring him security.

Next he thought, he could make a better profit with more land. Finally he was offered a waste land as much as he could walk around within one day for one thousand rubles. There was only one condition: he had to be back at the same point where he started before sunset. So he agreed with the deal and didn't know that he made a deal with the devil.

Pahom was pleased about such a generous offer and started to walk as fast as he could. He decided to encircle 35 miles of land and then sell his own land, for which he still owed, for a profit. So the story unfolded. Pahom was focused on his profit to gain more.

As the sun went slowly down he tried desperately to reach the starting post but collapsed. He then heard a loud laughter. This was the end. His servants came with a spade to dig a grave to bury him. “Six feet from his head to his heels was all he needed.”

Are we so much different than farmer Pahom? With three groceries, pharmacies, eating places, banks and all that is already offered in Sidney -- do we really need more? Why should we sacrifice the rural, peaceful landscape of North Saanich and kill the little town of Sidney that would never be able to compete with merchants who are selling the same items for less?

Should we not concentrate to make Sidney even more pleasant? This little town is a gem with a unique atmosphere by the ocean. Why should we destroy this with 22 acres of two shopping centres and let people breathe in the exhaust from even more cars? Why should we sacrifice the beauty of North Saanich with its rolling hills and green farms?

What do we win to turn 12 acres of top farmland into another shopping centre with mid box stores, to draw away business from Sidney and North Saanich? These mid box stores offer products at wholesale prices. Local independent retailers and farmers can not compete with this type of pricing method. There could be up to four mid-box wholesale-retail stores, with 40,000 square feet each, on the 12-acre commercial site, to be known as Sandown Commons.

It will end the rural quality of life for many residents and ruin the little town of Sidney by the Sea. Like the farmer Pahom, who was never satisfied with what he had, he wanted more without calculating the cost - the cost of life.

Hildegard Horie
North Saanich

Memories of Beth Rutherford

I first met Beth Rutherford in the early '70s. I was running my first federal campaign for Bob Cameron.

Beth walked into the office and introduced herself. She was still working for BC Tel. She told me she had been a member of the CCF/NDP since she was in her teens. She offered to work in the campaign.

I said that my EDay organizer had just quit and I needed a new one. She asked what it was all about so I showed her. She said that would be easy and she would be glad to do it.

When I said that it was almost full time, Beth's answer was: How about every evening and all day Saturday and Sunday. I said that would probably be OK so she took the job on.

She was right, she could do it and certainly put her heart and soul into it. I doubt she missed any campaign since. She worked even in those days when we weren't electing many candidates on the island. Walk into a campaign office and there would be Beth working away at whatever was needed.

She never missed a constituency meeting, whether federal or provincial. She was an active member of the Gorge Club.

Even after she had her brain aneurism, she was back at it in record short time.

She loved her home on the water and threw wonderful parties on her birthdays.

It was my honour to work with Beth on various campaigns. She was always cheerful, busy and we became good friends over the years.

She will be missed but she does deserve the rest.

Peggy Mika, Victoria

We welcome your letters to the editor, as well as articles and reviews, photos, and anything else you think would be of interest to our progressive readers. The next issue of the *Lower Island News* will be in early December.

The deadline for submitting advertising and articles for the next issue will be Friday, November 18.

For further information and to obtain advertising rates, please email dale_young@telus.net or phone 250-384-7621.

Enough is enough!

By David Olsen

As the *LIN* went to press, two major events dominated TV news programs on August 21.

The closing of the 2016 Rio Olympics got the most coverage, while yet another day of slaughter in the Middle East got a great deal less. On that day a suicide bomber (perhaps a child) killed himself and at least 51 others at a wedding party in Gaziantep, Turkey, it is said, in the name of ISIL. On that day too, Iraq hanged 36 men for their alleged part in the murder of 1700 Shia air force cadets in 2014, while the Iraqi prime minister called for more executions following the death of 300 people in a truck bomb explosion in Baghdad last month. And so it goes on.

The on-going news from the Middle Press reduces one to a state of despair. The region, if we include Afghanistan, has now been in a state of war since 1979 when the then Soviet Union under Leonid Brezhnev entered Afghanistan to prop up the pro-Russian government. Ten years later Mikhail Gorbachev pulled Russian forces out of Afghanistan after 15,000 Russian troops and one million Afghans lay dead.

Within two years the Soviet State had unravelled and the stage was set for the eventual ascent of Vladimir Putin – himself a protégé of Yuri Andropov, the KGB Chief when the Russian army went into Afghanistan.

Undeterred by the Russian catastrophe, George Bush and other western leaders also went into Afghanistan and then Iraq.

It could be said that the Middle East has been a war zone for much longer. Fought over from 1914 to 1918, then an uneasy period followed by a series of coups, regime changes (usually bloody), wars, foreign interventions, the endless Israel/Arab conflict, bringing us right up to date with no end in sight. The *LIN* once spoke of the prospect of a new 100 Years War. Well, a prospect no longer - that is what we have got, a thousand times more atrocious than its namesake of the 14th and 15th centuries.

Worse yet, there is no end in sight. So called "peace talks" have come to nothing and every group, army, militia and jihadist see themselves in a fight to the finish, in which only victory will suffice. So much blood has been spilled that it is now probably futile to imagine that a permanent settlement and solution can be found by negotiation, unless all sides are prostrated by exhaustion.

Given the support for various factions by Russia, Iran, the US, France, Britain and other western nations including Canada; various authoritarian Arab States, and increasingly authoritarian Turkey plus a hodgepodge of semi-religious Islamic militants like Hezbollah, the outlook is bleak. No wonder that millions of people just want to be out of a region which is an absolute ruin.

Meanwhile, endless bombing sorties continue, by Russians, French, American, British, Saudi (which also bombs Yemen) and other air forces. But what has it actually achieved? It hasn't stopped the recently reported chlorine gassing of a two year old Syrian child and many others. And there are now seven and a half million Syrian children affected by war.

These numbers become incomprehensible to us – they are just statistics. It is the pictures of five year Omran Dagneesh



In this frame grab taken from video provided by the Syrian anti-government activist group Aleppo Media Center (AMC), a child sits in an ambulance after being pulled out of a building hit by an airstrike, in Aleppo, Syria, August 17. The dusty and bloody five-year old Syrian boy captured the attention of people around the world. The boy suffered head injuries when his family's apartment building in the city of Aleppo was hit by a bomb. The boy was rescued from the rubble of the building. His family members were also rescued. None of them had serious injuries. The video and photos show the boy being lifted into an ambulance by a rescue worker. People can be heard yelling in the background. The boy, who has been identified as Omran Dagneesh, remains quiet and calm.

pulled from the rubble of a bombed building in Aleppo just days ago, or of Alan Kurdi drowned on a beach in Turkey that capture our attention.

But despite all this, the agony goes on. When Vladimir Putin, Bashar Al-Assad, Francois Hollande, Theresa May, Barack Obama and all the other "leaders" see these pictures and hear the front line stories, where is their compassion? Where is their will to hear the cries of a dying child or bereaved mother and say – "Enough"!

Faced with all this horror, everything else fades into insignificance or irrelevance. The applause for Olympic medallists is already a fading memory, but the children begging for food scraps from tourists at Rio de Janeiro restaurants are still there, as they have been for years.

The use by Canadian Health Minister Jane Philpott of limousine services contracted from a Liberal party supporter, while stupid and thoughtless (like Conservative Bev Oda's juice in London) seems to engage Conservatives and the public more than the government's (Stephane Dion) decision to continue with the \$15 billion sale of weaponry to Saudi Arabia, when that country is slaughtering civilians in Yemen.

There is no need for the defence minister to wander around Africa looking for places to send Canadian troops to keep elusive or non-existent "peace", for there lies the dilemma for our minister. Peace nowadays probably has to be imposed and enforced, rather than just kept. This is not to downplay the horror stories coming from South Sudan and elsewhere, but the need for action is staring us in the face, right in the Middle East, where Canada has been engaged for the last two years.

The problem for Canada and everyone else (except Russia) is that Syria probably falls into the "too hard" category, because if someone takes out Bashar al Assad, the Libyan post-Gadhafi disaster will be repeat-

ed in Syria.

Unfortunately, on World Humanitarian Day, August 19, the prime minister, while rightly making a statement on the 74th anniversary of the Dieppe raid, appeared unaware, or at least the PMO was, of World Humanitarian Day. The president of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly said "Let us demand that our leaders show just some of the courage displayed by those affected by the current crisis and work together to save lives".

So there it is Mr Trudeau. The situation in the Middle East goes from appalling to catastrophic and threatens to engulf the world far beyond Syria. When you, with other heads of state go to the UN General Assembly Summit for Refugees and Migrants on September 19, demand that the discussion to be held on "Addressing the root causes of large movements of refugees" is more than just a discussion. Demand that the Heads of State indeed show some courage and STOP THE BLOODY WAR IN SYRIA!

Then stop all the other insane wars with their attendant murder and rape. Do that and much of the "root causes of large movements of refugees" is solved. Then "leaders" can get stuck into the other main causes of refugees -- climate change and overpopulation.

Jim Jaarsma
Contracting
250-360-1905

Quality Carpentry
General Contracting

Cool Aid to operate Cottage Grove in Saanich

On June 28 levels of government and partners gathered for the "Celebration of Construction" for Cottage Grove supportive housing, at 3207 Quadra in Saanich, being built for 45 seniors and others who have been homeless. Victoria Cool Aid Society, which originally purchased the property in 2014, will be the operator.

"Cottage Grove is an excellent example of Cool Aid's long-term thinking and work towards permanent solutions to end homelessness," said Kathy Stinson, CEO. "Ten years ago, we first had the vision for this property. In the last two years, all levels of government have stepped up to make this new apartment building possible."

Capital funding has been provided by the Province, Canada, CRD, Saanich and Victoria. Initial funds that started the project were provided by Cool Aid and generous donations from individuals, businesses and foundations who contributed to the Help End Homelessness capital campaign.

Cool Aid's Help End Homelessness capital fund was used to kickstart Cottage Grove through the initial property purchase, and was also used to complete due diligence work on Mount Edwards Court. Thanks to the Province all these funds are back in Cool Aid's control to create more supportive housing.

Cottage Grove is expected to open early in 2017, and is part of the solution towards ending homelessness in the Capital Region.

"Collectively, we have tremendous momentum towards ending homelessness in the Capital Region," said Stinson. "Cool Aid will continue to work with all levels of government and other community partners

on permanent housing solutions that will improve hundreds of lives, more effectively utilize taxpayer dollars, and build a better quality of life for everyone who lives in Greater Victoria."

Victoria Labour Council

219-2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC V8T 4E8
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The VLC, representing affiliated unions in the Greater Victoria area, holds its regular monthly meetings the third Wednesday of each month at 7 pm, at the BCGEU Auditorium, 2994 Douglas Street.

All delegates are invited to come out and meet the Executive:
Mike Eso, President; Stan Dzbik, Treasurer; Robin Toszczak, Secretary

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Remembering Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August, 1945-2016

By Theresa Wolfwood

*"Nuclear-weapon states have kept the world hostage in fear and anxiety while squandering trillions of dollars away from meeting human needs ... an intolerable and unacceptable reality."*⁰

-- Setsuko Thurlow, 2015

"Our technical civilization has just reached its greatest level of savagery. We will have to choose, in the more or less near future, between collective suicide and the intelligent use of our scientific conquests.

Meanwhile we think there is something indecent in celebrating a discovery whose use has caused the most formidable rage of destruction ever known to man. What will it bring to a world already given over to all the convulsions of violence, incapable of any control, indifferent to justice and the simple happiness of men — a world where science devotes itself to organized murder?"

-- Albert Camus, 1945



Hiroshima after the atom bomb was dropped in 1945: internet photos at www.google.ca/search?q=hiroshima+photos&biw

On August 6, 1945 the USA dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima; on August 9, the USA dropped another A-bomb on Nagasaki. British pilot Leonard Cheshire, on board the plane with that bomb, described the bombing as, "Obscene in its greedy clawing at the earth, swelling as if with its regurgitation of all the life that it had consumed."

Within the first two to four months of the bombings, the atomic bombs killed 90,000–146,000 people in Hiroshima and 60,000–80,000 in Nagasaki; approximately half of the deaths in each city were on the first day; 71 years later people continue to die from the radiation effects of these toxic bombs.

Canada provided the uranium for those bombs; the native people who worked at the uranium deposit died and continue to die from radiation-caused cancers to this date. Canada provided most of the uranium for the bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 with devastating effects on the Dene people of Great Bear Lake. In the 1940s they started mining it using local people for labour. At the same time the Dene gave them caribou, moose and fish. "They were strangers living among us on our land so we took care of them." In return, the locals helped extract and transport the deadly ore with no knowledge of its dangers. The southern miners left the people with toxic waste dumps in their community and radiation ticking in their bodies.

Kazakhstan, Australia and Canada are the largest producer and exporters of uranium in the world.

USA, Russia, China, Britain, Israel, France, India, Pakistan (and maybe others, including North Korea) have more than 17,000 nuclear bombs. They are moving around the globe everyday on land, in the seas and the air.

Together USA and Russia have approximately 14,000 nuclear weapons; the rest each have a few hundred or less. The bombs dropped on Jan were approximately 20 kilotons each; present day nuclear weapons are in the range of 20-50 megatons or 20,000–50,000 more powerful than those dropped in 1945. The detonation of one hundred of these modern bombs would probably destroy all life on earth.

Canada continues to be complicit in nuclear development by selling uranium and technology for nuclear energy (which also contaminates the world with harmful radiation) and for bombs. Canada provides highly radioactive so called "depleted ura-

nium", to 22 nations for weapons – bomb casings, guns, tanks and other steel-hardening military uses. Depleted uranium weapons were tested in Panama and used in Iraq, Afghanistan and former Yugoslavia.

The Canada Pension Plan, mandatory for all working Canadians, invests our contributions in the five largest armament makers in the world which make nuclear as well as non-nuclear weapons that are sold to and used in many countries against civilian populations. Other pension plans worldwide also invest in nuclear and non-nuclear weapons manufacturing. Few countries have the stringent ethical conditions that Norway's pension fund has.

Nuclear weapons and radioactivity continue to threaten the health of all life systems and undermine the security of human society. Wealth and resources wasted on war-making are needed to create a peaceful and sustainable life for all humanity. It is time to call for nuclear disarmament and a moratorium on uranium mining; to call for cuts in our military spending and an increase in social, health and education budgets.

Our precious resources and energy should be directed to the creation of a peaceful, just and healthy world. Nuclear nations and a handful of men can destroy all life on earth and that unspoken threat is behind wars waged by nuclear powers today. Meanwhile the very production, storage and transport of nuclear weapons are in themselves major threats to our physical environment.

Setsuko Thurlow, buried in the rubble of her school in Hiroshima at the age of 13, but miraculously survived, is one of four Atom Bomb survivors in Canada. She says that climate change from most sources is slow and we can reverse it; climate change caused by nuclear explosion is instantaneous and irreversible.

Setsuko is hopeful that action by the UN-based alliance of non-nuclear nations and citizen groups that are calling for global nuclear disarmament will raise public awareness and pressure nuclear nations to disarm.

It is up to us, citizens of the world to work for a non-nuclear world, to actively support the efforts of non-nuclear nations and peace organizations in the vital task of ending the state of nuclear terror that a



Photo by Theresa Wolfwood

Setsuko Thurlow, an Atom Bomb survivor living in Canada, with Hiroshima memorial

handful of governments hold our lives and all life on earth as hostages.

Canadians can pressure our govern-

ments and politicians and create the political will to end our complicity in this culture of death.

**Langford - Juan de Fuca
Constituency Association**

Staying In Touch

Contact President Sharon Wilkinson
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Alistair MacGregor tables bill to limit federal election period

OTTAWA -- Alistair MacGregor, Member of Parliament for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, introduced a bill May 31 to ensure that governments cannot set an election period longer than 46 days in order to spend more money.

This bill would reverse the 2014 changes to the *Canada Elections Act* done unilaterally by the Conservatives that made it possible to extend the length of an election and allow spending limits to rise in accordance with the writ period.

"This bill will curtail the power of rich parties effectively having the ability to buy elections. If we are to create a fair electoral

system, then we must also ensure that political parties are on a level-playing field," stated MacGregor.

"We need to prevent US-style big money politics in Canada. Marathon election campaigns where wealthy parties can essentially flood the airwaves with attack ads have no place in a fair democratic system", stated NDP Democratic Reform Critic Nathan Cullen.

"This past election subjected Canadians to 78 days filled with a constant barrage of TV and radio ads all as a cynical attempt to increase the amount of election spending by political parties" stated MacGregor.



Victoria-Beacon Hill MLA Carole James addresses new Canadians at the Canada Day citizenship ceremony at Government House, in Victoria. Victoria MP Murray Rankin (left) also spoke.

Bids now open to remove abandoned vessel from Ladysmith Harbour

LADYSMITH — The process of removing and recycling the Viki Lyne II, an abandoned vessel that the federal government towed into Ladysmith Harbour in 2012, has now begun. The Government of Canada has started the tender process and is accepting bids for the contract to deconstruct the vessel.

"The tender process is the beginning of the end for the Viki Lyne II and shows that putting pressure on the federal government works," said Sheila Malcolmson, the Member of Parliament for Nanaimo-Ladysmith. "This is a win for our region but it also highlights the need for a comprehensive coast-wide abandoned vessel solution so we can move beyond these boat-by-boat emergency measures."

Malcolmson has pushed hard for the federal government to take action on the abandoned vessel issue since being elected in October. She credits the St'uminus First Nation, the Town of Ladysmith and

concerned community groups for pushing the government to deal with the Viki Lyne II and 13,000 litres of oil and solvents that remain onboard.

The contract has now been listed on the Government of Canada tender website and local proponents are encouraged to bid. The requirement includes removing the vessel from the marine environment, deconstructing it, and disposing of all pollutants and debris in a manner compliant with federal and provincial regulations and policies.

Malcolmson's legislative solution to make the federal government responsible for dealing with abandoned vessels country-wide will be debated in Parliament next year.

To find out more about Sheila Malcolmson's abandoned vessels legislation: go to <http://sheilamalcolmson.ndp.ca/sheila-malcolmson-tables-abandoned-vessels-bill>

Nanaimo residents express concerns about proposed TPP agreement

NANAIMO – Local residents expressed concerns over the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) at the July 26 town hall meeting hosted by MP Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo-Ladysmith). She was joined by MP Tracey Ramsey, the NDP Critic for International Trade, at Nanaimo's White Sails Brewing.

"Today I heard serious concerns that the TPP threatens Canadian jobs, will increase the cost of prescription drugs, and compromises Canada's ability to act on climate change," said Malcolmson. "We will take what we learned from our Nanaimo-Ladysmith community and include it in our official submission to the Minister of International Trade, and I will continue to put pressure on the Liberal government to reject the TPP."

The Conservatives concluded highly secretive TPP negotiations in the dying days of their government, and the Liberals signed onto it without fulfilling their campaign promise to consult the public. They have failed to produce an economic impact study of the TPP, even after a recent study indicated the deal will cost 60,000 Canadian jobs and lead to increased income inequality.

"The TPP is a sweetheart deal for foreign investors — but a bad deal for Canadians," said Ramsey, who also serves as Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on International Trade. "Our committee has heard from nearly 20,000 Canadians on the TPP, with most strongly opposed to the deal. The Liberal government should listen to Canadians and reject the TPP."

Murray Rankin
Member of Parliament
Victoria

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10am to 4pm

A message from Tom Mulcair:

The recent vote by the Liberals at the UN is shocking. Inexplicably, the Liberals voted against the adoption of a UN report recommending negotiations for a global treaty banning nuclear weapons.

Sixty-eight countries voted in favour of this resolution, which will now go to the UN General Assembly. This vote represents one of the most significant contributions to nuclear disarmament in years.

However, with its shameful vote, Canada has effectively removed itself from nuclear disarmament diplomacy.

The Liberal government's vote also flies in the face of a 2010 NDP motion in Parliament encouraging the Government of Canada to join negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention. This motion was adopted unanimously in the House of Commons and the Senate with support from all parties, including the Liberals.

The NDP supports efforts to create a nuclear weapons treaty. We commend the work of many civil society groups across Canada, including the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, who have devoted years to this campaign. We will continue to support efforts for nuclear disarmament as this issue goes to the UN General Assembly this fall.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide you with this update.
Tom Mulcair, Leader, Canada's New Democrats

BLM sit-in stuns Toronto Pride Parade

By John Wilson

The intervention by Black Lives Matter at the annual Toronto LGBTQ Pride march held on July 3 exploded into massive media coverage that blew past everything else related to Pride Week. BLM's 25-minute sit-in protest at a major intersection, at the head of the parade, and in support of nine demands presented to Mathieu Chantelois, Pride's executive director, will continue to resonate for a long time.

The nine demands relate to strengthening material support and real participation in decision-making in Pride for Blacks and other marginalized communities. Only one demand — to stop police floats in the march — was sensationalized by the corporate media. The rest were largely ignored.

BLM asked additionally for solid financial support for the Blackness Yes group who stage Blockorama, and for a central and fully supported stage for Black Queer Youth. They also want Indigenous, Black, trans people, and those with disabilities to have better access to paid Pride positions, plus the return of the South Asian stage.

The response by the LGBT "establishment" was sadly predictable.

Chantelois accepted BLM's demands, in writing, but immediately repudiated them once the march resumed. He said that he signed only to end the protest. Although there was significant support for BLM in the media and the social media brouhaha that followed, there was a tsunami of outrage that "they" delayed "our" march.

This kind of response went from stunningly ignorant expressions of white privilege to outright racism. BLM co-founder Janaya Khan reported receiving a large volume of hate mail. Despite its largely queer and trans, predominantly female leadership, BLM was viewed as an outsider and intruder, despite having been given the symbolic status of "honoured group".

Apparently, if a group is designated "honoured" it is expected to shut up and

behave. Even though BLM was recognized for its fight against police racism and brutality (including an ongoing series of wanton cop killings of Black people), the assimilationists can't grasp why minority communities would feel intimidated by a massive, privileged police presence in the march.

And this despite the fact that a month before the march, Pride sponsored a standing-room-only panel discussion on the massive, violent 1981 police bathhouse raid, the response to which was pivotal to the growth and development of the movement in Toronto and elsewhere. As veteran gay activist Tim McCaskell pointed out, the raid brought together the gay and Black communities in opposition to police oppression.

Lemona Johnson, widow of killer cop victim Albert Johnson, spoke at the second of the mass rallies organized by the Right to Privacy Committee (RTPC) in 1981.

McCaskell says, "Often forgotten is the RTPC's involvement, along with Black and South Asian groups and the Law Union of Ontario, in the establishment of CIRPA, the Citizens Independent Review of Police Actions, Toronto's first citizen watchdog of police." Unfortunately these alliances withered because of the emergence of a largely white, privileged LGBT self-appointed "leadership" more interested in being assimilated into the dominant society than in fighting oppression.

As Rinaldo Walcott wrote in *NOW* magazine, "Police presence in the parade obscures the work that still needs to be accomplished and whitewashes our history with them," and "To remove police floats is not to act against inclusion, but rather, to say that inclusion matters and must be earned."

Walcott's piece demolishes the reconciliation-and-accommodation line of the Pride bureaucracy. Toronto Police Chief Saunders' supposedly historic "apology" for 1981 is nothing of the sort. He expressed "regret" — the word apology was missing in action. No such regret was expressed for the multitude of actions taken by cops since then, not only against the queer population, but against racialized minorities, residents of low-income ghettos, street people and sex workers, all groups that are inevitably inter-related and should seek alliances against their oppressors.

The myth that the police leopard has changed its spots is destroyed by the cops' arrogant refusal to stop defending the blatantly racist practice of "carding". It is past time for queer activists to ignore the class role of the police. When the first force was established, in not-so-merrie England, its role was explicitly to protect the privileged. That remains its core function in contemporary capitalist society — to "serve and protect" the rule of the tiny, obscenely rich minority, and their state institutions.

BLM-TO's Pride protest should open a discussion about serious issues that have been bypassed by the cravenly assimilationist elites that dominate expression among LGBT people, and renew interest in the queer liberationist perspective from which Pride originated.

Cowichan Valley Town Hall on Electoral Reform draws many



Cowichan-Malahat-Langford MP Alistair MacGregor (standing, right) answers questions from one of the many concerned citizens who attended a Town Hall meeting organized by the MP's office.



Animated and thoughtful discussion followed at round table sessions.



Results of the round table discussions were presented to the audience.

Phelps Bondaroff elected president of Saanich-Gulf Islands NDP

By Starla Anderson

The Saanich-Gulf Islands Federal NDP Riding Association held its 2016 Annual General Meeting on Saturday, August 27 at the Cordova Bay "55 Plus" Centre on Cordova Bay in Saanich.

Out-going co-president Bill Graham chaired the meeting. After executive reports were given, guest speakers Gary Holman, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands, and Mark Jeffers from the Victoria chapter of Fair Vote Canada made presentations. The meeting concluded with the election of officers for the next year.

In his report, Graham highlighted the achievements of the executive's work during the past year: supporting NDP candidate Alicia Cormier's (now Holman) August to October campaign, holding a general meeting to select delegates for the April 8-10, 2016 Federal NDP Convention in Edmonton, and hosting a May 1 presentation on Indigenous Peoples and the Economy by Jean Crowder, former NDP critic for Aboriginal Affairs.

Graham mentioned that members of the executive took part in the Climate Conference held by Murray Rankin and Randall Garrison on May 27. He thanked executive members, especially Teale Phelps Bondaroff, for their work on creating a Strategic Plan. He also gave special recognition to Forrest Nelson who was recruited to prepare the mandatory annual Elections Canada Report.

Co-president Irene Wright was unable to attend the meeting but sent a written report by email that was projected and read aloud. She thanked the riding's candidate and those who supported the campaign: "Alicia was great before the public, concerned, knowledgeable and tough. We accomplished two important achievements: we limited Ms May to one riding only, and we saw the end of Harper."

In moving on from her role as co-president, Wright offered wisdom from her many years of NDP executive work:

- spend more time doing and less talking
- think of friend-raising as at least as important as fundraising
- allow your imaginations to assist in your approach to activities and events
- arrange for guest speakers who would appeal to all progressives
- build in fun and food
- work cooperatively with neighbouring constituencies and ridings
- find ways to work with the NDP Club at UVic and the Labour Council
- continue to promote PACs for the riding association
- be ready to suspend operations for the period of the BC provincial election.

Guest speakers provided informative and encouraging reports on the progress being made to change the current first-past-the-post electoral system to a proportional system that provides representation for all voters.

In his role as BC Opposition Spokesperson for Democratic Reform, Holman

believes that if change is to happen on a provincial level, there first needs to be a campaign to inform the public about proportional representation. Following this campaign, there need to be not one but two referendums—the first to ask a generic question based on a principle such as "Do you support an electoral system in which the percentage of MLAs represent the percentage of votes given?" And a separate referendum that asks voters to choose a specific electoral system that will bring in proportional representation. He believes that it is not only the electoral system that needs to be changed, but also the rules around election finance.

Mark Jeffers from Fair Vote Canada presented a comprehensive power point overview of the reasons why it is so important to move away from the present voting system. The overview also gave an explanation of optional electoral systems presently being practiced in democracies around the world. He encouraged NDP members to go to the fairvote.ca website to learn more, and to check out a youtube explanation of the Single Transferable Vote by John Cleese.

On September 7, the federal All Party Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reform will host a public meeting in Victoria—details will be available on the fairvote.ca website. At the conclusion of Jeffers' presentation, Rick Habgood, the president of the Victoria chapter of Fair Vote Canada, joined Jeffers to answer questions.

Haggood added that Fair Vote's present campaign for proportional representation is in honour of former president, Wendy Bergerud, who spent many years educating the public about the need for electoral reform after her participation in the BC Citizens' Assembly. Bergerud, who passed away this past March, was a member of the executive of the Saanich-Gulf Islands riding association in past years. Holman said that he had brought her passing to the attention of the legislature and there had been a moment of silence in her honor.

Before the election of the new executive officers, Graham recognized and thanked Richard Mills and Carolyn Jerome for their years of service as they did not seek re-election.

The newly elected executive are: Teale Phelps Bondaroff, president; Devon Black, secretary; Forrest Nelson, financial agent. Members-at-large include Bill Graham, Irene Wright, Stephanie Ferguson, Alicia Holman, Jack Greenwell, Gerd Braune, and Starla Anderson.

BC Council president, Jennifer Burgis, asked the new executive to choose a representative for the council as each of BC's 42 ridings needs to have representation. Burgis will meet with the new executive in the fall to provide more information.

The meeting ended with new president Teale Phelps Bondaroff thanking members for their vote of confidence and his expression that he looked forward to working with the new executive to move their Strategic Plan forward.



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 Tuesday-Friday by appointment
 Drop-ins Wednesday 10am-2:30pm

MLA Report:

Assisting where we can

By Carole James

British Columbia's affordability crisis is impacting everybody, and it is one of the top concerns for families and those living on their own in Victoria-Beacon Hill. We hear about it every day in my Victoria-Beacon Hill Community Office.

People are understandably concerned about rising rents and property values, healthcare costs, extra school fees, and big increases to BC Hydro bills and ICBC rates. Citizens are being squeezed and seeing their household money eaten up by the misplaced priorities of the current government.

It's been a busy summer at my office as we've been working to help constituents dealing with affordability-related pressures, and a range of issues. We helped a woman we will call Rachel with filing an application for dispute resolution with the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB). Unfortunately her dispute won't be heard until November, which highlights the urgent need to strengthen protections for tenants, and for government to address the backlog of RTB cases.

In July our office also assisted "Victor" who felt that his Pharmacare deductible was set too high based on his current income. Our office learned that because his income had dropped more than 10% in the past 2 years, he was eligible for an income review. We helped him fill out the necessary paperwork, and Pharmacare reduced his deductible.

In August we helped "Alex" set up an affordable repayment schedule for a debt he had with BC Hydro so that his power wouldn't be cut off. Alex's situation is becoming all too common, especially as hydro rates continue to increase.

During this spring's legislative session, Opposition Leader John Horgan introduced the Hydro Affordability Act, legislation that would give families that need it access to a lifeline rate. However, the government ignored the proposal, leaving some British Columbians to choose between heating their home and putting food on the table. Vulnerable citizens shouldn't have to pay the price for this government's bad management.

My constituents are feeling the impacts on their lives in a multitude of ways. Our

office was contacted by "Jennifer" who lives in BC Housing with her special needs grandson. Jennifer needed a transfer to a top-floor unit, as her grandson found it difficult to sleep with noisy upstairs neighbours, and it was exacerbating his learning and behavior difficulties.

Jennifer was told that she wasn't eligible for a transfer, so our office wrote to BC Housing asking them to reconsider based on notes from the grandson's doctor and specialists. Jennifer contacted us a few weeks later to say that the transfer had been approved and they would be moving as soon as an appropriate unit became available.

Our office was contacted by "John", a senior who heard he might be eligible for MSP premium assistance. Despite living on a limited pension, John had been diligently paying his premiums for years. My staff asked him to bring in his tax records for the past six years and learned that he had been eligible for a 100 percent reduction. We were able to get him a \$4,500 refund.

We're now getting ready for several events this fall. We're planning another ID replacement clinic in mid-October as part of Homelessness Action Week. There is currently no government support to help people who cannot afford to replace their ID, and this is a major barrier for people to find work, housing, and get access to the services and supports they desperately need. Some individuals we have assisted have been without any ID for years.

In partnership with the Downtown Service Providers, we'll help those experiencing homelessness and extreme poverty to replace birth certificates and BC Services Cards. We hope to help at least 100 individuals replace their ID so they can meet basic needs like accessing banking services, find housing, register their kids for school, vote, and access government services.

If you or your family is having an issue with a provincial government program, or an issue under provincial jurisdiction, my Community Office may be able to help. My staff is happy to provide information, advice and direct assistance where appropriate.

Carole James' office is located at 1084 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K4; or she can be reached by phone at 250 952 4211, or by email to carole.james.mla@leg.bc.ca. Or visit her website at www.carolejamesmla.ca.



MLAs Rob Fleming and Maurine Karagianis listen to First Nations leaders at the National Aboriginal Day ceremony

MLA Report:

We need stable, sustainable and adequate funding for schools

By Rob Fleming

Every parent and kid in BC has been buzzing with excitement because "it's that time of year again!" These days I get to experience back-to-school as a parent of two amazing kids. I get to see their hopes and ease their worries about a new school year. It reminds me how important our K-12 education system is in shaping our children and helping them realize their potential.

Think of the importance and scale of K-12 education in BC -- over 550,000 kids returned to schools after the Labour Day weekend. When you factor in parents, grandparents, guardians, teachers, education assistants, you quickly realize millions of British Columbians are directly invested in the business of learning. And every one of us shares a common interest in the educational success of kids in BC.

Opportunity, prosperity, and economic diversity in a socially just society -- all of these broadly-shared aspirations can only be realized through the enormous social and economic dividends of investing in a well-educated, skilled, creative and globally minded population. Our province cannot sustain a prosperous future without the next generation of skilled professionals, workers, entrepreneurs and researchers making their contribution.

It all starts in strong schools. I see the difference teachers, administrators and support staff can make when they meet with an anxious child and their parents before the first day of class, when they provide that extra attention to a student who is struggling, or when school districts kickstart new programs to ensure our children get the skills they need to succeed in our advanced economy. We know that all those supportive experiences young people have in the classroom add up.

That's why we need to ensure our public education system is properly funded.

As the Official Opposition's spokesperson for Education I have been travelling across the province, talking with British Columbians about improving K-12 education. Families know that education in BC has fallen from the 2nd best funded in the country to 2nd worst under the BC Liberals.

In all corners of the province, parents are worried that when their children go back to school this year we'll see the impacts of underfunding in more school closures, program cuts and class size increases. Despite student enrolment growing again in BC, Christy Clark's budget cut tens of millions of dollars in funding for school board budgets. Her government has downloaded hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years onto school districts for unfunded costs for wages and salaries, broadband internet, utilities and maintenance. The results are being felt across the province.

Schools have been closing, seismic upgrading has been further delayed, and 432 classes lost their educational assistants

for kids with special needs. But standing up together we can make a difference. I've been collaborating with parents across BC to fight school closures, advocate for seismic upgrading and call for better funding for K-12 education. When the government wanted to close Osoyoos' only high school, the community organized and fought for their school. Through public pressure we got Premier Clark to commit to temporary funding to keep Osoyoos Secondary open.

BC Liberal funding policies are still targeting schools in Richmond, Vancouver, Victoria and rural BC with shortfalls, and communities are getting organized. During the summer legislative session, I had the opportunity to present a petition signed by nearly 4,000 Richmond parents demanding that Premier Clark keep neighborhood schools open and make them seismically safe.

Knowing we face challenges, we also know in a province like ours we have the power to provide solutions that are achievable and ambitious. This is the time to cherish and speak out for the opportunities, lifelong relationships and the joys of success and accomplishment that public education provides for families and for our province as a whole.

On behalf of the New Democrat Official Opposition, I wish to extend my best wishes to all students, parents and employees for a productive and wonderful school year. We know the power education has to transform lives and open up new worlds of possibility. BC NDP leader John Horgan and I will keep fighting for adequately funded, safe and supportive schools, because that's what our kids deserve.

Rob Fleming is MLA for Victoria-Swan Lake.

BC Climate plan a sop to Liberal donors

Victoria - Premier Christy Clark's new climate plan will fail to make BC a climate leader, instead catering to the interests of big money BC Liberal donors while BC's greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.

"This plan will not make BC into a climate leader," said Will Horter, Dogwood Director of Strategy. "What Clark's Carbon Fudge It Budget will do, however, is help to enrich Christy Clark's biggest corporate donors in the LNG and forestry industries."

Ignoring nearly every major recommendation made by the premier's own hand-picked Climate Leadership Team, the plan's emphasis on reforestation represents a major stimulus for the forestry industry, which has funneled at least \$5.8 million into Liberal bank accounts since 2005, according to research from public-interest watchdog Integrity B.C.

Further, by refusing to increase BC's carbon tax, Clark has abandoned BC's climate commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 33% below 2007 levels by 2020.

Carole James, MLA VICTORIA-BEACON HILL



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MLA Report:

Good governance, political expediency and big money

By Gary Holman

The BC government just called a one week, mid-summer session of the legislature to deal with two important issues that should have been addressed a few weeks ago in the spring sitting of the House.

During the spring session, the Official Opposition introduced legislation that would have enshrined transgender rights in our BC human rights laws. We also presented legislation to tax speculative investment and investigate money laundering in BC real estate.

Government's response to our proposals was dismissive at best. Attorney General Susan Anton repeated her mantra that transgender rights are already protected by law. Minister of Housing Rich Coleman characterized the Opposition's David Eby, and others concerned about the impact of speculative investment on housing prices, as "whiners". The premier suggested that those unable to find affordable housing in the lower mainland could move to BC's north, where views were "spectacular".

What a difference continued bad headlines (and likely some negative polling results) can make. In a few short weeks, issues previously deemed irrelevant by the premier and her ministers now demanded immediate attention and a special summer session of the BC Legislature.

Amendments to the *Human Rights Act* were simple -- a matter of adding a few words. This is why the Opposition's Spencer Chandra Herbert, who year after year proposed such amendments, was so frustrated by government's inaction. The premier's sudden interest in the issue was

explained when she made herself available for the photo-op with trans rights advocates, but missed the actual vote in the legislature so she could attend a fundraiser for the BC Liberal Party, which tops up the premier's \$195,000 salary by \$50,000 per year.

The tax on new foreign investors is more complex and already the flaws in this hurried, politically-motivated legislation are becoming evident -- constitutional challenges and ease of evasion because the Liberal tax targets investor nationality rather than the investment itself. The new tax also excludes billions in housing stock already controlled by speculative capital. The new law enables Vancouver to apply a "vacancy" tax, but the cost and difficulty of determining vacant housing will also be downloaded. Once implemented in one municipality, the vacancy tax will simply push the problem elsewhere in BC.

These policy flip-flops are driven by political expediency not good governance, and they are just the tip of the ethically-challenged iceberg the Christy Clark government represents. Liberal policies on key matters of public interest like housing prices, environmental regulation, energy and climate action, fair taxation, and social justice are unduly influenced by big money and partisan interest. Premier Clark has repeatedly rejected Opposition proposals to ban political donations from corporations and unions and establish limits on personal donations (all of which are in place federally); and to place government (i.e., taxpayer funded) advertising under the control of the Auditor General to ensure no partisan bias. Reforms to diminish the role of big mon-



Victoria-Beacon Hill MLA Carole James waves to spectators as she walks in the annual Victoria Gay Parade in July.

ey in politics are the right thing to do, but this summer's hurriedly convened legislative session demonstrates the Liberal government will act only if they believe British Columbians care. I believe my constituents do care, and I will continue to fight with them to oppose and reform a regressive agenda driven by big money rather than the public interest.

Gary Holman is MLA for Saanich North and the Islands.

**Bill Routley, MLA
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Analysis finds that BC's "record levels" of K-12 education funding are a fiction

VANCOUVER -- Contrary to provincial government claims that education funding is at "record levels", new analysis released August 24 finds that education funding has dropped by 25% since 2001 as a share of BC's economy (GDP).

What's the real story behind BC's education funding crisis? by Alex Hemingway was released August 24 by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Not only has education funding dropped from 3.3% of GDP in 2001 to a projected 2.5% in Budget 2016, BC has the second lowest level of education funding in the country -- nearly \$1,000 per student below the national average.

"The government's numbers are misleading because they don't take into account inflation or cost pressures from higher Hydro and MSP rates, which are being downloaded onto school districts" says Hemingway.

"The government says this is about declining school enrolment, yet the funding crunch has hit school districts with grow-

ing enrolments as well as those seeing declines. And the government's own data project an almost 40,000 student increase in enrolment by 2024."

"Underfunding is a political choice," says Hemingway. "If we dedicated the same share of our economy (GDP) to public education today as we did 15 years ago, we'd have nearly another \$2 billion. That much additional funding might go beyond what's necessary, but it tells us what's possible. We certainly wouldn't be facing school closures, overcrowded classrooms or cuts to vital programs and student supports."

"BC could be investing in our youth, so that we build a solid economic and social foundation for our future. Instead, the provincial government is choosing to oversee cuts."

"One-off funding announcements may make for good politics, but they're no substitute for reliable funding that keeps pace with inflation and rising costs," concludes Hemingway.

What's the real story behind BC's educa-

tion funding crisis? is available at <http://policynote.ca/education-crisis>.

Introducing Alex Hemingway: As the CCPA-BC's first Public Finance Policy Analyst, Alex Hemingway fills a research and engagement position that is highly responsive to current events. His work focuses on the state of BC's public services, including education, health care, social programs and regulation. He also looks at the tax system and its relationship to inequality.

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NDP Provincial Leader John Horgan (centre) and Victoria-Swan Lake MLA Rob Fleming pose with students from Reynolds High School, in Victoria, during their visit to the Legislature.

Gary Holman, MLA
Saanich North and the Islands

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Victoria-Swan Lake holds its Founding Meeting and AGM

By Starla Anderson

The Victoria-Swan Lake NDP Constituency Association held its Founding and Annual General Meeting on June 5 from 1:30 to 2:30 at the Oaklands Community Centre on Belmont Avenue in Victoria.

President Trish Richards explained that although the Victoria-Swan Lake constituency was not among the many BC constituencies whose boundaries were changed subsequent to the 2013 election by the Electoral Boundaries Commission redistribution, it was still necessary to hold a Founding Meeting:

"Elections BC rules hold that even if there are no changes to your boundaries, as was the case with VSL, all Constituencies have to de-constitute and then re-constitute," Richards said.

Guest speaker NDP MLA Jodie Wickens was elected in the February 2, 2016 Coquitlam-Burke Mountain by-election. (Liberal MLA Douglas Horne had resigned to run for the Conservatives in the 2015 fall election.)

Wickens spoke about how she became involved in politics when she came together with other parents to lobby for improvements in the public school system; Wickens has a son diagnosed with autism and she was particularly motivated to address the shortfalls of support for special needs students.

Wickens held the position of executive director of the Autism Support Network and extended her advocacy work to run as a candidate for her local school board in 2014. She didn't win a trustee seat but she came to the attention of Port Coquitlam

NDP MLA Mike Farnworth who strongly encouraged her to run for the NDP in the by-election. Wickens said that her husband Brian supported her: "When a door opens, you need to walk through it."

Wickens believes that she won the Coquitlam-Burke Mountain seat because she and her campaign team listened to the people in that community and framed the campaign around issues that they talked about at Town Hall meetings: the need for change in the funding of public education, improvements needed in transportation, healthcare, and generally the need for more support for struggling families.

She concluded by saying that she is invigorated by her constituents who understand the issues of the day and believe in a brighter future.

In thanking Wickens for sharing her story and thoughts, Victoria-Swan Lake MLA Rob Fleming said, "Jodie Wickens was the best thing that happened to the BCNDP in the past year." He went on to say that the May 9, 2017 election will be the most important election in a couple of generations and "it will be about breaking through in areas where we haven't won before as Jodie Wickens did, and that there were lessons to be learned from her campaign."



Guest speaker Jodie Wickens

Fleming went on to identify a number of campaign issues under four "E" categories: ethics, the economy, education, and the environment. He said that the Liberals refuse to clean up the unethical practice of accepting large corporate donations or to look into voter suppression. The Liberals have no plans for a sustainable economy: that lack of housing affordability, "an economic albatross," and homelessness have not been solved. Schools are closed and adequate support for public education, including adult education, is lacking.

Fleming emphasized that the present government is backward on the environment—he referred to weak mining regulations and oversight—"there was no oversight on the Mt. Polley Mine"—and bridges are built instead of public transportation.

Fleming closed his talk with an appeal: "Let's bring people in who have never campaigned for the NDP before. People have

the power—the power of the vote. Change can come in a very short time."

The business part of the meeting followed, with executive reports from president Trish Richards, treasurer Bill Hawkins, and Provincial Council rep Will Maartman. Revised Victoria-Swan Lake NDP Constituency Association bylaws were unanimously approved with two amendments.

And the 2016-17 executive was elected as follows: Trish Richards, president; Ed May, past president; Stephanie Ferguson, vice-president; Bill Hawkins, treasurer; Jordon Lowe, recording secretary; Bronte Renwick-Shields, YND rep; Will Maartman, Provincial Council rep; and members-at-large: Liz James, Tom Longman, Melissa Farrance, Susan Farmer, Samantha Scott, Seamus Wolfe, and Elsa McIntosh.

The meeting was followed by a complimentary barbecue social held in the garden courtyard of Oaklands Community Centre.



Victoria-Swan Lake MLA Rob Fleming tells NDP members that the May 9, 2017 election will be the most important election in a couple of generations.



The newly elected executive of the Victoria-Swan Lake NDP Constituency Association paused for a photograph with reelected president Trish Richards.

Random acts of education funding all about Christy Clark's bad headlines

VICTORIA – Christy Clark's eleventh-hour education funding isn't about kids, it's about bad headlines, say the New Democrats.

"The premier was content to underfund education for years, forcing school districts into heartbreaking and disruptive decisions to close schools and cancel programs," said New Democrat education spokesperson Rob Fleming (Victoria-Swan Lake).

"Now we're in an election year, and Christy Clark is desperate to get rid of her bad headlines. That's why she and her ministers are popping up across the province with random acts of education funding."

August 10 the BC Liberals announced more emergency funding, this time for the school bus programs under threat in many districts.

"Just five months ago, Christy Clark's education ministry saw school bus services as expendable. In fact, they sent out guide-

lines to school boards that recommended cutting them to balance their budgets," said Fleming.

"Now, after an uproar from parents across the province, they've rushed out emergency cash and an ad hoc program. It's a great win for parents, but a terrible way to run our education system."

Fleming says BC kids deserve a quality education all the time, not just every four years, when an election is looming.

"What kids need is stable, sustainable and adequate funding for their schools. That's not what this is about. This is about Christy Clark, and the years of starving our education system that she wants parents to forget."

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Balancing the scales: Local lawyer wins Dugald Christie Award

By Lalita Hamill

My dad, Forrest Nelson, has been a Vancouver Island resident for 15 years and lawyer for 40; he recently received the annual Dugald Christie Award, which was presented by Access Probono in recognition of my dad's contributions through their free legal clinic.

Decades ago, a highly successful Vancouver lawyer named Dugald Christie gave up a lucrative career to serve low income clients. He founded The Western Canada Society to Access Justice, which was instrumental in establishing 60 clinics staffed by over 400 volunteer lawyers offering free legal services throughout BC.

In 1998, Christie was thoroughly frustrated with the legal system and cycled across Canada to burn his legal robes on the steps of the Supreme Court of Canada. He stated, "I've been practicing for 30 years and I've been so disgusted with the problem of access to law and how little is being done." (*Medicine Hat News*, August 5, 1998)

Christie was hoping to reform the justice system to include what he called the ABC's of true justice: affordable, brief and comprehensible. He stated that, "The ordinary person simply cannot afford the legal process, cannot wait the years that are necessary to get before a judge and cannot understand the horrific paperwork that is required. In short, Canadians do not have access to justice!" (www.sootoday.com)

Do Canadians actually equally access objective, fair justice?

Justice is usually depicted as a blindfolded woman holding a set of scales and a sword. The scales represent fairness in the judicial process, that each side will be fairly weighed and considered. Her blindfold represents objectivity, namely that one should have equal access to justice regardless of one's wealth, fame, power, influence, or identity. The sword symbolizes Lady Justice's authority to make decisions.

In 2006, Christie, 65, began cycling from Vancouver to Ottawa to raise awareness and gather momentum to protest a tax on legal fees in BC.

Sadly, near the end of his journey, he was struck by a van and killed.

Like Christie, my father is frustrated.



Lady Justice, as envisioned by tuthor/artist, Lalita Hamill.

He says, "Access to justice is at a crisis point. Middle and low-income communities face multiple insurmountable barriers. It is worse than when Dugald was alive."

Yet, like many unsung heroes, my dad works steadily behind the scenes to help those least able to pay for so-called "fair" access to legal counsel. My dad has spent his professional life doing everything he can to help one family at a time. Clients of legal aid lawyers include people who were single moms, low-income, refugees, disabled, aboriginals, and those who are otherwise marginalized or disadvantaged.

Unfortunately, a common stigma is that legal aid lawyers are not "good enough" to be in private practice, and that their clients have often brought their situation on themselves. I find these stigmas highly debatable, especially in the case of Christie and my dad; they value(d) service to others over money. Regardless, the fact remains that legal aid lawyers operate on extremely limited budgets and therefore do not have access to necessary resources such as paralegals, staff, necessary documents,

experts, interpreters, and the like.

If "justice" means that people with money, power, or influence are much more likely to win, then Lady Justice's blindfold is shredded, and a bag of money weighs heavily on one side of the scales.

If we are to honour what Lady Justice stands for, we must improve the legal system.

However, the opposite has happened. In 2002 the BC Liberal government slashed the budget for the Legal Services Society (LSS) by almost 40% over three years. The government fired the legal board and changed the law to prohibit the board from offering services not approved by Cabinet. They reduced the offices from 42 to seven and cut full time staff from 460 to 155. They made legal aid extremely difficult to access by eliminating all funding for poverty and immigration law and by providing family law legal aid only to someone who is fearful for their own safety or that of their children.

The damage of these cuts, and others, has been extensive and largely unpublicized. The term "marginalized" means to treat a person, group or concept as insignificant or peripheral. A low-income mother who cannot access legal aid is in danger of giving up legitimate rights to spousal support and fair division of family assets and/or losing custody of her children. And who is going to hear about it? Who is going to do anything to help her and her kids?

Without access to affordable legal



Lawyer Nelson Forrest

support, many people with legitimate civil claims are either giving up, or are not being defended by a lawyer when they should be.

In an article on the Policy Alternatives website, Alison Brewin writes: "Perhaps most outrageous to those suffering from massive legal aid cuts is the fact that the province collects considerably more than it spends on legal aid." Editors of the Legal Aid Action Committee newsletter (October 2015) wrote, "The PST raises over \$150 million yearly. However, less than half of the tax was allocated to legal aid services...[the government] has directed the [remainder] into general revenue. If the money was provided as promised, legal aid services would have been adequately funded throughout the last two decades, as well as today!"

This tax, which the Liberal government is misappropriating, is precisely the one Christie died while in protest! I find it reprehensible that thousands are suffering unnecessarily, and that lawyers feel compelled to donate their time, because the current provincial government is not fulfilling its responsibilities.

I want to publicly thank and acknowledge my father, Forrest Nelson, along with those who have sacrificed something in order to benefit the lives of others. He states, "I am only one of many lawyers and judges who volunteer their time to work towards better access, but it will take more than this volunteer effort to tackle the issues at hand."

Chances are that you or someone you know either has needed, or will need, legal counsel. Imagine being one of the thousands of BC residents unable to get help.

I hope to revive discussion and action around the issues Dugald Christie died for. According to the LAAC, "We have virtually gone full circle backwards to the pre-legal aid days" before the 1950's.

If you agree that we should honour Lady Justice's blindfold and scales, I invite you to take part by sharing this article online, contacting your local MLA, volunteering with the Legal Aid Action Committee, or otherwise get the attention of those who can effect change. Watch for an upcoming campaign through www.change.org, where a petition will be available to sign.

Working poverty on the rise

VANCOUVER -- Contrary to stereotypes about poverty being concentrated mainly in Vancouver and Surrey, a new study finds the growing ranks of the working poor are spread out across the Metro Vancouver region.

The study looks at working poverty pre- and post-recession, in 2006 and 2012. Rates were highest by 2012 in Richmond (10.5%), Vancouver (10%), Burnaby (9.4%), Surrey (9.1%), North Vancouver (8.4%) and Coquitlam (8.1%). The largest increases occurred in suburban municipalities like West Vancouver, Coquitlam, White Rock, Lions Bay and the District of North Vancouver.

Working Poverty in Metro Vancouver was published June 28 by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), the United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM) and the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition.

"We are often told that the solution to poverty is for the poor to get a job," says study author Iglia Ivanova, Senior Economist at the CCPA's BC Office. "But the reality is that having a job is not a guaranteed path out of poverty."

"We live in one of the most expensive cities in the world, let alone in Canada," says Michael McKnight, president and CEO of United Way of the Lower Mainland. "Yet in 2012, the median family income for Metro Vancouver's working poor was only \$18,060. Families are struggling to make ends meet."

The majority (61%) of Metro Vancouverites who are stuck below the poverty line despite having a job are of "prime working age"—30 to 54 years. Just over half of the working poor are married or living common law, and 42% have dependent children.

Among Canadian cities, Metro Vancouver

has the second highest rate of working poverty (8.7% of the working-age population), after Greater Toronto (9.1%). The hardship is even more severe in these two regions than the statistics show, since the measure of poverty used in the study does not account for differences in housing costs across the country.

According to Ivanova, a key driver of the growth in working poverty is a trend towards more precarious work. "We spend a lot of time talking about the number of jobs created and don't pay as much attention to the quality of these jobs. Many of the new jobs created since the recession have been part-time, temporary and low paid, jobs that don't support families," she says.

"BC is the only province in Canada without a poverty reduction plan," says Trish Garner, Community Organizer with the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition. "Other places are saving lives and money by tackling the root causes of poverty rather than paying for the consequences. Working families are counting on the provincial government to do better."

A central recommendation in the study is the development of a comprehensive poverty reduction plan for BC. Key elements include a higher minimum wage, stronger employment standards, increased affordable housing, creation of a \$10/day child care program and more access to education and training for low-income earners.

The federal government also has an important role to play in areas like affordable housing and child care, and should take the lead on reforming Employment Insurance and expanding the Working Income Tax Benefit.

Replacing MSP with fair taxes would mean savings for most BC families:

VANCOUVER -- The majority of British Columbians would come out ahead under a plan to scrap MSP and replace the \$2.5 billion in public revenues it currently brings in with fair taxes scaled to income.

Iglia Ivanova, a Senior Economist with Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, crunched the numbers on two options for getting rid of the unpopular head tax. One calls for small increases to existing provincial income tax rates, along with new brackets at the top end of the income ladder. The second option combines small income tax increases with a new business tax, roughly in proportion to the share of MSP currently paid by individuals and employers.

Most households would see net savings under both scenarios, but Ivanova recommends moving ahead with the combined personal and business tax option. Under this plan:

- A family of four with household income of \$60,000 would save \$1,725 each year.
- A family of four with income of \$90,000 would save \$1,450.
- An individual with income of \$80,000 would save \$263.
- Families currently receiving MSP premium assistance would see modest savings or be unaffected by the change (since they already pay reduced MSP or no MSP).
- Only the top 6% of families would pay more in net taxes.
- All businesses would pay a percentage of gross wages and salaries, with lower rates for smaller businesses. The rate would depend on how the tax is structured but should be set to raise about \$1.1

billion in 2017, or 40% of total MSP revenues — the approximate share currently contributed by those employers who cover MSP for their employees.

"Businesses already pay a significant portion of MSP," says Ivanova. "Our plan would share costs more fairly, resulting in net savings for the 'good' employers who now cover MSP for their staff and forcing those who are currently free riding to pay their share."

"MSP is an unfair and unnecessary tax," says Ivanova. "A two-parent family with \$40,000 income currently pays \$1,800 per year — the same as a family making \$400,000. The amount is inconsequential for well-off families but takes a significant bite out of the family budget for those with modest resources."

"BC is the only province left in Canada to charge a head tax like MSP," says Ivanova. "It's time to eliminate MSP and replace it with fair taxes."

Read the short report: *BC should eliminate the MSP. Here are two better options* at <http://www.policynote.ca/eliminate-msp/>

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One man's humiliation put right – telling the story

By Diane Walsh

It has been more than a few months since I returned from Scotland. Scotland – the land of my maternal grandfather John Myles Wilson, born July 24 1914, in Bonnyrigg. It had been on my bucket list for as long as I can remember to return to his homeland to reclaim it as part of my ancestral heritage.

He'd been in the the Second World War but like many families from *Across the Pond* we were never to speak of this war apparently. But as a child I'd noticed the scars on my granddad's personality.

He was withdrawn; someone who spoke very little in company; sadness and anger in his eyes. And yet, so obviously a decent and intelligent man, as well. Life had bitten him – bitten him hard. The family didn't admit what it was that had actually happened to him. I've now begun to understand that we may not have been even been told the full story.

As a researcher interested in family genealogies, I sought to solve the puzzle. It took my going to Scotland and being practically re-colonized by the last outpost of the British Empire, otherwise known as St. Andrews, to figure out part of the story. Irish on my father's side, and Scottish and French on my mother's side, I was well equipped to unravel the complexity of the effects of what we today call Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) on my grandfather's personality.

On June 18, 1940, John Myles Wilson received his Certificate of Competency as Master of a Foreign-Going Steamship in the Merchant Service, Ministry of Shipping. The Ministry of Shipping was the ad-



Three of the four medals awarded to John Myles Wilson.



The UK Merchant Navy ship *Keila*, seen here being loaded ready to sail, and captained by John Myles Wilson, was attacked and thought to have sunk, but instead drifted helplessly at sea for months before being towed back to port.

ministration of foreign-going vessels for the British government. He became captain of his own ship at the age of 26. With the war on, he captained *The Keila* (pictured here) as part of convoys moving supplies and food across the oceans. Torpedoes were striking everywhere. As history recorded, many convoy ships were bombed (see diagram). Approximately 2/3 of the total allied tonnage was lost to these strikes by German U-boats.

My grandmother received a letter from the Royal Navy claiming he was lost at sea; "Presumed dead", they said, somewhere off the coast of Greenland. Nana believed he wasn't dead and held up hope. It turned out that she was right. He did survive, but didn't return home until many, many months later and in rough shape psychologically when he did.

A combination of speaking with living relatives and searching archives has helped confirm *The Keila* was ultimately towed back to shore. The full details of how the ship was rescued, is not known.

UK government files claim that "the *Kingston Hill* and the *Keila* were bombed, and that they were escorted back to the UK by the corvette *HMS Picotee* and Smit tug *Thames*. Captain Walter Niven, the

Master of the *Kingston Hill* was killed in this attack". It does not say that the *Keila* was lost and presumed sunk for a long while, before it was rescued. Nor does it confirm that the Master of the *Keila* actually survived.

The Royal Navy had a policy that, once bombed, that was the end of you; it did not perform convoy rescue-operations as that would endanger the strategies in-play to win the war. I do know that the torpedo hit at the stern of *The Keila* knocking out the rudder and the ability to steer; and thus leading the ship to drift endlessly. I do not know what the captain and his remaining crew did to survive. The information on file at National Archives UK supposedly includes the Seaman's Pouch, which I am currently in process of trying to retrieve.

Thankfully, it is accurately recorded today that the ship was bombed – not sunk, as initially presumed. The history doesn't say, after it was bombed, that in fact it drifted at sea for months unbeknownst to the authorities. I've added that in, now, through a website specializing in WWII ships. And that it was ultimately spotted, rescued and towed to shore by sheer chance. Indeed Captain Wilson's ship did not sink to the bottom of the ocean as did so many of the others.

The doubly devastating part of the story is of course the manner in which the Royal Navy treated war-time working Merchant Mariners known now as the Merchant Navy. When the war was won, the Royal Navy took all the credit. Granddad told us this, himself. Although my granddad did receive four medals (only three of which pictured here, as the fourth is not in my possession) he never received a Merchant Navy pension specifically.

It does appear he was not adequately compensated as a Merchant Navy man in the way the Royal Navy veterans were. He'd immigrated to Canada and shortly after the war Canada denied benefits to the Canadian Merchant Navy veterans.

Families fought for more than 30 years, and the Canadian government worked a compromise so late in the game (in 1989) that some Merchant Navy men who may well have been eligible, were already dead. My grandfather died in Montreal in 1987, as if "two years too early"? – I once heard someone say. He never successfully claimed a rightful Merchant Navy pension – stunning, considering what he'd gone through at sea, in "war-service". By 1990, his living wife was told she was not eligible. It seemed *the veteran* (as he was now finally considered) would have had to be alive to enable his family to claim and receive benefit.

More insult to injury for a family that had already endured the disgraceful attitude of the Royal Navy and British government toward those who had served on the convoys during the War. As if Merchant Navy seaman hadn't *equally* contributed to the War Effort! The supplies wouldn't have been delivered had it not been for people like my Granddad and his crew and we'd all be saying Heil Hitler.

So when I went to Scotland, and I came across the toffee superior attitude, I vowed



Wedding photo of the author's grandfather, John Myles Wilson, and his wife.

to tell our family war history. Many Scots, and Irish, many of whom were deck hands on the convoy-ships [also] made a significant contribution to Britain winning the war.

It is also unfortunate that the grudging way, in which medals due to Merchant Navy seaman, were unceremoniously distributed (in plain brown envelope via mail), typifies the shoddy recognition of the invaluable contribution the Merchant Navy provided to British and Allied victory in WWII.

Thank you for listening to the healing power of war and genealogy stories told out loud.

If you would like to inquire about the research websites mentioned in the article, or have anything you'd like to add, please do not hesitate to get in touch with author Diane Walsh at media-geode@yahoo.com.

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Billion dollar blunder at BC Hydro means families will pay the price

VICTORIA – Families will face massive hydro rate hikes after the Christy Clark government secretly added more than \$1 billion dollars to BC Hydro's debt last year.

"Just after the last election, Premier Christy Clark surprised families across BC with a staggering 28 percent hydro rate hike," said New Democrat Leader John Horgan. "By missing their debt reduction plan by more than \$1 billion dollars, BC Hydro and the Christy Clark government could saddle ratepayers with another \$500 hike each right after the next election."

According to BC Hydro's latest annual report, the crown corporation was \$1.1 billion off target for a major debt, primarily due to a huge overestimation of domestic revenue for power.

"The current rate hikes were based on a plan that didn't expect that extra billion

dollars in debt, which means that there is an inevitable day of reckoning to come," said New Democrat spokesperson on BC Hydro Adrian Dix. "That billion dollar blunder breaks down to an extra \$500 for every ratepayer in BC. Those are families and businesses across the province that will be on the hook.

"Even worse, Christy Clark and her energy minister seem completely unconcerned. They are pretending this \$1.1 billion mistake doesn't exist, when British Columbians know it exists, and it's going to show up as an increase in their hydro bill."

Insured but not protected!

Proximate Cause: An event sufficiently related to a legally recognizable injury to be held to be the cause of that injury – the “proximate” or “legal” cause

By Jonathan Lee

Sadly and too often today's uncaring society is the proximate cause of so many needless tragedies and miseries.

Here's one on our doorstep in gentle Victoria, BC. You decide whether the proximate cause of our neighbour, Paul Price's life altering injuries have not, at least been exacerbated by the expensive and mandated insurance protection upon which he relied.

I'm talking about our old “friend” ICBC, of course.

Paul Price, now 68, appears much older than his years and is far removed from the active and sprightly retirees who inhabit the sports clubs around Greater Victoria.

In 2006 Price was a self reliant, talented photographer with a keen and intelligent eye. He had been a contributing resident of Victoria for decades. In short, an experienced resident of whom Victoria could be proud.

In 2016 he lives in a dark, cramped, basement suite near the lush golf course that so many of his contemporaries are fortunate enough to be able to enjoy.

What happened to make Price's retirement and twilight years so dark?

In 2006 Price's car was struck by a teenage drunk driver. The incident was not Price's fault. The teenage driver ignored a red light and crashed into Price's vehicle. The young man was entirely responsible for the collision.

Price, being of a generation that seeks to confront adversity with backbone and stiff upper lip, picked himself up, dusted down and sought medical attention when the needs and schedules of others had been met.

Of course, it was impossible for Price to ignore the physical damage and traumatic impact of the collision and Price followed the rules, as he had always done in his life, trusting that the insurance protocols of ICBC would honestly evaluate his circum-

stances and future needs and difficulties. Certainly the health effects of the crash were becoming evident and negatively affecting his life and normal routines.

He was advised that an experienced lawyer would deal appropriately with the requirements of ICBC and that an ultimate settlement would properly reflect his significantly disabling future needs.

It was not until 2009 that ICBC delivered on its mandate to do its best to contribute to making him “whole”.

In the 3 year delay uncertainty had led to the loss of his house, the loss of his credit rating, the loss of his livelihood and the loss of his health and independence.

Further, the settlement amount delivered to Price, after deductions for lawyer's fees, long term medical attention and administrative costs would be closer to what might be expected from a twisted ankle after tripping on a loose pavement slab.

But Paul Price soldiered on, his belief in the usefulness of the ICBC system shattered, but knowing that life must go on, nevertheless.

Then, in 2014, he was again hit by a careless driver who rear-ended him as that driver exited a parking lot.

Again Price was deemed not to have been the cause of the incident. Again he was an innocent victim.

With care and caution Price again entered the Kafkaesque world of ICBC.

Again possible legal representation, medical reports and useful administrative supervision are not readily forthcoming. Price is entirely at the mercy of professional services which seem to be designed to confuse or trip him at every turn.

At time of reporting, Price says that his proposed legal representatives say that they are still awaiting the reports required by ICBC that will enable a payment so that Price can move on with his life, and now, ever present medical attention.

Paul Price's medical needs, flowing

from the physical and emotional damage resulting from the 2006 drunk driver collision, are significant and worsening.

He suffers symptoms of brain damage. His eyesight does not enable him to follow his profession as a photographer. His right foot has been amputated and he walks, with pain and a cane.

At this time, monies that might have been useful in avoiding and correcting the damage that Price has suffered, through no fault of his own, have instead been used to pay lawyers and ICBC adjusters and administrators.

Certainly ICBC administrators have been careful not to be in danger of overpaying in settling Price's legitimate claims even as they have scrupulously followed every administrative protocol in protecting the ICBC purse.

It is not in the mandate of ICBC to run an “austerity” corporation. Its mandate is to serve citizens and customers of ICBC with insurance protection that will assess damage and provide realistic and timely settlement amounts that reflect the needs and requirements of innocent accident victims.

That has not happened for Paul Price. He has been unlucky as the innocent victim of two road accidents. As a society we must understand the duty to assist and support to the best of our available services and technology.



Paul Price, still waiting for help from ICBC.

As a public service corporation, ICBC has a duty to play its part in making Price whole.

That is not what ICBC has done. They have delayed, prevaricated, unfairly assessed, ignored relevant evidence of Price's condition and generally failed to address the emotional pain that the corporate protocols have caused.

So, if we're looking for a Proximate Cause for Paul Price's 10 years of frustration and deteriorating health then British Columbia's own insurance corporation must be joined with the young driver whose collision with Paul Price's vehicle has now done much to crash Paul Price's life.

Society is not properly served by insurance adjustment systems that deny accident victims proper adjudication and serve more generously the legal professionals and administrators whose work can deny the very purpose of their professions.

Violence and “root causes” – the elephant in the room

By Helen Forsey

The current worldwide epidemic of violence – terrorist acts, police shootings and civil wars being the most visible – is generating debate about the possible root causes of such horrifying events. Links have been made to racism, mental illness, gun culture, generalized anger, poverty, marginalization – all probable contributing factors which must be addressed. But there's something else missing from the public discussion, something important.

The elephant in the room, what no one seems able to see, is gender. The stark fact that almost all of the agents of the violence we are discussing have been male. The statistical link between violence and masculinity is obscured through the careful use of neutral terms like “shooters,” “perpetrators” and “suspects,” but it's there.

Horrific incidents of public violence are multiplying into a “new normal”, yet most of those seeking to understand the growing madness seem resolutely oblivious to any gendered connection. “The suspect had been radicalized,” they say. “This individual was alienated, marginalized.” “This person had a history of mental illness.” They almost never say, “This man.” And yet it almost always is a man.

Surely, if any other statistic was staring us in the face like that we would all be taking note. Facebook and Twitter would be full of controversy over the significance of gender in the escalating epidemic of attacks. The mainstream media would be highlighting the question in their interviews and reporting; universities would be incorporating the debate into their courses. Governments would be setting up public inquiries into the links between male violence, militarism, pornography and other elements of sexist culture. Terrorism research institutes would be retrieving from obscurity the extensive

work that feminist scholars have done on these issues, studying their analyses and promoting their recommendations. But I don't see any of that happening.

This reluctance to point out the obvious is understandable. No one, myself included, wants to be seen as “blaming men”. I have sons and grandsons, and I know in my flesh that our male babies are not born violent. The linkage is cultural, not biological. But it's real, and ignoring it is not the answer.

Throughout recorded history, in cultures around the world, boys and men have been saddled with the insulting sexist assumption that to be male is to be violent. Boys are taught that a “real man” is always ready to put up his fists or pull out his gun, that it is “manly” to use lethal force. Girls and women are told that this kind of male power offers us protection from other dangers (that is, as long as we behave).

This false linkage between male sexuality and violence has always wreaked unfathomable harm on women, children and men themselves, and it continues today in the violence we see on our screens.

Although terrorism is often portrayed as a recent phenomenon, it is not new; it just takes new forms. Modern terrorism adds new methods to the age-old practices of rape, battering and war; new weapons to the old arsenal of daggers, fists and cannons. Male-on-male violence in warfare, pogroms and brawls has been matched throughout history by the brutality routinely inflicted, though seldom acknowledged, on women and children.

The terror felt by all those victims has always been every bit as real as the terror we see on television and social media in these frightening days.

This tragic history will only go on repeating itself unless we learn from it. To do that, we must stop ignoring the gender-

related evidence and start actively de-linking violence from maleness. Precisely because the link is culturally-based, it can be broken, and that is something all of us can do, now, whoever and wherever we are.

Young people, parents, grandparents, teachers, musicians, community leaders – everyone can do their part. Let's make sure that no little boy grows up thinking violence is manly, that no little girl falls for the same propaganda. Let's make sure that no man is tempted to assert his maleness by hurting someone else, and that no woman tol-

erates macho behaviour in those she loves.

If we can dig out the patriarchal garbage from among terror's roots, there's hope that terror itself may wither and die.

“If there were an Olympic event for political cynicism on the climate challenge, BC's new climate plan would be a strong contender for the gold medal.”
– Mark Jaccard, professor of sustainable energy in the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University

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Site C or sight to see...

Photo story by Maureen Burgess

Yes, it was a sight to see the already devastation of clear cut on the proposed Site C Dam in the Peace River Valley.

On Thursday, July 7, along with many other adventurous souls, we boarded the 7 am ferry from Victoria to Tsawwassen where we met more adventurous souls from the lower mainland. We boarded our Rolling Justice Bus which was the start of an amazing journey to the Peace River Valley.

It was truly an awe inspiring journey along the mighty Fraser River, following its path north through Hell's Gate and meeting its largest tributary the Thompson River at Lytton. The bus kept rolling along through the changing scenery of Cache Creek, Williams Lake, Quesnel and our final destination for the night at Prince George.

Early Friday morning, under a clear blue sky, we made a stop at the junction of Highway 97 and Highway 16, the highway of tears. We had all written our thoughts and feelings on colourful paper hearts which we planted at this junction to remember, honour and never forget the missing and murdered Indigenous women. As our tears dropped they were filled with hope that justice will be served. We continued our journey north and east to the Peace River Valley.

On a beautiful summer evening we walked the field sprinkled with wild flowers that led to the edge of the precipice overlooking the Peace River. An amazing majestic sight meandering through the valley to the point below us and there the first sight of the coming rape of this valley. Directly across from us the clear cut logs



Fertile fields like this will be flooded and vital food production lost if the Site C dam is built.

were stacked and the land crisscrossed with roads.

We joined our hosts and other farmers from the area in a delicious meal prepared and created by our industrious souls from the Rolling Justice Bus. As the sun set on the Peace, we exchanged our thoughts and our hope that the powers that be will see the light.

Saturday was the big day for the Paddle for the Peace and it dawned gray and gloomy but did not dampen our spirits. At the assembly point for the canoes and paddlers we were all treated to a wonderful breakfast prepared by the members of the local First Nations.

Over 400 paddlers and supporters

gathered around to listen to words of praise and hope from Chiefs, farmers, politicians and other dignitaries before the launch of the flotilla.

As I stood by my assigned canoe trepidation set in, as this was not my first canoe journey but at the age of 76 and most of my experience was on a quiet lake, I began to second guess my judgement. To my delight I was assigned to a competent young lady, Eliza, the owner of a lovely four seat canoe. As we pushed off from shore, all my anxieties just floated away and the sun came out to cheer us on.

Paddling about a third of the way, enjoying the peace and serenity, my thoughts turned to all the great explorers who too paddled these mighty rivers on their journey to find the Pacific Ocean. Just as we were guided today by our indigenous peoples who had travelled these routes for thousands of years, so too they guided the explorers.

My thoughts were halted as we came upon another two-person canoe towing a rubber dingy which was quite noticeably losing air. As we pulled alongside, my competent skipper immediately grasped the situation and indicated to head for the shore and shallows.

At this point we were able to transfer a mother and her little girl from the dingy into our canoe. Although extremely wet and cold, our little passenger Alexis, was a delight. She entertained us with singing, questions and laughter as we continued our journey along the mighty Peace.

The unbelievable day was crowned with speeches of support and hope once again, and spirits soared along with the bands and singers. The sad part of the day was what we were standing on, a fertile field which if the propose Site C Dam is not stopped, will be lost to food production forever.

Sunday was once more bright and sunny and we loaded up the Rolling Justice Bus for the journey to Fort St. John before turning west and south for the trip back to Prince George. How glad we were to make the journey to Fort St. John to join with others from the area in a peaceful protest. This was especially meaningful for me as I once again met up with little Alexis and her Mum. We were met with cheers and yes, some jeers but with four year old Alexis by our side there is hope.

The journey back to Prince George was charged as we expressed our thoughts, feelings and plans for the future and so glad we had made this journey.

Over the past few weeks I have tried to look at all sides and make some meaning of this. The one recurring thought was what does the future hold for little Alexis and her generation and generations to follow?

With a BC Provincial election on the horizon what can be done to reverse the decision of the Site C Dam by the present Liberal provincial government?

In 2013 I attended an all candidates meeting in my riding for the then upcoming May 2013 provincial election. Most of the platform centred on LNG and the thousands of jobs it will create.

I asked a question about these jobs and what would be available for women. The answer was all kinds of training programs for both genders. The question I asked of one candidate, who was also a developer, was why it was not mandatory for solar panels or at least hot water on demand built into every new residential project. Answer, it is far too expensive.

Here we are almost four years later and where are the jobs, the solar panels, green industry and the wealth from LNG?

Site C Dam is all about supplying en-



The Peace River as seen from a hillside overlooking it.

ergy for the LNG industry and at an estimated cost of \$9 billion dollars. This dam project will flood thousands of fertile acres, displace First Nations, wipe out wildlife and for what....to fuel an industry that is going nowhere.

Check out the facts below about what we can learn from others. Follow the tips put out by BC Hydro to reduce your electricity consumption and if we all do it, think of how much electricity will be saved.

We owe it to our future generations – my generation have had it all – time to give back.

Uncanny similarities

Ever heard of Muskrat Falls in Newfoundland? In 2010 when this project began it was *estimated* to cost \$6.2 billion dollars. As of now, it has ballooned to a whopping \$11.3 billion dollars. The government has run out of money and is seeking additional \$4 billion from the federal government.

The new CEO of Nalcor, which is building the facility, now admits that it is a project ill conceived, but the ratepayers of the province will shoulder the costs.*

LNG and what BC can learn from Norway

The Snohovit LNG plant in Norway began construction in 2003 and shipped its first load of LNG in 2007. It now forms the cornerstone of Norway's natural gas export sector and the ever expanding public purse of oil and gas revenues. Norway's Government Pension Fund Global launched in 1990 was worth \$1.1 trillion dollars as of May 2015. Comparisons between Norway and Canada's energy provinces are sobering. Take Alberta, which, despite producing almost twice as much oil annually, has socked away just \$17.5 billion dollars in its

Heritage Savings Fund since 1976. In BC, which has been in the natural gas business since the 1980s, when the first wells were drilled in Peace River country – we still don't have a dedicated fund for growing public wealth from gas revenue and royalties. Royalties hit a peak in 2008/2009 at \$1.3 billion dollars and are expected to be only \$542 million for 2015/2016. Now BC is scrambling to get into the LNG game with no guarantee that the province will get the hoped for windfall.*

BC has no Plan B for LNG

Northeastern BC sits on an ocean of natural gas. But so do Montana, North Dakota and New York State, so the US. doesn't need Canadian Gas. That's why the BC government put so much energy into opening up new markets for BC gas in Asia in its bid to develop a LNG industry. But one by one, LNG proposals have been falling like dominoes as companies have shelved or deferred projects.*

Peace Valley family takes home top prize in canola yield contest

A canola farming family in the Peace River valley won top prize in a yield contest with last year's harvest – on land rented from BC Hydro that will be lost to the Site C dam reservoir.*



Eliza, the owner of a 4-seat canoe, took the writer on the Paddle for the Peace.

21 Tips: No-Cost Ways to Save Electricity

- 1) Turn off unnecessary lights
 - 2) Take shorter showers or shower every other day
 - 3) Wash laundry in cold water
 - 4) Hang laundry to dry....hang it indoors (only North America has daft laws about hanging outside)
 - 5) Run full loads
- To see all 21 tips go to www.bchydro.com

Source:

*Uncanny similarities...*Alaska Highway News*, August 3, 2016

*LNG and what BC can learn from Norway...*BC Business Magazine*, August 21, 2015

*BC has no Plan B for LNG...*Alaska Highway News*, August 3, 2016

*Peace Valley family takes home top prize in canola yield contest...*Alaska Highway News*, January 22, 2016

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Health and human rights in prison: The need for prison-based needle and syringe programs

By Laura Track

During the prison law seminar I took in law school, professor and prison justice expert Michael Jackson said something I'll never forget. **People are sent to prison as punishment, he told us, not for punishment.**

That simple statement stuck with me. Prisons don't have to be dangerous, cruel, filthy and overcrowded places for them to be extremely punishing experiences. The deprivation of liberty a prison sentence entails *is* the punishment, and it is punishing enough. Inmates need not be treated with additional harshness, and prisons must not be allowed to deteriorate into violent and dangerous places, in a misguided effort to see that people convicted of crimes receive an appropriate punishment for their actions.



Photo credit: Alexandre Vanier

People do not surrender their human rights when they enter a prison. Yet Canadian prison policy is failing to uphold the human rights of inmates and is making prisons far more punishing places than they need to be. From the ongoing use of solitary confinement, a practice the UN says can amount to torture, to severe overcrowding and deplorable conditions, inadequate treatment and care for the mentally ill, a shocking over-incarceration of Indigenous people and increasingly dangerous conditions, Canada's so-called "correctional" facilities tend to be anything but. Instead, goals of rehabilitating and preparing offenders for reintegration into communities are sacrificed in the name of cost-saving and administrative efficiency.

But we all pay a price when people emerge from prison sicker, angrier and more marginalized than when they went in. Problems in prisons and prison populations do not stay locked up behind the walls, but inevitably spill out into our communities.

A CRITICAL PROBLEM: HIV AND HEPATITIS C INFECTION RATES

One area where government and prison officials could take relatively simple and eminently sensible steps to address a critical problem in prisons – one with significant implications for public health – is in the area of HIV and hepatitis C infection. Rates of HIV and hepatitis C in federal prisons are vastly higher than in the rest of the population, and transmission of these diseases within prisons is occurring at an alarming rate. A Vancouver study estimated that incarceration more than doubled the risk of HIV infection for people who use injection drugs, and one in five HIV infections among people who inject drugs in Vancouver was acquired in prison.^[i]

Sharing needles to inject drugs is a primary cause of the high rates of HIV and hepatitis C infection in Canadian prisons. As a result of criminalization of addiction and addiction-related behaviours and the insufficient resources dedicated to community-based treatment and support, our prisons are rapidly filling with people struggling with substance use problems. In particular, women and Indigenous people suffering from addiction are greatly over-represented in Canadian prisons.

While many people assume that drugs would not be available in such a secure and highly restrictive environment, illegal drugs can and do make their way into prisons. A 2010 survey by Corrections Service Canada found that 34 percent of men and 25 percent of women in federal prisons admitted to using drugs in the past six months, and 17 percent of men and 14 percent of women admitted to injecting drugs. Among the prisoners who reported having injected drugs, 55 percent of men and 41 percent of women used someone else's needle, and 38 percent of men and 29 percent of women shared a needle with someone who has HIV, hepatitis C, or an unknown infection status.^[ii]

The author, Laura Track, is BCCLA Staff Counsel. Interested readers can learn more at www.bccla.org and if they have questions can go to the BCCLA Facebook page at www.bccla.org/BC-CivLib.



Photo credit: Todd Huffman

NEEDLE EXCHANGES: VITAL HARM REDUCTION TOOL

Needle and syringe programs, often known as "needle exchanges", are a vital harm reduction tool available in hundreds of communities across Canada. They are a cost-effective way of reducing the risk of infection from sharing used injection equipment, facilitate access to care and treatment, and have been supported by all levels of government. Prison-based needle and syringe programs (PNSPs) offer similar benefits in the many countries where they've been implemented, including Switzerland, Germany and Spain. They are supported by doctors and medical associations and hundreds of community organizations across the country. Evaluations of PNSPs have consistently demonstrated that they:

- Reduce needle sharing
- Reduce drug overdoses
- Do not lead to increased drug use or injecting
- Facilitate referrals to drug treatment programs
- Have not resulted in needles being used as weapons against staff or other prisoners.

However, despite these clear benefits, Canadian prisoners are denied access to sterile injecting equipment. This not only puts the health and lives of prisoners at risk, but also correctional staff who run the risk of being exposed to non-sterile needles, as well as prisoners' families and the broader public when prisoners are released back into the community with health problems they contracted in prison.

People in prison have the right, protected by law, to essential health care that contributes to their rehabilitation and reintegration, and to a standard of health care that's equivalent to that available on the outside. Yet despite these legal guarantees, prisoners are not being provided with equal access to harm reduction options, with grave consequences for their health and human rights, as well as public health more broadly.

TAKING ACTION TO DEMAND HUMANE PRISON POLICIES

The BCCLA has taken action to demand sane, humane prison policies many times over the years, including our ongoing challenge, with the John Howard Society of Canada, to prolonged solitary confinement, and our work to ensure that the rule of law continues to run behind the walls of Canada's prisons and jails.

In the coming months, we'll be turning our sights to the lack of harm reduction tools for injection drug users in prisons and the violations of the rights to life, security and equality this policy failure entails. The BCCLA will be intervening in a constitutional challenge brought by Steven Simons, a former prisoner who was infected with hepatitis C during his imprisonment, the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network and other community organizations against the Government of Canada over its failure to make sterile injection equipment available to federal prisoners and prevent the spread of HIV and hepatitis C in federal prisons.

We intend to argue that the prohibition on access to sterile injection equipment in prisons violates the principles of fundamental justice enshrined in the *Charter*: **the restriction goes too far in trying to achieve its objective of protecting and promoting the health and safety of prisoners and staff, and its negative effects are grossly disproportionate.** We will also argue that because the government has complete control over prisoners' access to health care of any kind, the Constitution imposes an obligation on government to provide prisoners with necessary health care, including clean needles and syringes, just as they would have access to in the community.

For more information on the lawsuit and an informative range of research on PNSPs, check out the Prison Health Now website. And watch this space for news about the BCCLA's intervention.

Prisons may be designed for punishment, but they should not be a death sentence.

^[i] See Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, "Prison Needle and Syringe Programs: Policy Brief" (15 February 2012).

^[ii] Ibid.

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Stay in touch with your Executive!

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New Democrats**
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Email your president at deb.foster21@gmail.com
or
cowichanvalley.NDP@shaw.ca

***Facing the Anthropocene: Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*, by Ian Angus, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2016**

Book review by Jim Manly

After years of the Harper government's anti-scientific refusal to acknowledge the growing challenge of catastrophic change to our environment, Canadians were relieved and even rather proud when Catherine McKenna endorsed the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C at the Paris Climate Conference in December 2015. Unfortunately, in spite of its fine words, the Conference did not back them up with any concrete measures; every country is to set its own targets and there are no means of enforcing those targets.

The Trudeau government, after promising "real change", has simply accepted the Harper government's 2014 goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030. Although he claims that this is a "floor" and not a "ceiling", his gung-ho approach to pipeline expansion does not give any hope that serious changes will be made by his government.

Serious changes will be made, however, not by governments but by the Earth system itself. As Ian Angus details in *Facing the Anthropocene*, these changes are already taking place with extreme heat, droughts, floods, ice storms, melting glaciers, rise of sea levels and species extinction. The contradictory nature of these changes, while baffling to the casual observer, reveal the complexity of the Earth system. Repeatedly, scientists are forced to report that these changes are happening much more rapidly than they were expecting even 10 years ago.

The new word, *Anthropocene*, has come into use by scientists to describe a new geological epoch that replaces the *Holocene* epoch of the last 10-12,000 years. "It stands for the notion that human beings have become the primary emergent geological force affecting the future of the Earth System." (p. 9) Although sometimes traced back to the Industrial Revolution, most of

the changes that set it in motion arose as our society became increasingly technological during and following WW II.

Our growing dependence on fossil fuels has been a major driver of these changes. To take oil as an example, "world oil production grew by more than 700% in the period 1946-73." (p. 149) It continues apace in our time. "What nature took hundreds of millions of years to create, capital is destroying in a few hundred years, releasing millions of tons of long buried CO₂ into the atmosphere far more rapidly than the oceans and other carbon sinks can remove it." (p. 124)

This disrupts the natural carbon cycle by which the ocean and the atmosphere exchange carbon and keep each other more or less in balance. With more CO₂ in the atmosphere, heat is prevented from escaping into space and global temperatures rise.

Our world cannot keep burning carbon and at the same time prevent global temperatures from rising; this is why we must oppose and stop pipelines and coal ports. Carbon burned in China has the same effect on our atmosphere and global warming as carbon burned in Canada.

Frequently in discussion of climate change, no reference is made to the military use of oil; this is not an accidental oversight because "military emissions were excluded from the Kyoto Accord." (p. 161) With the data available however, it has been estimated that in the 1990s the US military used "more than the total commercial energy consumption of nearly two-thirds of the world's countries," and this does not count what was used in the Iraq war or the bombing of Serbia and Kosovo. (p. 161).

Other emissions into the atmosphere, such as nitrogen from fertilizer, and methane (CH₄), the main component of natural gas, further disrupt the natural order and contribute to climate change. The destruction of forests, overfishing, long range transportation of food as agribusiness elim-

inates small scale farms, the use of non biodegradable plastics and other practices of our modern economy all contribute to the destructive changes that are taking place and are slated to continue into the future.

The old canard that population growth is pushing us to climate catastrophe ignores the fact that the changes are caused by the rich countries of our world with low birth rates. Stephen Pacala of Princeton University's Environment Institute claims, "the 3 billion poorest people...emit essentially nothing.... The development of the desperately poor is not in conflict with solving the climate problem, which is a problem of the very rich." (p. 225)

Although they are not the cause of climate change, the poor countries with the poorest people already suffer the most and, as the global situation gets worse, so will their suffering. "Globally 99% of weather disaster casualties are in developing countries, and 75% of them are women. The pattern repeats at every scale. Within the South, the very poorest countries, mostly in Africa south of the Sahara, are hit hardest. Within each country, the poorest people—women, children and the elderly are most likely to lose their homes from climate change, and most likely to die. The same pattern repeats in the North." (pp.178-77)

In the face of environmental disaster, global elites, and not only the top 1% but middle class people in North America and western Europe, will attempt "to wall themselves off from the rest of humanity." (p. 185) We can already see this in the refusal to accept the growing number of "climate refugees", combined with the failure to recognize that in places like Syria many of the overwhelming number of "political refugees" (i.e. according to UN standards) are the result of civil unrest and violence caused by drought and famine. In the same way that we received a modest number of political refugees, Canada should take the lead in recognizing the human rights of people displaced by environmental catastrophe.

Destructive changes are already "in the pipeline"; it is too late to stop many of them but we can and must take action to limit them and also to alleviate the damage that they will do to future generations. We owe an environmental debt to our great grandchildren and their descendants.

Like Naomi Klein in *This Changes Everything*, Angus emphasizes that the necessary changes cannot take place under capitalism since it depends upon endless expansion on a limited planet. Unfortunately, "we live in a time when most people find it easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism." (p. 202, quoting Fredric Jameson) We need to develop a 21st Century socialist alternative, what Angus calls *ecosocialism*. "There can be no true ecological revolution that is not socialist and no true socialist revolution that is not ecological." (p.202)

He turns to the 2010 Peoples Agreement from Cochabamba, Bolivia for a helpful framework for our action:

-Financial support for adaptation to climate change, including the development of ecologically sound agriculture.

-Direct transfer of renewable energy and other technologies, so that the poorest countries can have economic development without contributing to global warming.

-Opposition to so-called market solutions and to the commodification of nature. This includes rejecting carbon trading in all its forms.

-Welcoming climate refugees to our countries, offering them decent lives with full human rights.

Although it wouldn't qualify as a "Guide for Idiots", *Facing the Anthropocene* is a helpful book for people of reasonable intelligence; Angus uses scientific terms but explains them in language that ordinary readers can understand.

Quite apart from its readability, the subject matter is of crucial importance. This is a book to read, think about, discuss and act upon.

***Canada Since 1960: A People's History: A Left Perspective on 50 Years of Politics, Economics and Culture*, Cy Gonick, editor, James Lorimer & Company Ltd., 2016, Toronto, ON**

Book review by Theresa Wolfwood

Winnipeg-based *Canadian Dimension* magazine has been a **uniquely Canadian intellectual and moral compass for 35 years** providing "people who want to change the world" with information, opinion and analysis with a leftist perspective on issues that concern Canadians.

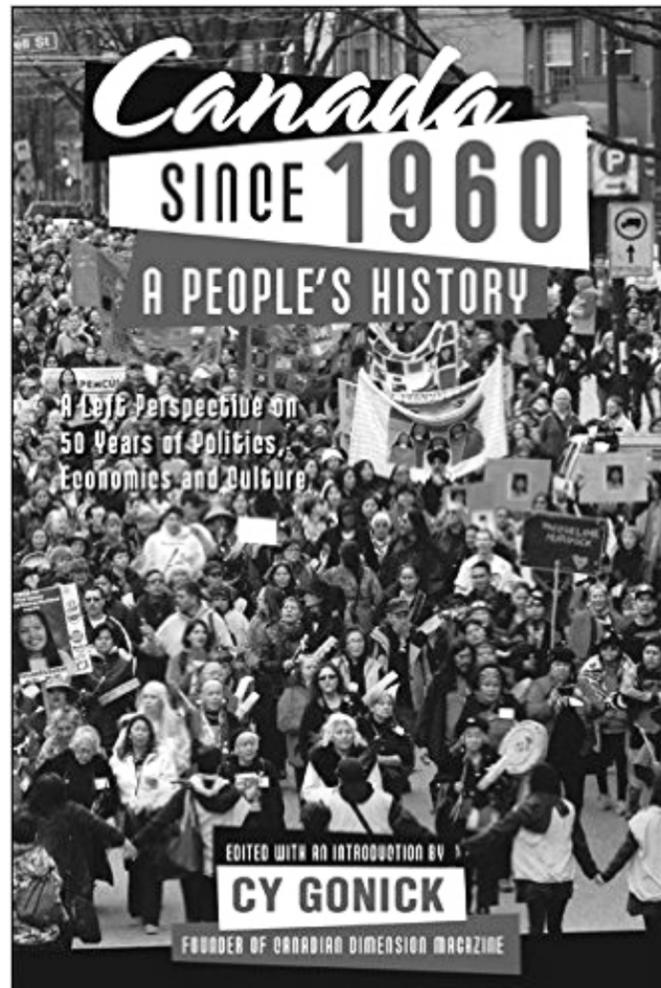
That includes everything from 1st nations' rights to the Olympics, from Boycott, Divest and Sanctions movements – first of South Africa and now of Israel -- and a myriad of issues in our face every day.

Founder and publisher Cy Gonick, still going strong, proclaims the journal as "refreshingly independent", "uniquely Canadian" and "always progressive".

Now Gonick has edited writings from scholars and activists across Canada to provide important perspectives on Canadian politics, economics, and culture since 1960.

Writers provide an engrossing view of our country, a leftist view never seen in corporate media; we may know of the issues, but here we can read well-written and documented analysis of what we are living through in our free-market neoliberalism and where we can find real alternative thinking to the wishy-washy centralist ideas that pass for left-wing political ideology in Canada.

Take hope and courage and as the old saying goes, still truer than ever: Don't agonize, organize!



***War Against the People: Israel. The Palestinians and Global Pacification*, by Jeff Halper**

Mini introduction by Eva Manly

Some of you will have heard Jeff Halper speak during his 2015 national tour, in which he mentioned a new book he was writing. It is now in print and vital reading.

Many of you will know Jeff Halper as a founding member and head of the *Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions* (ICAHD). In his previous book, *An Israeli in Palestine*, Halper opens with the destruction of the home of his friend Salim Shamreh in *Anata*, a village near Jerusalem.

This event forced Halper, who had been a committed Zionist, to confront what was really happening in the West Bank and Gaza. This book was a wakeup call for many of his readers, myself included.

His new book begins with the question, "How does Israel get away with it?"

Because the deadline for reviews has passed, I will simply recommend an October 2, 2015, online review by Tom Sperlinger located at <https://electronicintifada.net/content/how-does-israel-get-away-it/14882>

Halper's *War Against the People: Israel. The Palestinians and Global Pacification* is essential reading for all those concerned with the rights of Indigenous peoples, issues of war and peace, human rights and the implications of trade deals such as the TTP. It is also essential reading for politicians of every stripe. The opening chapter is worth the price of the book!

Emmanuel De Guzman, secretary of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), likened the fight against climate change to the Philippine Revolution. He urged other member states to continue being "revolutionaries fighting for the planet's future" and end the record-setting temperature increases the world has experienced in the past few years. "Like them (the revolutionaries of the Philippine Revolution), we, too, are fighting for the future ... for the fate of the entire world and the billions of people who call our planet home," De Guzman said. "This is a revolution we in the CVF must lead because we are the countries that will fall first if the 1.5 degrees global warming limit of the Paris Agreement is breached," he said."

Calendar of coming events

CENTRAL SAANICH RESIDENTS ARE invited to attend regular neighbourhood gatherings, held every Friday night at 7 pm at Spelt's Coffee Shop, 7586 East Saanich Road, in Saanichton. Share stories, books, talk politics and enjoy hot coffee. Nothing is taboo. No pretentiousness, no meeting agenda...just a chance to chat with neighbours and build community. Call 250-652-8228 for further information.

THE VICTORIA LABOUR COUNCIL representing affiliated unions in the Greater Victoria area, holds its regular monthly meetings at 7 pm on the 3rd Wednesday each month at the BCGEU Auditorium, 2994 Douglas Street, Victoria. All delegates are welcome to come to meet their execu-

tive, president Mike Eso, treasurer, Stan Dzbik, and secretary Michael Maloney.

WOMEN IN BLACK invite you to join them in their monthly vigil to remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki and call on all Canadians and people globally to work for peace and disarmament. All those who support our goals are welcome. For further information, contact bbcf@bbcf.ca.

JOIN MURRAY RANKIN, MP, VICTORIA, for a Town Hall on Electoral Reform, on Saturday, September 10, from 3:00-5:00 pm, at Victoria High School Auditorium. Featured speakers will be Nathan Cullin, MP and Vice-chair of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform, and Avigail Eisen-

berg, Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria.

ESQUIMALT AND WEST SHORE NEW Democrats! If you live in Esquimalt, View Royal, Colwood or Metchosin, you are in the new provincial constituency of Esquimalt-Metchosin. The Founding General Meeting of Esquimalt-Metchosin will take place on Saturday, September 10, at the Colwood Community Hall (Children's Hall), 2219 Sooke Road (near Kelly Road). Registration starts at 10:30 am meeting, at 11 a.m. For more information, e-mail esqmetndp@gmail.com.

"WE CALL THEM INTRUDERS: a documentary film about mining in Africa" will be

shown on Monday, September 19, at 7:00pm, in Room 105, in the Harry Hickman Building, University of Victoria. The film will be followed by a panel discussion and Q and A. Sponsored by Amnesty International in association with SJS, MJAC, GRANS and VPC.

JOIN MPs RANDALL GARRISON AND Alistair MacGregor for a Community Town Hall on Electoral Reform, a panel and discussion on how to make our voting system fairer for Canadians, on Saturday, September 24, from 2:00-3:30 pm, in the Community Commons area at Belmont Secondary School, 3041 Langford Lake Road. Everyone is welcome. For more information contact the MPs--Garrison at 250-405-6550 and MacGregor at 1-866-609-9998.

Corbyn set to beat Labour right wing, again Labour right wing

By Barry Weisleder

British Labour Party Leader Jeremy Corbyn is on track to retain his job and defeat the right wing challenge to his leadership. The leftist Corbyn, 67 years old, campaigns for re-nationalization of public utilities and railways, and for unilateral disarmament of nuclear weapons.

He beat out six other MPs to become Leader in October 2015, after attracting hundreds of thousands of new members to the party. Now he faces an all-members' vote, with the result to be announced on September 21.

The election was triggered by non-confidence expressed by about 70 percent of the Labour MPs just after the Brexit referendum in late June. They accused Corbyn of failing to campaign for the "Remain in the

EU" side with sufficient enthusiasm. Now it is clear that it is the majority of LP MPs who are out of touch with the rank and file. As Corbyn speaks to huge support rallies across Britain, his remaining opponent, MP Owen Smith, is fading. Another adversary, MP Angela Eagle, pulled out of the race on July 19, and endorsed Smith.

In August, the British High Court ruled that people who joined the Labour Party after January 12 must now be permitted to vote for Leader. Labour officials were granted a right of appeal, but the court is unlikely to reverse its decision. More members with the right to vote is seen as a plus for Corbyn, who continues to attract new members who seek a radical political alternative to the Tory coalition government, now led by Theresa May, and to the Blairites.

Meanwhile, LP members elected a new National Executive Committee. All six pro-Corbyn, Momentum-backed candidates for the NEC won, thus making for a clean sweep. In addition, the vast majority of Constituency Labour Parties (local electoral district LP associations) voted to re-nominate Corbyn for Leader. Smith obtained the support of only 11 percent, less than the number of CLPs that expressed no opinion.

In another development, Labour MP Sarah Champion, who was one of several who quit Jeremy Corbyn's shadow cabinet right after the Brexit vote, has been reinstated after she "unresigned" back to her old post. Others who walked out on Corbyn are now rumoured to be looking for a way back. The tide is turning.

Supporters of the pro-war, austerity-friendly, ex-LP Leader and former Prime

Minister Tony Blair have posted angry messages on the party's official facebook page. Many threaten to stop their monthly automatic donations to the party. Their money may be missed more than their odious politics, but the swelling movement for a socialist, working class agenda can easily make up for all of it.

Speculation is rife that a split in the parliamentary caucus and the party as a whole is imminent, especially as numerous MPs behind the failing coup against Corbyn face de-selection in their constituencies prior to the next general election. A split by the right wing, as in 1981, will produce a rump that will eventually seek refuge in the Liberal Democratic Party, perhaps even in Conservative ranks.

Thus, the prospect opens up the possibility that the LP under Corbyn will move further to the left, posing a significant chal-

Postal Workers confront Canada Post

By Evert Hoogers, Donald Swartz, and Rosemar Warskett

A major confrontation is in the making at Canada Post. On the one hand, post office management is seeking to extract a series of far ranging concessions from its workers. On the other, those workers and their union, Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), are not simply prepared to resist these demands, but are determined to use the opportunity to negotiate a new collective agreement to pursue an agenda that advances equality within the workplace and the expansion and renewal of vital public services.

The importance of this struggle lies in the fact that its outcome will be of enormous significance not only to the lives of postal workers, but to all public sector workers and indeed to future workers as well...It would appear that we are in the midst of the "calm before the storm".

There is little likelihood that CUPW will acquiesce to Canada Post's demands without a fight – not least to the demand for an inferior pension plan for future, younger, workers. Two-tier pay systems that require workers with different pay and/or benefits to work side-by-side offend most workers'

sense of justice and solidarity and many will go to great lengths to avoid this situation. In 2009, for example, steelworkers in Sudbury and Port Colborne struck for almost a year in an unsuccessful bid to block Vale Inco's imposition of a two-tier pension system.

CUPW, with its commitment to equality between male and female workers, as well as full and part time workers, that goes back to the 1970s, is unlikely to act any differently. Indeed, when faced with an attempt by management to create a new lower classification in conjunction with the introduction of new technology back in 1974, they struck illegally to block it. For the same reason, CUPW is unlikely to simply abandon its demand for equal pay for rural carriers (most of whom are female, and who earn 30 percent less than urban male carriers - editor).

How this will play out remains to be seen with the Federal government being something of a wild card, albeit a crucial one given its ability to invoke the law and the power of the state. Much will depend on the support for CUPW of those who are committed to social justice and equality, expanding public services and spaces and ecological sanity.

In this respect, the grassroots coalitions

of union, student, anti-poverty and environmental activists that have already sprung up in cities such as Ottawa, Montreal, Halifax, Winnipeg, Toronto and Vancouver are encouraging. However, it will be necessary to engage the major public and private sector unions with their much greater resources and potential mobilizing capacities – all of whose members have a real stake in the outcome.

This is so clearly the case for unions in the federal public sector whose members will be next in line if Canada Post succeeds in imposing a two-tier pension system on CUPW. But it is also the case that unions in the private sector, many of whom are struggling to overcome the divisiveness created by having accepted two-tier wage and benefit systems, have a real stake in the outcome. A CUPW defeat would only strengthen the forces pushing them into the race to the bottom.

It is urgently necessary that the union leaderships take the initiative in building the requisite mobilization, in concert with CUPW. Unfortunately, past experience reveals that this can by no means be taken for granted. For example, meaningful efforts by USW, let alone the CLC to build support for Vale Inco workers in 2009 were

noticeably absent.

Activists need to find ways to put pressure on the leaders of both public and private sector unions, insisting that they go beyond perfunctory statements of support, and even promises of financial assistance,

to communicate the importance of the issues to their members and to commit significant resources to mobilizing concrete solidarity with postal workers.

We also need to communicate support for postal workers to the government. Messages from individuals and groups to the government and individual MPs should not only call on the government to press the post office to drop its demands for concessions and respond positively to CUPW's demands, but also express support for CUPW's proposals for the future of the postal service.

For details see www.CUPW.ca/CanadaPostReview. Equally important, we should communicate support for expanding postal services directly to the Task Force on the future of Canada Post at www.Canada.ca/CanadaPostReview.

Evert Hoogers is a former CUPW National Union Representative. Donald Swartz and Rosemary Warskett both taught at Carleton University in Ottawa for many years.

Excerpts from an article on rabble.ca

TPP poses unnecessary risks to Canada's postal services: report

OTTAWA -- A new assessment of the Trans-Pacific Partnership by two legal experts finds that the trade agreement's provisions related to mail delivery and courier services pose a threat to how Canada Post functions today and restrict how the Crown corporation might be reformed or the services it provides expanded in the future.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered? The TPP and Canada's Public Postal Service, by Daniel Sheppard and Louis Century of Goldblatt Partners LLP, and released August 11 by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, attempts to determine the extent to which rules contained in the TPP may constrain the current and future activities of Canada Post. While the authors conclude the TPP "does not necessarily render Canada Post's current activities unlawful",

it will create unnecessary risks of future trade litigation.

"The TPP's convoluted, overlapping and ambiguous rules, many of which directly respond to US courier industry lobbying, create real risks of future trade and investment disputes triggered by corporations or member states unhappy with Canada's policy choices in the area of postal services," say Sheppard and Century. "In contrast to the Canada Post review currently underway by the Trudeau government, these rules in the TPP were negotiated in secret by trade negotiators and lobbyists, on a fast-tracked basis, without parliamentary oversight or public consultation."

The authors review the history of Canada Post, its entry into the express delivery market in the 1990s, and industry ef-

forts since then to dismantle the integrated public postal service model in Canada and elsewhere. These efforts have included two trade disputes by UPS: one against Canada under the investment rules in NAFTA, the other against the European Commission under EU law for Deutsche Post's acquisition of a significant interest in courier DHL.

The TPP's express delivery services annex expands the potential opportunities for courier services to challenge Canada Post. It does this in one way by prohibiting the use of money from monopoly activities (e.g., letter mail) to "cross-subsidize" its own or anyone else's express delivery services. The annex also requires that postal monopolies not "abuse [their] monopoly position" in a way that treats foreign companies (like

UPS) less favourably than domestic ones (like Purolator, which is majority-owned by Canada Post). Other restrictions on state-owned enterprises and "designated monopolies" further compromise the current and possible future expanded activities of Canada Post.

"It is unfortunate that Canada agreed to these ill-defined new rules, which cast doubt on the federal government's policy-making authority in respect of postal services at the very moment when the public is participating in a consultative project to reimagine the role of our public postal service," say the authors.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered is the latest study in the CCPA's ongoing research series on the TPP, *What's the Big Deal: Understanding the Trans-Pacific Partnership*, and is available on the CCPA website at www.policyalternatives.ca.

Directory of locations, organizations, publications of interest

MLA COMMUNITY OFFICES

Cowichan Valley Community Office, Bill Routley: MLA, 273 Trunk Road, Duncan, BC, or PO Box 599, Duncan, BC, V9L 3X9, phone 250-715-0127, toll free 1-877-715-0127, fax 250-715-0139, email bill.routley.mla@leg.bc.ca.

Esquimalt-Royal Roads Community Office, Maurine Karagianis, MLA: A5-100 Aldersmith Place, View Royal, BC, V9A 7M8, phone 250-479-8326, email maurine.karagianis.mla@leg.bc.ca or visit her website at www.maurinekaragianis.ca.

Juan de Fuca Community Office, John Horgan, MLA, 122-2806 Jacklin Road, Victoria, BC V9B 5A4, phone 250-391-2801, fax 250-391-2804, email john.horgan.mla@leg.bc.ca.

Saanich South Community Office, Lana Popham, MLA: 4085 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC, v8 1K5, email lana.popham.mla@leg.bc.ca, or visit website at www.saanichsouth.ca.

Saanich North and the Islands Community Office, Gary Holman, MLA., 2393 Beacon Avenue, Sidney, BC, phone: 250 655-5711, toll-free: 1-855 955-5711, fax: 250 655-7398, email gary.holman.mla.leg.bc.ca.

Victoria-Beacon Hill Community Office, Carole James, MLA: 1084 Forst Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K4, phone 250-952-4211, fax 250-952-4586, email carole.james.mla@leg.bc.ca.

Victoria-Swan Lake Community Office, Rob Fleming, MLA: 1020 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8T 2A2, email rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca.

MPs and COMMUNITY OFFICES

Randall Garrison, MP, House of Commons, Confederation Building, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6, email randall.garrison@parl.gc.ca.

Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke Community Office, Randall Garrison, MP, 2904 Tillicum Road (the corner of Gorge and Tillicum, Victoria, BC, V9A 4A5, open 10 am-4 pm, Monday-Thursday or by appointment. Phone 250-405-4550; fax 250-405-4568.

Alistair MacGregor, MP, House of Commons, Confederation Building, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6., email alistair.macgregor@parl.gc.ca, or visit his website at www.alistairmacgregor.ca.

Cowichan-Malahat-Langford Community Offices, Alistair MacGregor, MP, Duncan Office, 101-128 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC, V9L 1P1, Langford Office: 3202B Happy Valley Road, phone 1-866-609-9998, or email at alistair.macgregor@parl.gc.ca.

Murray Rankin, MP, House of Commons, Confederation Building, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6. email murray.rankin@parl.gc.ca, or visit his website at www.murrayrankin.ca/

Victoria Community Office, Murray Rankin, MP, 1057 Fort Street, Victoria, V8V 3K5, phone 250-363-3600, fax 250-363-8422, email him at murray.rankin@parl.gc.ca

PROVINCIAL NDP CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS

Cowichan Valley New Democrats: Write PO Box 102, Duncan, BC, V9L 1P0, or contact president Deb Foster, at 250-510-0544 or by email at deb.foster21@gmail.com, or email cowichanvalley.NDP@shaw.ca.

Esquimalt-Royal Roads New Democrats: Write Box 231, 110-174 Wilson Street, Victoria, BC, V9A 7N7 or email esquimaltroyalroads@gmail.com.

Langford-Juan de Fuca New Democrats: Phone president Sharon Wilkins at 250-478-5907 or email her at sawilkinson@shaw.ca.

Oak Bay-Gordon Head New Democrats: Write PO Box 5539, LCD 9, Victoria, BC, V8R 6S4 or contact president Keith Todd at 250-598-8039 or by email at keith.todd@shaw.bc.ca.

Saanich North and the Islands New Democrats: Email president Allan Collier at silcol@telus.net.

Saanich South New Democrats: Write PO Box 30041, Saanich Centre Postal Outlet, Victoria, BC, V8X 5E1, phone 250-479-1100, or email emrogers@uvic.ca

Victoria-Beacon Hill New Democrats: Write PO Box 8523, Victoria, BC, V8W 3S1 attention President Lucia Orser..

Victoria-Swan Lake New Democrats: Contact President Trish Richards at victoriaswanlakendp@gmail.com or write PO Box 282, 1681 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8T 2C1.

FEDERAL NDP RIDING ASSOCIATIONS

Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke New Democrats: Contact President Grant McLachlan at 778-676-4033; email him at esquimaltsaanichsookendp@gmail.com, or write to PO Box 622, 105-1497 Admirals Road, Victoria, BC, V9A 2P8.

Cowichan -Malahat-Langford New Democrats (formerly Nanaimo-Cowichan): Contact president Anne Balding at 250-710-0351 or email her at a.balding@hotmail.com.

Saanich-Gulf Islands New Democrats: Contact co-president Bill Graham by email to ndpsaanichgulflslands@gmail.com or Irene Wright (Gulf Islands) by phone/fax at 250-537-5347, or email to aiwright@telus.net.. See also Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SaanichGulflslands or website: http://alturl.com/ofy8.

Victoria New Democrats: Contact president James Coccola, by phone at 250-514-5518, or by email to president@victoriandp.ca, or visit their website at www.victoriandp.ca.

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL NDP OFFICES

BC New Democrats: 5367 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, V5H 2G1, phone 604-430-8600, fax 604-432-9517, toll free 1-888-868-3637.

Canada's New Democrats: 300-279 Laurie West, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5J9, phone 613-236-3613, toll free, 1-866-525-2555, fax 613-230-9950, TTY: 1-866-776-7742.

OTHER GROUPS YOU MAY WANT TO REACH

Amnesty International--Canadian Section: www.amnesty.org

BC Council of Senior Citizens Organizations: phone 604-438-3221.

BC Latin American Congress: 4184 Brant Street, Vancouver, BC, V5N 5B4, phone 604-879-3246, fax 604-872-6776, email bclac@vsn.bc.ca.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives: 410-75 Albert Street, Ottawa ON, K1P 5E7, phone 613-563-1341, fax 613-233-1458, email ccpa@policyalternatives.ca, website www.policyalternatives.ca.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives--BC Office, 1400-207 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 1H7, phone 604-801-5121, fax 604-801-5122, website: ww.policyalternatives.ca.

Canadian Health Coalition: phone 613-233-1018.

Canadian Labour Congress (Pacific Region): 201-5118 Joyce Street, Vancouver, BC, V5R 4H1; Regional Representative Iris Taylor, phone 604-430-6766, ext 267, fax 604-430-6762.

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East, Victoria Chapter: Victoria, BC, phone 778-679-2943 or email frances.everett@cjpme.org. Enquiries, new members, guests welcome. CJPME's website can be found at www.cjpme.org.

Council of Canadians, Victoria Chapter: 203-391 Tye Road, Victoria, BC V9A 0A9. Info@victoriacouncilofcanadians.ca and www.victoriacouncilofcanadians.ca.

Canadian Wildlife Federation: 350 Michael Cowpland Drive, Kanata, ON, K2M 2W1, phone 1-800-563-9453, or visit www.cwf-fcf.org.

Cool Aid Society: www.CoolAid.org; phone 250-383-1977: Building homes, lives and community. Cool Aid creates opportunities for people who are homeless or living in poverty. We make a difference through housing, health care, support and emergency shelters. Founded in 1968, Cool Aid helps over 9,000 people in the Capital Region every year, at 14 locations in Langford, Victoria and Saanich. The Society's major new campaign is "Help End Homelessness", to build an additional 360 apartments for people in the community who have no home.

Ecojustice: 214-131 Water Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 4M3, phone 1-800-926-7444.

Human Rights Internet: www.hri.ca.

Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria: phone 250-388-4728, fax 250-386-4395.

Mining Justice Action Committee (MJAC): contact Heather Tufts at htufts@shaw.ca or Sharlene Patterson at daveandshar@shaw.ca.

NAPO (National Anti-Poverty Organization) News: advocates for the poor in communities, courts and political arenas, www.napo-onap.ca.

NDP Socialist Caucus: www.ndpsocialists.ca. "Our aim and ongoing struggle as New Democrats must be to establish a Socialist Canada."

Parliamentary website lists all federal cabinet ministers, parliamentary secretaries and opposition spokespersons. Visit www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/people/key/critic.asp?language=E

Seniors Entitlement Service, assisting seniors 55+ in Greater Victoria with pensions, healthcare and other issues at QuadraVillage Community Centre, 901 Kings Rd. Trained advocates on duty Monday and Thursdays, 9am-3pm. Tel.250-388-7696, ext 223.

Seniors Serving Seniors: 109-1022 Pandora Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8V 3P5, phone 250-382-4331.

South Island Health Coalition, an affiliate of the BC Health Coalition. If you are concerned about access affordability and quality of health care in our community, get involved by calling co-chairs Dale Perkins at 250-592-5487 or Wendy Strong at 250-592-1222.

Together Against Poverty Society (TAPS): 302-895 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1H7, phone 250-361-3521; fax 250-361-3541.

Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society: Third floor, 535 Yates Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 2Z6 phone 250-361-9433, fax 250-361-1914 or see website www.virca.bc.ca.

Victoria Labour Council: 219-2750 Quadra street, Victoria, BC, V8T 4E8, phone 250-384-8331, fax 250-384-8381, email vlcbc@telsu.net.; Mike Eso, president, Stan Dzbik, treasurer, Kim Manotn, secretary Michael Maloney...

World Wildlife Federation: 410-245 Eglinton Avenue East, Toronto, ON, M4P 3J1, phone 1-800-26-PANDA, fax 416-489-8055, website www.wwf.ca.

United Nations Association of Canada (UNAC)--Victoria Branch: 202-3293 Douglas Street, Victoria, BC, V8Z 3K9, phone 250-475-2868, fax 250-475-5898, email unavic@coastnet.com or website www.unac.org.

ALTERNATIVE PUBLICATIONS

Canadian Dimension Magazine: An independent forum for Left-wing political thought and discussion — including just about the entire range of what passes for the Left in Canada. A few years ago we adopted the banner "a magazine for people who want to change the world". That's still a good summary of who we are. Subscriptions from \$29.99. See http://canadiandimension.com for more information.Or contact them by mail at Canadian Dimension, 2E-91 Albert Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 1G5, or by phone at 204-957-1519 or oll-ree: 1-800-737-7051.

CCPA Monitor: a monthly journal sent free to all members, and published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Canada's leading organization for articulating progressive, positive social policy reform. Ever constructive and independent. Contact them at CCPA National Office, Suite 500, 251 Bank Street, Ottawa ON, K2P 1X3; tel: 613-563-1341; fax: 613-233-1458; email: ccpa@policyalternatives.ca.

Our Times: Canada's independent labour magazine and read by most labour organizations and other supporters of working people. Check its website at www.ourtimes.ca.

The Dominion: a monthly paper published by an incipient network of independent journalists in Canada. It aims to provide accurate, critical coverage that is accountable to its readers and the subjects it tackles. Taking its name from Canada's official status as both a colony and a colonial force, the Dominion examines politics, culture and daily life with a view to understanding the exercise of power. It can be purchased at Bolen Books, Victoria, Camas Books & Infoshop, Victoria, Dark Horse Books, Victoria, and Munro's Bookstore Ltd, Victoria.Or suscribe and Receive an email notice when a new issue is online: Visit http://www.dominionpaper.ca/ to view the paper and to subscribe.

Turn Left: Official magazine of the NDP socialist caucus, is published for each federal and Ontario provincial convention. It is written and edited and by SC supporters but also includes articles by and interviews with progressive activists from outside the NDP as well. Download the paper at www.ndpsocialists.ca/Issues.html

ALTERNATIVE WEBSITES

www.alternet.org--A US website featuring alternative articles on US and world politics, an online magazine and information source.

www.avaaz.org/en/global--By confronting such threats as global warming together, Avaaz hopes to build a more just, tolerant and vibrant world.

www.counterpunch.org--An American website with a left-wing viewpoint.

http://dominionpaper.ca--A Canadian ezine covering national and international stories that mainstream sources may not cover.

www.globalproblematique.net--is an invitation to participate in a carefully conceived sustainability-oriented process. The story is organized as a linear flow. First it explains why and how we address the World Problematique in this fashion. Then, it branches out into four distinct, interactive threads. For more information go to the website.

www.lowerislandnews.com is a democratic socialist tabloid newspaper published in Victoria, BC, four or five times a year.

http://newsdaily.ca--CanadaNewsdaily.ca is a good (and bad) news service with a refreshingly non-corporate view of the news, from local to global stories, with features, opinion, analysis--all for free, including classified ads. Newsdaily covers Canadian and world news, plus a focused look at British Columbia, Victoria, and the Islands.

www.ndpsocialists.ca/Issues.html

mai-not@globalproblematique.net--Originally set up to discuss the implications of the Multilateral Agreement on Investments, this website and related email list now discuss world-wide developments of concern to left wing readers.

http://pacificfreepress.com

www.pejnews.com--Peace, Earth & Justice News, a free email and web service, provides news, opinion and analysis of peace, environment (earth) and justice issues. Stay informed with postings often days, weeks and months ahead of the mainstream media, and often never covered in the mass market. PEJ News is produced entirely by volunteers, and is a project of the non-profit Prometheus Institute based in Victoria, Canada.

www.policyalternatives.ca--The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' webpage offers research reports, books and opinion pieces on issues of social and economic justice.

www.rabble.ca--A cheeky site offering original stories, feature articles and columns from some of the progressive voices in Canada.

http://socialcoast.org

http://socialenvironmentalliance.wordpress.com

www.straightgoods.ca--A watchdog working for Canadian consumers and citizens.

www.thetyee.ca--BC news and views from a non-corporate perspective.

www.truthout.org--US website with Real news.

www.victoriacarshare.ca--If you don't want to own a car, but still need to drive one sometimes, then this website may be for you.

www.vivelecanada.ca--The mission of Vive le Canada is to protect and improve Canadian sovereignties and democracy through education, dialogue, and advocacy, especially using existing and emerging communications tools. We believe that the direction of this country should be set by its citizens, rather than by corporations or corporate trade bodies/trade agreements, the United States, or a small number of Canadian corporate elites.

www.wsws.org--The World Socialist Web Site is the Internet centre of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). It provides analysis of major world events, comments on political, cultural, historical and philosophical issues, and valuable documents and studies from the heritage of the socialist movement.