

Lower Island NEWS

An independent democratic socialist newspaper serving the Lower Vancouver Island area for 33 years

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Volume 34 Issue #3

November/December 2017

Victoria, BC

Was it a convention or a party or a victory speech?

By Sue Stroud

The first convention after the victorious formation of a minority government, with all the waiting and drama that involved, was bound to be a joyful one. It certainly didn't disappoint.

MLAs and staff were everywhere bestowing smiles and hugs; chatting with people who don't usually get an opportunity to bend their ear and posing for enough selfies to fill the internet with happy New Democrats determined to help this new caucus make BC better as advertised.

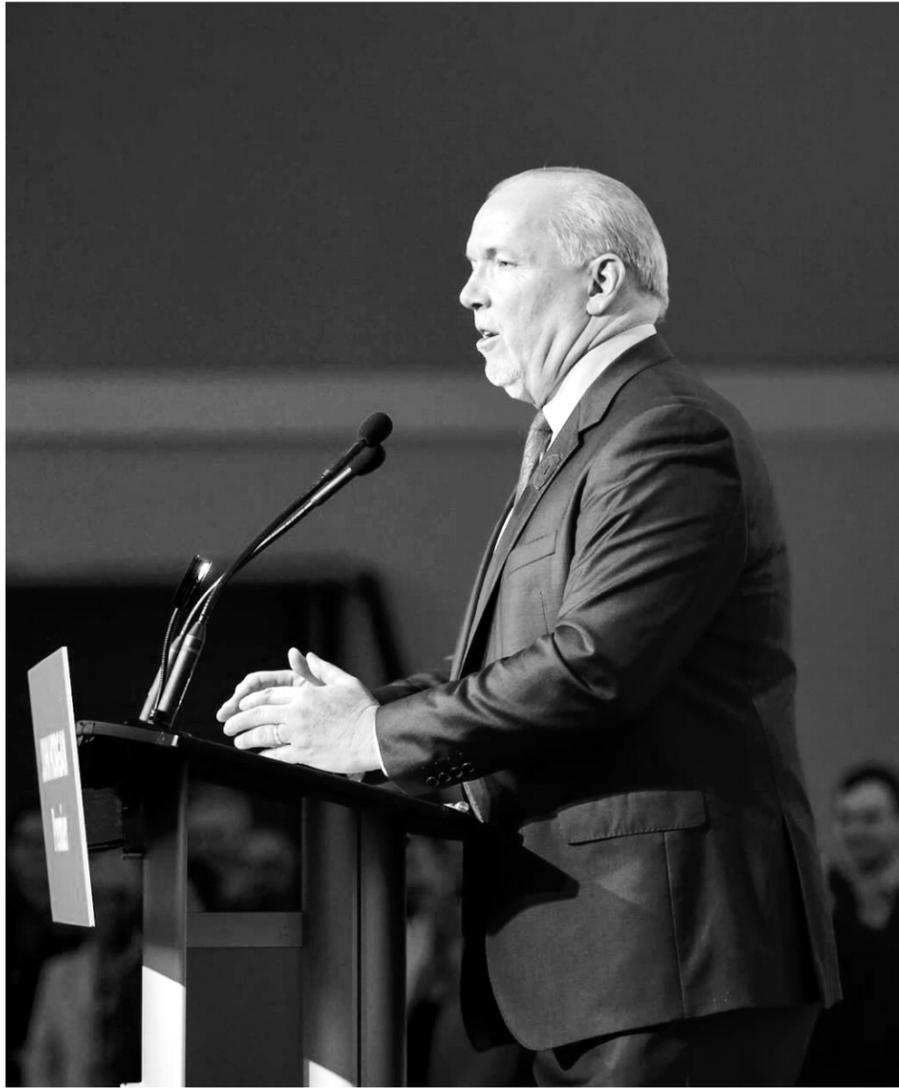
The convention was opened with wise words from Andy Thomas (Sunupin) Chief of Esquimalt First Nation. He reminded us that reconciliation is a process, not a ceremony or a gift or a statue.

"There is no real magic solution, we must reach out and learn to talk to each other," he said. "We can operate out here with you, but when we get back home we have to look after our souls too."

It was a poignant reminder that not all First Nations are treated as they should be by their neighbours. We have much work to do.

Rachna Singh, MLA for Surrey-GreenTimbers gave the first of the inspirational talks known as Victory Speeches. She came to Canada in 2001 and became a citizen. Her first job here was in a unionized environment where she was encouraged to get politically involved. "Everything I've done since was built on that," she said.

She worked on campaigns for Jagrup Brar, Sue Hammell, Jinny Sims, Harry Bains and was working for CUPE in Calgary when Rachel Notley was elected. When



BC Premier John Horgan addresses the large crowd of NDP members attending the BC party's annual convention held November 3-5 in Victoria.

Sue Hammell suggested she run she knew it would be difficult.

"The media kept referring to me as the wife of the person I was married to, they said I was weak and this would be a Liberal cake-walk. When all this was happening the Party stood behind me, I knew I was supported."

Singh got a lot of her volunteers from the schools, young people came out to help and spread the word that this campaign was fun and the numbers grew. On election day her campaign manager told her to go home and not answer the phone unless it was the manager calling.

She watched with great excitement as all the other Surrey candidates got elected and then suddenly there was a green tick by her own name on the screen. "I didn't know whether to cry or dance on the sofa! People broke barriers for me and I want to be remembered as someone who broke barriers for those who came next."

Lisa Beare, first woman ever elected in Maple Ridge-Pit Meadows, and now Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture told us of the difficulties of parenting young children while campaigning. Her daughter Brinley was just 16 months old when Beare was nominated.

"I was told that door-knocking was going to be the way I'd win," she said "but it cost on average \$40 an evening for babysitters so I could go door-knocking. Sometimes I took her with me. She was a great ice breaker and liked ringing the doorbells. Once the door opened she just toddled right in. It made for great conversations about child care, but I couldn't take her all the time and she would cry when she sawi

Turn to page 2, Was it a convention?



Newly elected leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada Jagmeet Singh (centre right) receives a standing ovation from the convention crowd.



At its first convention held since the BC NDP won a minority government in BC in May, an enthusiastic crowd listens to speeches at Victoria Convention Centre.

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Inside this issue

Was it a convention or.....2	Social and ecological justice.....12
Jagmet Singh wins leadership.....3	Women in science.....13
Editorial and op/ed.....4	Drain it: 2 fracking dams.....14
Letters.....5	BC has fiscal room.....15
An opportunity for the socialist left...6	Uniperspective drive.....16
Should schools have a dress code?...7	No excuse for racism.....17
MPs at work.....8 & 9	Book reviews.....18
Looking at work accomplished.....10	Coming event calendar.....19
Addressing the challenges.....11	Directory.....20

Was it a convention a or a party or a victory speech? continued from page 1

me get out the blow-dryer because she knew it meant I wouldn't be home to tuck her in."

Child care became the biggest single anxiety of the campaign. "Being an elected official makes me a better mother and being a mother makes me a better elected official," Beare reflected. "We need to find ways to help young families meet the life-work challenge."

Beare's campaign office set up a daycare and encouraged volunteers to bring their children with them. They also learned to change the times a candidate does things so they can put their child to bed.

Bowinn Ma, the electric MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale and Parliamentary Secretary for Translink, was first up on Saturday to speak on how to win an unwinnable riding. The rule is to start early, she said.

"Most voters don't follow politics, I remember what it was like not to know," said Ma. "I didn't have the Party relationships to build on so I engaged with people who were not connected to the Party, people from my workplace for example. We built a team that didn't know any better because people told me if I knew better I wouldn't put all this effort into North Vancouver-Lonsdale."

Ma explained, "We built a team that refused to know better and we did the work because what could be worse than wondering if we could have done more. You have to leave it all on the field. The pressure to give up can be enormous, so choose to believe, don't let somebody else's impossible stop you. We chose to believe, we believed in John Horgan, in ourselves and in our province."

Craig Keating took the stage after Ma and said "Never send a man to do a great woman's job." A great tribute to three amazing new MLAs.

This is just a taste of what the

convention was like. We heard inspiring speeches from Ravi Kahlon, John Horgan and federal leader Jagmeet Singh and we enjoyed their company as they stayed with the delegates talking and connecting and keeping the inspiration flowing.

Jagmeet Singh and almost all the MLAs came to the Saturday evening South Island Regional Council event at the Sticky Wicket Pub. The pub was packed with NDPers from every corner of the province. It was loud and full of laughter and SIRC is to be congratulated.

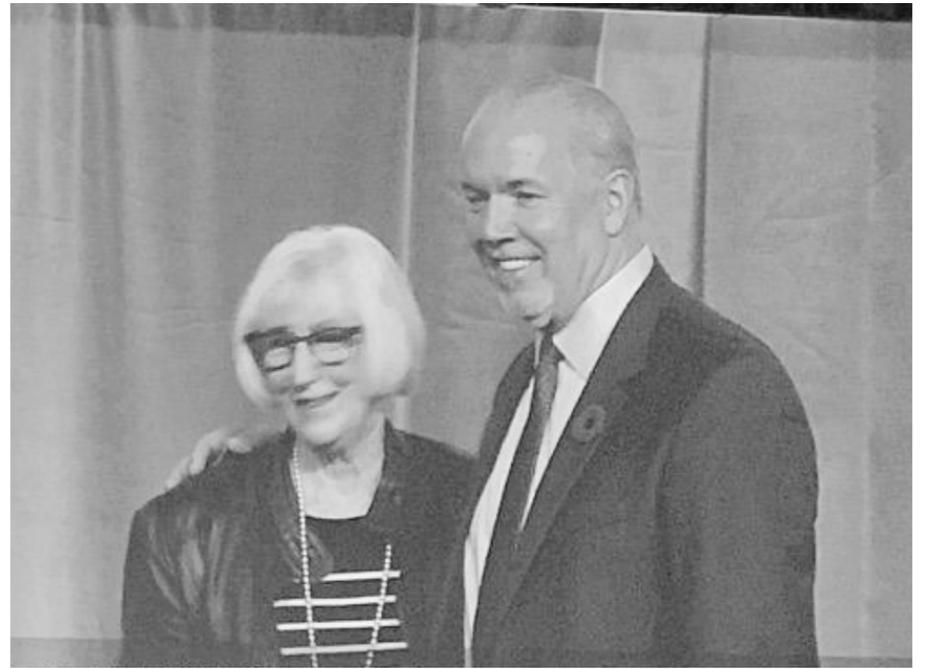
In addition there were caucuses for Women, Youth, Labour, Pride and every Region. The new South Island Regional Reps to Provincial Council are Sam Montgomery and Ravi Parmar who pledged to make sure South Island voices and concerns are heard.

There was also a solemn In Memoriam section to remember those we lost since the last convention and a very upbeat induction of Honorary Life Members. These included Arlene Feke, Hugh Watson, John Colbourne, Don and Bernice Gehring, Robin Geary, Colin Gabelmann, Gord and Petra Savard, Anne Edwards, Bill Goodacre, Elsie McMuphy, Paul McDonnell, Gian Sihota, John Hagen, Terry Plant, Alison Kirkley, Bill Wilson, Ed Cooper and Hardev Ball.

We also participated in workshops on winning rural campaigns, using digital media more effectively, getting to know and learning to thank our donors and electoral finance reform and what it means for our constituencies.

And there were resolutions. Many more resolutions than we could ever get to, some hotly debated, some referred, some passed, but all worth the effort spent to bring them forward.

Teale Phelps-Bondaroff fought hard for universal access to birth control which passed. Carole James and others debated



Premier Horgan congratulates long-time member Elsie McMurphy, from Saanich North and the Islands, on being presented with an Honorary Life Membership, along with 19 others

the merits of annual conventions versus biennial conventions with the in between year used for training workshops around the province (this option won the day).

A new Black, Indigenous and People of Colour Committee was formed with great organization at the mikes by those bringing it forward including Lorene Oikawa from Surrey-Whalley who reminded us all that we can never again allow the kind of prejudice that sent Canadians of Japanese descent to the internment camps and First Nations to residential schools.

Oikawa also reminded us to stand up for our Muslim neighbours who are being targeted by hate around the province.

There were also elections which saw Craig Keating and Amber Hockin re-elected as president and treasurer respectively. Six vice presidents were elected including Morgane Oger, the first ever transgender person elected to hold office in the Party.

All in all it was quite an event, inspiring, uplifting and it gave us a lot to build on for the future.



Premier Horgan greets Sue Stroud, a long time activist from Vancouver Island who found the convention inspiring and uplifting.



Andy Thomas (Sunupin), Chief of Esquimalt First Nation, opens the convention with wise words, reminding the audience that reconciliation is a process, not a ceremony or a gift or a statue.



Teale Phelps Bondaroff, president of the Saanich-Gulf Islands New Democrats, and new federal NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh pose for a photo op.



A group of convention delegates show their enthusiasm for the event.

Jagmeet Singh wins NDP leadership race

Thirty-eight-year-old MPP for Bramble-Gore-Malton wins on first ballot

Ontario MPP Jagmeet Singh is the new leader of the federal NDP.

The provincial politician—who holds no seat in the House of Commons—won the party's leadership race on the first ballot October 1 with a total of 35,266 votes out of 65,782 total votes cast, or just over 53 percent.

"I don't have the words to capture this journey. I don't, but let me just say it is a profound honour," said Singh in his victory speech.

"This race has renewed excitement in our party."

A 38-year-old turbaned Sikh who represents the provincial riding of Bramble-Gore-Malton, Singh had been predicted by pollsters to have the race in the bag and beat out party stalwarts and members of Parliament Charlie Angus, Guy Caron and Niki Ashton.

Angus came in second behind Singh with 12,705 votes, while Ashton got 11,374 and Caron got 6,174.

Singh was first elected to Queen's Park in 2011 and served as deputy leader of the Ontario NDP from 2015 until May, when he decided to take a run at the federal leadership.

The party voted in early 2016 to dump Tom Mulcair, who was elected leader after the death of Jack Layton. A former Toronto city councillor, Layton had led the party to Official Opposition status for the first time in history in the 2011 election, something that was lost under Mulcair.

The NDP now holds third-party status.

Singh has been billed as the party's best hope of reclaiming the support it briefly captured — and its strongest shot at taking on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in 2019.

"We are the party that is building a better Canada," he said. "It is us, and it is in us that you can see the future of our country. How great our country will be with a New Democratic government. Look at what we've been able to accomplish in a few months. Imagine what we can accomplish in two years."



New federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh leads a caucus meeting of NDP Members of Parliament in Ottawa following his election.

Singh also reiterated his commitment to the core platform issues of his campaign and pledged to continue working to address inequality, pay equity, housing affordability, climate change and electoral reform.

In his speech, he repeated a central pledge of his provincial political work, and said banning the practice of police carding — or racially profiled and arbitrary street checks — would be a priority if elected prime minister.

Singh reflected on growing up in "The Six", a term for Toronto popularized by local rapper Drake which draws on the city's

416-area code. He urged party members to stand together to fight inequality, prejudice and the unstable economic realities faced by Canadians who are under- or unemployed.

Shortly after the winner was declared, the Liberal Party released a statement that reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening the Canada Pension Plan, creating new affordable childcare spaces, improving home care for seniors and building more affordable housing.

"Liberals across Canada offer our congratulations to Jagmeet Singh on his elec-

tion as Leader of the New Democratic Party. The Liberal team looks forward to a debate on how we can continue to strengthen Canada's middle class," it said.

"The Liberal team will stay focused on building a stronger middle class and a better future for all Canadians, not just the wealthiest one per cent. We look forward to working together with the NDP on this shared goal."

The election of Singh makes Trudeau the oldest of the main federal party leaders at 45. Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, elected in May, is also 38.

Singh win a new dawn for NDP, a nightmare for Trudeau

Hip, new leader could erode Liberal urban base in Toronto and Vancouver, and Tories might pick up three-way splits.

By Bill Tieleman

A new day in federal politics has indeed dawned, with the New Democrats now led by a charismatic, young urban leader — Jagmeet Singh — just as Justin Trudeau's Liberals have fallen behind Andrew Scheer's Conservatives in the polls.

It's a one-two punch for the pugilistic prime minister. A right hook from an Angus Reid Institute poll last week put his party actually trailing the Conservatives for the first time since his 2015 election, with the Liberals dropping to 33 percent to the Tories' rising 36 percent.

Then a left hook from Singh, who is intent on knocking the Liberals out of much of the suburban Toronto and Vancouver ridings they depend on for their parliamentary majority.

And with both Singh and Scheer just 38 years old, Trudeau becomes the "old man" of the three major party leaders at 45!

The energetic and hip Singh, who triumphed over second place finisher and NDP MP Charlie Angus — who I supported — and MPs Nikki Ashton and Guy Caron, represents a huge threat to the Liberals in two ways.

First, Singh has both a formidable following and high recognition in the politically treasured and seat-rich region of central Toronto, Singh's home in nearby Brampton, Mississauga and Oakville. That area delivered every one of its 24 seats to the Liberals in 2015, while incumbent New Democrats and Conservatives were defeated.

The Liberals also won all 14 seats in suburban Toronto's Don Valley, Etobicoke and Scarborough, again defeating NDP and Tory MPs.

Singh will work hard to regain the NDP's seven lost Toronto-area ridings and

grab more from the Liberals.

One example: in 2015 NDP MP Peggy Nash was in a classic Toronto swing riding that has alternated with the Liberals. Parkdale-High Park elected Nash in 2006 but she was defeated in 2008 by Liberal Gerard Kennedy, then re-elected in 2011 and defeated in 2015 by a margin of just under 1,100 votes.

Those are the kind of ridings that Singh must win next time to at least knock the Liberals into a minority position and likely dependent on the NDP to retain government, with concessions to the social democrats.

But Singh's urban appeal is doubly damaging to Trudeau because any major leakage of Liberal votes to the NDP could allow the Conservatives to regain lost seats, too, in three-way splits.

Singh will also help the NDP be more competitive in Greater Vancouver area ridings where it lost two seats to the Liberals in 2015 and came close in others, while the Conservatives lost seven.

Again, the Conservatives are grinning at the possibility of more three-way splits that would let them win back ridings lost in Stephen Harper's last campaign.

In BC ridings like Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge, the Liberals' Dan Ruimy took away a Conservative incumbent seat with a new candidate by just 1,270 votes, with the NDP close behind with just 2,223 votes fewer than the Liberals.

If Singh catches fire with voters in 2019, those are the kind of small margins that can evaporate completely. Or, the Tories could watch gleefully as the NDP and Liberals split the so-called and mythical "progressive" vote while the right wins the riding.

And for the federal Green Party and its single-seat leader Elizabeth May, Singh is

also bad news. He will undoubtedly draw from the Greens' base of young, environmental conscious, socially progressive voters, making it hard for the Greens to expand their tiny Vancouver Island beachhead once again.

Of course, Singh's leadership campaign pledge to implement proportional representation without any voter referendum on such electoral system change until two elections later will also undercut the similarly minded Greens — notwithstanding that promise's undemocratic nature and unlikely implementation.

Regardless of who might win — depending on the extremely variable factor of how an election almost two years away plays out — what is clear is that both Singh and Scheer have already changed the fundamental dynamics, something both parties sought after disappointing results in

the last election from Harper and ex-NDP leader Tom Mulcair.

And with that, suddenly the Liberals 30 seat majority over the opposition in 2015 seems stunningly vulnerable.

Singh's new dawn looks like a nightmare for Justin Trudeau and a possible dream for both the NDP and Conservatives.

This article is reprinted with permission from the author, Bill Tieleman, and first appeared in *The Tyee* and *24 Hours Vancouver*

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SEASON'S GREETINGS
AND
BEST WISHES FOR 2018
FROM
THE ESQUIMALT-SAANICH-SOOKE NDP

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR
local food bank



It's our opinion

NDP activists make the Party

After 16 gloomy and frustrating years, the NDP is back in government. At this fall's party convention, delegates, MLAs, and all who participated had much to celebrate. After a challenging summer of negotiations with Green Party leader Andrew Weaver and Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon, our new premier John Horgan's enthusiasm was undiminished. Still, it's likely that those who cheered the loudest were the grassroots members who have given freely of their time, energy, and talent to keep the party functioning through the better part of two decades in opposition.

Grassroots members like Mike Hayes, who has stepped up whenever called upon to run a fundraising auction; Forrest Nelson, whose financial wizardry has helped keep several constituencies in compliance with BC's electoral laws; Hanny Pannekoek, who has helped educate members about the history of the NDP and worked hard for the cause of affordable housing; Sharon Wilkinson, who has seen the name of her constituency (currently Langford–Juan de Fuca) change three times during her tenure as constituency president; Bill Hawkins, who has not only kept the Victoria-Swan Lake's books in order for a decade but has taken on additional duties whenever riding president Trish Richards has called on him; Sue Stroud, who has been a dedicated worker for Saanich North and the Islands for decades...to name but a few. [See more on page 6.]

Constituency work is demanding. Executive members meet monthly; organize general meetings at least once a year; bring members together for fundraising events; keep them informed and connected through phone calls, mailings, and newsletters; and hold nomination meetings to prepare for election campaigns. If this outreach work isn't done, membership declines and candidates have no one to rely on when the next election comes around--no one to set up campaign offices, make phone calls, drop leaflets on doorsteps, canvass, do fundraising, put up signs, host coffee klatches, take food to the campaign office, and so on and so forth. Each task is an essential contribution. Without the volunteer work of activists there is no party, no campaign, and no hope for social democracy.

What is it that drives grassroots activists to give so generously of themselves? For us NDPers, it's our shared values—our belief in and commitment to the principles of social justice and equality of opportunity for all citizens. These are high ideals that are a long way from being fully realized, but history teaches that the dedication shown by proactive citizens can move the agenda forward. We see already that our new government wasted no time in redressing the neglect of BC's most needy citizens--within a few weeks of taking power, it has restored bus passes to those receiving disability pensions, raised cheques to those on income assistance by \$100 a month, and waived post-secondary tuition for former foster-care children and for adults wanting to complete their secondary education.

For activists who have long struggled to bring electoral reform and campaign-finance reform to BC, further celebration is in order. Legislation has already passed to ban political donations from corporations and unions and to put a \$1,200 ceiling on individual donations. And a referendum on proportional representation has been slated for November 2018. When the politicians we have worked for keep their election promises, grassroots workers become even more committed. Relationships between elected politicians and party activists are fundamental to the democratic process; and, unlike the Liberals, NDPers view public office as a profound and sacred trust.

The NDP has enjoyed very few years of governance during this province's 146-year history. Descended from the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, which was formed in 1933, the party did not form government in BC until 1972 under leader Dave Barrett. Despite its many progressive changes to the labour and social landscape of the province, Barrett's NDP lost the election of 1975 to the Social Credit party, which governed until 1991. Then, under the leadership of Mike Harcourt, the New Democrats finally regained power. This time, under Harcourt and his successors Glen Clark and Ujjal Dosanjh, they held it for a decade.

During the early 1990s, however, the so-called War in the Woods drove a wedge between the NDP and many of its supporters, as the demands of unionized forest workers collided with those of a passionate environmentalist movement, allowing the Green Party to build up its base at the New Democrats' expense. Today's NDP legislators still struggle to motivate industrialists and corporate shareholders to address the reality of climate change and move towards environmentally sustainable sources of energy. Stopping Kinder Morgan's Trans-Mountain pipeline from being built will require solid support from citizens across the province, particularly from NDP and Green activists who share an interest in this cause.

In May 2001, the NDP lost every seat but two—those held by Vancouver-Hastings' Joy MacPhail and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant's Jenny Kwan. Up against 77 Liberal MLAs, these two fearless women conducted Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition with vigour and aplomb. Since that low point, Victoria-Beacon Hill's Carole James spearheaded the party's rebuilding through the elections of 2005 and 2009, and Vancouver-Kingsway's Adrian Dix brought it close to a win in the 2013 election. Throughout the opposition years, constituency executives and party activists throughout the province kept the torch of social democracy alight. Unpaid and largely unrecognized, they just carried on carrying on, doing the mundane, day-to-day work that makes the difference between a party that goes under and one that lives to fight another day.

Many challenges lie ahead for the NDP government, but one our MLAs must never forget is the challenge of keeping faith with their constituency workers, whose unstinting efforts have finally paid off. Not only did those efforts give the MLAs their electoral victories, after all. They gave us all another chance to make our dreams come true--to improve the lives of the disenfranchised and to preserve the health of our fragile planet for the benefit of future generations.

--Starla Anderson, a proud NDP activist

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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As others see it

Making voting fairer

By Dale Perkins

At a visceral level I want to support the widely-held view that our antiquated FPTP (First Past The Post) voting system is obsolete and has to be replaced. What it's replaced with is a "million dollar" question. Many protagonists argue that Proportional Representation (PR) or variations on the theme will make voting more fair and representative of the voting electorate.

There is an increasing sense of urgency being advanced by the general public who want a change. It hasn't been helped by the actions of our current Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, who made a clear and definite promise that "this would be the last election using the FPTP voting system".

However soon after winning a majority for the Liberal Party he quickly scampered off for another selfie with an adoring fan, leaving in his wake only mumblings about further consultation and discussion before really seriously considering changing the FPTP voting system.

Here in BC, the newly elected NDP Government with the blessing and support of the three Green representatives has decided to authorize a plebiscite at the same date as we select our next cadre of municipal politicians. What the wording of the plebiscite is remains a closely guarded secret, but the "dye" is cast, and we expect to vote on a plebiscite the fall of 2018.

Many of us ponder aloud -- will BC electors really do it this time, and will this be the final death-knell of FPTP voting?

Several important issues emerge now: Do we still want some form of representative democracy where the FPTP winners hold a majority in the legislature? What I hear articulated by the central players advancing PR is that now every vote will count and along with FPTP winners, the minority candidates may enjoy the support of those voting for their Party.

However, who actually gets to sit in the Legislature still remains the decision of the Parties to which they belong. And a set number of extra seats will be set aside for candidates from Parties receiving significant percentage of the vote. So each Parliament will be made up of both FPTP winners, and representatives chosen by their Party. Obviously minorities and coalitions will be the "order of the day", and Legislatures are expected to see representatives who better represent the popular vote of the electorate. Electors will realize that while their vote might not have gone towards the FPTP candidate, it still would be added to the popular vote for a Party, and representatives would be selected by the Party to fill the quota of seats allocated

for Party representatives.

There are several variations on this scenario but at its core sits the principle that every vote counts in selecting a representative. However there are other serious questions that need attention: Immediately we wonder what happens when a person's opinion changes, including elected representatives. This happens when new information and circumstances force an elected candidate to change her/his mind. Plebiscites and elections are expensive. Is the only recourse for electors to wait until the next plebiscite or election and without majorities individual representatives need not pay attention to whips or Party leaders and policies.

Hiding 'behind the skirts' of minorities and coalitions provide lots of protection for individual representatives. In fact one wonders what this might do for Party politics. As pointed out by municipal political enthusiasts there would be little need for Parties now. With the array of social media tools available to individual candidates there no longer is a role for Party.

In the past a central role for Parties was to inform and gather members and adherents and animate them to work on elections and raise money to pay for these contests. That would no longer be necessary with computer technology orchestrating individual candidate's ambitions and intentions.

However, overriding all of these concerns is the issue of the role of the corporate financial elites and their behaviour and relative influence in this new environment. With the likelihood of fewer majorities and Parties orchestrating elections, now individual candidates become the objective of control by the corporate financial elites. Realizing that the 'Piper' now can call the tune for individuals needing support at election time, it becomes a relatively easy proposition to exercise control over individual candidates wanting to become representatives. The elite simply buys the candidates and ignores the Party in large part.

What are we to do now? The options are complex and very challenging to comprehend.

Do we simply admit that the FPTP voting system only needs minor adjustments, or are we requiring a major overhaul? There are a legion of analysts who are quite willing and able to fine-tune the issues involved, and we can expect to hear from them over the next stage of the process.

Perhaps we simply adopt the adage of the late Winston Churchill when commenting on democracy - "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others" - and apply it to the system of voting we use in this country.

Season's Greetings to all our readers

Bullying, slander, discrimination not okay *Beyond symbolic to substantial actions*

Dear Lower Island News Editorial Board,
I am writing to object to your publication [in the July issue of *Lower Island News*] of Barry Weisleder's 10 questions to challenge NDP leadership candidates, in particular point 4.

It's Weisleder's prerogative to object to the policies or practices of any government Canada, Israel, Cuba, etc...but he goes too far in parroting the inflammatory and misleading propaganda that Israel is an apartheid state and impugning Zionism which is the movement for recognition of the rights of the Jewish people to a state in their historic homeland.

What is the difference between anti-Semitism and hatred of the state of Israel? In the view of an increasing number of notable individuals, organizations and nations, not much. As a NDP member and supporter, a lifelong activist for social justice and the environment and an active volunteer in our community I feel increasingly alienated from the very movement where I should most feel at home.

The narrative that Israel is a colonial outpost is nonsense, rather we should be celebrating the story of a long ago displaced indigenous people who have returned to their homeland and achieved great success despite the endless animosity of its neighbours.

As progressive people you should realize how unfair and reckless it is for any of us to be indifferent to or participate in this oldest of prejudices inflamed over the centuries by Christian and Muslim replacement theology.

How can such a small, embattled nation be responsible for communism and capitalism, militarism and anarchy, control the banks and the world's media and governments? Do Jews really harvest organs, use child soldiers, pollute Palestinian water and spread STD's etc... or are these modern versions of ancient blood libels? And yet these hateful ideas are readily

available and rarely denounced.

Today I read that Grade 6 Social Studies text books in Ontario falsely accuse Israel of using "child soldiers". Recently UNESCO defied history and designated the Temple Mount and Old City of Jerusalem solely a Palestinian site without any recognition of its Jewish origins and today UNESCO again affronted history by declaring the Old City of Hebron and the Tomb of the Jewish Patriarchs solely Palestinian. Big deal, the Jews who have continuously lived there for thousands of years are inconvenient to the false anti-colonial narrative.

Every day the news reports hateful acts against innocent Jews such Doctor Sarah Halimi hurled by a Muslim neighbour to her death from the window of her third-floor Paris apartment. I ask you to consider why so many on the left are so tolerant of, if not complicit in, anti-Israel/anti-Jewish behaviour and why indifferent to the consequences such as Dr. Halimi's murder or incidents closer to home?

The Jewish community on Vancouver Island and in BC pre-dates provincehood and confederation. We have always been generous and able contributors in every field including human rights, social justice and the environment as well as community building. Why should we feel threatened by the indecent and at times reckless rhetoric and action of people like Barry Weislander and the others who think bullying, slander and discrimination are OK, the hallmarks of the BDS movement?

Does it contribute to peace, here or the middle east? Any reasonable person will say no so why does LIN participate rather than promoting peace and reconciliation? The Jewish people remain ready; isn't it time for Palestinian advocates to put their energy into building a Palestinian state rather than trying to destroy the Jewish one?

Thank you .

Michael Bloomfield

Many of the gatherings I have attended lately have to do with truth and reconciliation between us non aboriginals and our aboriginal neighbours. The level of blame and accusation varies a great deal, but the acrimony is palatable and sometimes vitriolic. Often we liberals are asked to make a significant effort to right wrongs and make repairs to historical injustices. That is, focus on rebalancing the legacy of colonialism which is now revealed to be the source of so much injustice during this 150th year of celebrating Canada's birth as a nation state.

It is a constant admonition since now is a pivotal moment when decisive action is expected. All levels of government are examining their role in these historical travesties. However, I don't see many examples as to what would constitute "significant effort" on our part.

Would it be no longer having boiled water advisories posted on Indian Reserves, or building more substantial houses for northern aboriginal families to reside in and enjoy? Not to ignore the plethora of missing indigenous women sitting on legal dockets scattered across the country...those hundreds of missing aboriginal women who have disappeared or been found dead. We know deep down that the perpetrators of these crimes must be found, tried and incarcerated if they're guilty.

And on a less emotional front we know that lots of jobs must become available and provide living wages to indigenous young people, and schools built with native instructors and teachers hired, and ... and...(the list goes on and on).

Quickly it becomes obvious that nothing can be done to right the historical

wrongs perpetrated by our ancestral leaders and representatives of the dominant class in charge -- that's "water under the bridge" and apart from elevating the general level of guilt they serve no useful purpose.

For many of us it will come down to accepting the costs for reparations, which will be financed out of the common tax base. One wonders -- will it simply come down to money, and that will right the wrong as nothing else can?

However, none of this will be easy nor automatic. Many impediments stand in the way to bring about these correctives and adjustments. All of them demand bold actions requiring high-minded and ethic values from all of us. Many habits and patterns are so entrenched over the centuries that changing them will require a monumental effort.

What might be disconcerting to many of us is the awareness that some of the indigenous leaders receiving these reparations will have just as many selfish tendencies as the descendants of the original perpetrators. Is it too late? that is to say -- the genie has "left the bottle" and there's no way we can put her back in.

Not wanting us to give up and admit defeat, I prefer allowing for the positives to take up the challenge, knowing that mistakes will be made and setbacks can be expected. Nevertheless, more than symbolic displays are needed now; substantial actions will take courage and be difficult, but anything less would be an abdication of responsibility.

We need resilience and hope. Can we locate both?

Dale Perkins
Victoria

Correction: UVic Student Union barred LIN from being displayed in SUB

Dear Editor:

The article by Jonathan Lee in your July issue about the removal of the *Lower Island News* from the Student Union Building at the University of Victoria incorrectly attributes that to a change in university policy.

The University of Victoria Students' Society, an independent organization for undergraduate students, is responsible for the management of the Student Union Building at UVic. If the *Lower Island News* was told that it was no longer welcome to distribute papers within the SUB, that would have been a decision of the students'

society.

The photo accompanying the article is of the university's campus publication boxes which are fully assigned to student organization and university publications. The policy around these has not changed.

While the article urges your readers to contact UVic President Jamie Cassels to protest, neither he nor the university have had any involvement in this matter.

Bruce Kilpatrick
Communications + Marketing
University of Victoria

Friends of the Lower Island News

Well, we finally have an NDP government in charge in BC. And isn't it great to be keeping tabs for a change on a government that is trying to do the right things for the people of the province? We won't always agree with the moves they make, but fully expect that we will agree with and applaud a good many of them. We hope to be able to keep you posted on how the new government is doing.

One thing that doesn't change, however, is the need to ask you, our readers for help financially. Mailing costs as you know have skyrocketed and like many publications we are constantly scraping the the bottom of our financial barrel.

That being said, all of us volunteers who work on the *Lower Island News* are truly grateful for the generosity of our Friends of the LIN who continue to send us cheques to help keep the paper going. Thank you from all of us.at LIN

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

Remembering Joan Gillatt

April 16, 1924 - August 10, 2017

Joan (Gower) Gillatt was born in a nursing home on the corner of Hillside and Blanshard in Victoria (now the site of a Boston Pizza), on April 16, 1924. She came from English heritage on her father's side and Icelandic heritage on her mother's side. She was the fourth and youngest child in her family with two older brothers and a sister.

Joan grew up in Victoria. After high school, she received a \$100 scholarship which paid for a year's tuition at Victoria College. After the first year, she worked at the Dominion Bank to save up money for her second year, but during that working year he father suddenly died at age 64.

There was no Old Age Pension at that time so Joan kept working to support her mother. This was wartime in 1942-43 and Joan got a job with the Assay Office for the provincial Department of Mines testing basse metals that were usedf in the war effort.

The job ended when the war did with men returning and taking up jobs. Joan got transferred to the filing office where she worked for the next 12 years. During this time she was very active in seeking justice in the workplace and bargaining rights for workers.

In 1958 Joan quit her job and returned to university, completing her teacher training and then working as a teacher at Oak Bay Junior High for one year.

In 1960 Joan married Jock Gillatt and moved to Duncan. Jock was recently wid-

owed and single parent to three-year-old Susan, so Joan became a mother at the time she married. She and Jock had two more daughters, Maggie and Carol.

Joan was a member of Duncan United Church for over 50 years, and served in many roles in the congregation. One of her greatest joys was teaching Sunday School which she did until well in to her 70s.

She believed the principle of caring for each other should be the basis for a church and for a political party. Joan joined the NDP in the early 1960s and worked in many campaigns. She served on the local executive, Provincial Council, Provincial Executive, and Federal Council.

After working as the director for the CVRD Activity Centre for seven years, Joan answered MLA Barbara Wallace's request for her to be her constituency assistant. Joan was also a Cowichan School Board trustee, serving four years as the Board Chair.

Joan spent nine years on Duncan City Council and was awarded the highest honour the City of Duncan can bestow, that of "Freedom of the City".

She also logged years of volunteer work with Cowichan Lodge, Cowichan District Hospital Board, Cowichan United Way, the Volunteer Society Board, Community Futures and was the initiator for the Peace pole that will soon be placed in Duncan.

Joan's motto was always, "I want to make things a little better."

She died August 10.

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* is uncertain at this time. We will send out the usual notifications when we start work on another issue.

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

A big opportunity for the Socialist Left

By Barry Weisleder

Jagmeet Singh's election as federal New Democratic Party leader is, at least in part, the revenge of the NDP top brass and the liberal media establishment. They never forgave the party and labour union ranks for forcing the leadership review that ultimately deposed Tom Mulcair following his disastrous 2015 election campaign. Enormous resources were marshaled to portray Brampton, Ontario MPP Singh as "an outsider" and a "fresh face" with a cool, hipster image who can challenge Justin Trudeau for "middle class" allegiances.

But what's in it, concretely, for the working class? What does it mean for the vast majority of Canadians who are the victims of capitalist austerity, growing inequality, and environmental chaos?

While barely over half of the eligible party members voted, Singh's first ballot victory inclines many to think that he embodies meaningful racial and generational change. So, it will be crucial to hold him accountable, to insist that he not retreat even from his sparse "progressive" policies, and furthermore, to demand a bold socialist alternative to Trudeau's Harper-lite regimen.

This should include public ownership of the energy sector, and attention to the much-ignored issues of foreign policy: BDS and justice for Palestine, getting Canada out of NATO, and reducing the military budget, which Trudeau just increased by a whopping 70 percent.

Illusions in Singh may soon be dashed. This is a time of social upheaval, from indigenous Caledonia, to Catalonia in the Spanish state. Jeremy Corbyn and Bernie Sanders showed that the open road is to the left, not the centre. Thus, now is the time to fight for a **Workers' Agenda, for socialism**, inside the only mass, labour-based political party in North America.

The NDP Socialist Caucus recognizes the huge opportunity and the heavy responsibility to unite all anti-capitalists and social justice fighters inside and outside the NDP. We invite Niki Ashton MP, her supporters, and all leftist backers of the other candidates, to come together now. With conservative forces dominating at the summit of the NDP and labour unions, the space is open for an insurgent, militant left wing in the major working class institutions, organizing from the bottom-up.

The Socialist Caucus national conference, to be held on Saturday, December 2 at the University of Toronto's Woodsworth College Residence, may be a turning point.

Together, we can unite the left and build on the momentum that caused the NDP leadership candidates to tack to the left. The working class needs socialist solutions to the crisis of capitalism and to counteract the rise of the alt-right.

We can, and we will, advance... Socialist policies. More democratic debate. Socialist candidates for federal NDP executive. Direct action against capitalist austerity.

Get ready for the NDP Federal Convention, February 16-18, 2018 in Ottawa. Stoke your ideas and your energy.

Register now for the NDP Socialist Caucus conference in Toronto on Saturday, December 2. Visit www.ndpsocialists.ca; email info@ndpsocialists.ca; or phone 647-986-1917.

Barry Weisleder is chair of the socialist caucus of the federal NDP.

An environmental mess:

BC government needs to bring gas industry and regulator under tighter control

By Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and Ben Parfitt

Few environmental messes inherited by the new BC government rival the unregulated free-for-all that has unfolded in the province's northeast where companies that frack for natural gas have built nearly 60 unlicensed dams.

Not only do some of those dams show distressing signs of failing, but the companies that built them -- and the government agencies that regulate them -- consistently failed to honestly consult with First Nations about their intentions.

First Nations were never told that proposed "water storage" facilities on their traditional lands were actually large dams. Nor were they told that the companies shouldn't build them without first obtaining water licences and submitting engineering reports to provincial dam safety officials -- neither of which happened.

Now, in an unprecedented application before BC's Environmental Assessment Office (EAO), Progress Energy -- a subsidiary of the giant Malaysian state-owned corporation Petronas -- is asking the Province to "exempt" from retroactive review two massive dams that it built without first obtaining proper authorizations.

One of the two dams rivals a seven-storey apartment building in height. That makes it (and its somewhat smaller cousin) a "major project" under BC's *Environmental Assessment Act*. The Act's regulations stipulate clearly that such projects are to be assessed by the EAO *before* they are built. Not after.

So here we are. Government agencies allow a company to build two major dams without proper authorizations. First Nations are treated dismissively. And the EAO is asked to give a free pass to the company that broke the rules in breathtaking fashion.

If the EAO grants Progress's request, it sends a terrible signal that BC really is the Wild West. Rules and regulations are simply there to be ignored.

The current government should immediately reject this premise especially given the importance that Premier John Horgan has placed on reforming BC's environmental assessment process.

In his mandate letter to George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, the Premier instructed the minister to "revitalize the Environmental Assessment process" and to "review the professional reliance model to ensure the legal rights of First Nations are respected, and the public's expectations of a strong, transparent process is met."

That current model is one in which pro-

professionals either directly employed by or working under contract to major corporations are increasingly in the driver's seat, while public servants, including statutory decision-makers who should be providing independent oversight to projects, are pushed to the margins.

Coincidentally, the Premier signed that letter just two days before Progress filed its controversial exemption applications.

Members of the public, however, only learned of the company's application a month later and only then after the EAO, in a classic "issues management" move, quietly posted the company's request online in the lead-up to the busy Labour Day weekend.

Progress's application offers the provincial government a golden opportunity to signal that the process of revitalizing our environmental assessment process begins today.

The government can and should use the opportunity to let the EAO know that the public expects and deserves a review of the Progress dams. That review should cast a wide net that looks both at the environmental and public safety risks posed by the two dams and the much more troubling question of how dozens of other such dams were built without permits and fulsome First Nation consultations.

An expanded review should also look at what all those dams are there for, because they all have something in common: to corral vast quantities of fresh water used in natural gas industry fracking operations. Notable cases of such operations have been linked to earthquakes due to the tremendous volumes and pressures at which water is pumped underground to "liberate" natural gas.

The Progress application offers another golden opportunity for the Environment Minister to fulfill something else asked of him and all his Cabinet colleagues, namely, to commit to a "true, lasting reconciliation with First Nations" and to fully adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Shining a much-needed light on an unregulated dam-building spree that took place entirely on the previous government's watch would be a significant step towards fulfilling that commitment to First Nations and would signal that the government is serious about reforming BC's environmental assessment process.



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Chartered Accountant

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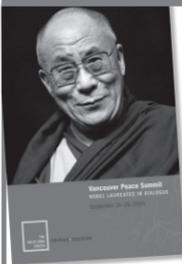
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Victoria Labour Council

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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

Longtime NDP stewards recognized

The following are longtime stewards of provincial New Democratic executives on southern Vancouver Island -- they have not been paid for any of their constituency work but have themselves contributed much to the party both financially and in time and energy for decades.

Thousands of volunteers have given much of themselves towards building and rebuilding the party and each individual's contribution has made a difference; we regret that not everyone can be named. But these members whose names were put forward by present constituency executive members are alworthy of special recognition.

Elsie McMurphy ~ Irene Wright ~ Linda Black ~ Sue Stroud ~ Len Howland ~ Ruth Howland ~ Allan Collier ~ David Olsen ~ Chris Brown ~ Peggy Mika ~ John Mika ~ Jack Greenwell ~ Des McCambridge ~ Trish Richards ~ Liz James ~ Bill Hawkins ~ Jayne Ducker ~ Ken Lapham ~ Ray Rice ~ Chris Tomaschuk ~ Freya Keddie ~ Forrest Nelson ~ Carol Hamill ~ Cris Starkey ~ Jock Bates ~ Marilyn Callahan ~ Mavis de Giralomo ~ Ellen Godfrey ~ Hanny Pannekoek ~ Bill Graham ~ Mike Hayes ~ Sheridan Cooper ~ Marianne Alto ~ Maura Parte ~ Brenda McBain ~ Jessica Van der Veen ~ Charley Beresford ~ Jim Jaarsma ~ Chris McLaren ~ Kenn McLaren ~ John Shields ~ Anne Russo ~ Keith Todd ~ Sharon Wilkinson ~ Shannon Russell ~ Bob Phillips ~ Heather Phillips ~ Grant McLachlan ~ Kathy Palmer ~ Ravi Parvar ~ Sharon Hazelwood ~ Jennifer Burgis ~ Carol Judd ~ Carol Pickup ~ Dale Young



Since August 24, members of the Kwakwaka'wakw Nations have occupied three fish farms in their territory, to protect their salmon and primary food source. On November 2, Kwakwaka'wakw chiefs and elders held a rally on the lawn and steps of the BC Legislature. This event is the result of a grassroots mobilization of people in support of indigenous resurgence, the survival of wild salmon, and the long work towards decolonization. For more information on the fish farm occupations, and the ongoing crisis in salmon returns, see <https://www.facebook.com/fishfarmsgetout/>

Photo by Tony Sprackett

Should Victoria schools have a dress code?

By Starla Anderson

A few years back I was working with student teachers in a secondary school in the Greater Victoria School District; this was at a time when the fashion industry was pushing both male and female teens to wear hipster jeans and female teens to wear spaghetti-strap tank tops. These fashions hadn't been in my classrooms only a few years earlier, not even in Vancouver's alternative schools.

I asked the student teacher to speak individually with a male student whose hipster jeans had crept down and revealed his buttocks, but she wasn't comfortable to do that. Since the boy was sitting right in front of me, I quietly asked him to pull his pants up and without any fuss, he did. I wondered if this boy really wanted to be wearing this cut of jeans or if he felt peer pressure to dress "cool". I also wondered at the time whether the school had a dress code, but I had many other questions on my mind at the time so I never got that one answered.

Recently, I learned that SD61 trustees have been grappling with the issue of dress codes since June 2016. At that meeting, trustee Jordan Watters presented this motion to the Board's Operations Policy and Planning Standing Committee: "That the Board of Education of School District 61 (Greater Victoria) task the Superintendent with developing regulations and/or administrative guidelines for the creation, review and enforcement of school dress codes in order to ensure that any dress codes in our district reflect the Board's commitment to gender equity in both intention and practice, and that they are in alignment with Policy 4303 [on] Discrimination."

Since that time, a standing committee of the board has met with parents, staff, trustees, and other members of the public on a set of principles to guide the development of regulations and/or administrative guidelines.

On September 12 of this year, trustee Watters spoke on the CBC program *BC Almanac*—she presented her personal view

that the existing dress codes should be eliminated. This statement motivated me to attend a committee meeting to learn more about her position.

In a subsequent letter, Trustee Watters clarified for me her reasons for wanting to eliminate dress codes. In the letter, she argued passionately that "dress codes have contributed to many of our students feeling disrespected, shamed, misunderstood, and disconnected without solving any of the 'problems' they set out to address. The ways in which young women and gender non-conforming students have had their bodies policed has had lasting negative impacts for a not insignificant number of students. I believe the students in our 22 schools that have dress codes would be better served without the focus on width of straps, length of shorts, and specific styles of dress. By removing the focus on dress, we can start looking at the actual issues at play. If a child is wearing a hoodie or hat because they want to hide, let's supportively address why they are feeling disconnected from the school community, rather than pushing them further away. If a young woman is pushing boundaries sexually, let's build a supportive connection with her so we can learn if she is struggling or in an unsafe situation. We can do that without humiliating her in front of her class—forcing her to go home, or forcing her to wear some 'shirt of shame' to cover up. And let's accept that young women have bodies, and that there is nothing wrong with the female form."

Trustee Watters makes strong points about how important it is to value each student equally, whether male, female, or gender non-conforming, and I agree with her on these points. However, having spent most of my working life in a classroom with high school students, I know how valuable it is in developing a positive learning environment to be clear with students about behavioural expectations, including providing parameters that can guide students in their clothing choices.

Children need help with understanding that their behaviour, including the clothing they wear, has an effect on others. Learn-

ing to have empathy for others is critical for all children to feel that they belong in their school community; some children learn empathy and self-awareness at home but many others need help from their teachers with these challenges. Further, academic learning, the primary purpose of public education, requires focus and the fewer distractions there are in a classroom, the more likely it is that teachers will be able to succeed with their students. I believe that appropriate, non-discriminatory dress codes can support students in both their social and academic learning.

I've spoken with many friends about this issue during the past month or so. Carol Judd, a friend who has three children and several grandchildren who have all been in the Greater Victoria School District, has given a lot of thought to the matter.

Judd asks, "Why should there not be rules about wearing clothing? We are talking only about six hours a day during the school week for 10 months of the year; children can otherwise wear whatever they and their family choose. While at school, male and female students and teachers

should be required to wear clothes that are respectful of themselves and others. They should wear clothes that are appropriate to wear in public; that is, clothes that would not give offence to others by exposing body parts that are culturally deemed to be private, and that includes cleavage, breasts, penises, butt cracks and butt cheeks."

It's likely that most parents, grandparents, teachers, and other caregivers agree with Judd. At the committee meeting I attended, Audrey Smith, the president of the Victoria Confederation of Parents Advisory Councils (VCPAC), stressed that parents are looking for support from the school district and that there needs to be cooperation between home and school on the issue of dress codes.

There are many consultations yet to come. Readers who want to weigh in on this discussion can do so by visiting the Greater Victoria School District website and using the contact form in the Board of Education menu to send in their perspectives.

Starla Anderson, Ed.D., is a retired teacher living in Victoria.

Esquimalt-Metchosin New Democrats

Stay in touch!

You can reach your Executive
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or by writing to us
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Bill C-58 -- New Access to Information Bill is regressive

By Murray Rankin

Right now, Bill C-58 is currently before the House of Commons. It would amend the antiquated *Access to Information Act*. In short, this Liberal Bill is regressive. It moves us farther from transparency and openness – and this conclusion is not simply a matter of perspective or partisan politics. At the Ethics Committee, Suzanne Legault, the independent Information Commissioner, testified that the status quo under the Harper regime is better than the Liberals' proposed changes in Bill C-58. In case you missed that, the Information Commissioner herself testified that the proposed changes would actually make things worse.

Rarely has an officer of Parliament

been so categorical in slamming a government for its broken promises.

Three things are necessary for any credible law. First, it has to have a clear statement that information is a right. Second, there have to be exceptions to the rule of openness that are narrow and ideally the government should have to demonstrate some harm that would arise from the disclosure. Third, there has to be an umpire, someone neutral, who can order the government that does not wish to provide the information to make it public. Those are the three things by which any reform must be evaluated. Sadly, this bill comes up far short.

On November 2, I held a press conference in Ottawa where I emphasized to journalists — a group that will surely be negatively impacted by these changes — the crucial importance in our democracy of access to information. The courts have called

it a “quasi-constitutional right”. Access to Information is the reason why we learned about the Liberals' sponsorship scandal, the Afghan detainees' issue and the murdered and missing indigenous women issue.

The Information Commissioner revealed that the a request under the *Access Act* made by journalist Daniel Leblanc from the *Globe and Mail* concerning the sponsorship scandal would be refused if Bill C-58 were in force because he wouldn't have had enough details to make the request. Think of all the things we might never have known.

Access to Information doesn't just affect our journalists. It affects everyday Canadians. It affects academics, unions, environmentalists and indigenous peoples. Bill C-58 will introduce significant new barriers to First Nations and organizations trying to access information to document their claims, disputes and grievances.

It is an essential tool that is used every day by thousands of Canadians to find out what their government is doing with their taxes and how their rights are being addressed. Information delayed is justice delayed. Information denied is justice denied.

For me this is a very personal issue. A very long time ago I did my graduate work, arguing for Canada to have legislation like the US *Freedom of Information Act*. I received an award from former Conservative Member of Parliament Jed Baldwin, for my advocacy and then was involved in the drafting to the first freedom of information bill in British Columbia, a bill that received unanimous support in its Legislative Assembly. I am proud to have contributed to making information more accessible to people lucky enough to live in British Columbia. I want the same for all Canadians.

The Liberals campaigned on open and accountable government. They promised to improve the *Access to Information Act* and to extend coverage to the PMO and Ministers' offices. The Prime Minister's own private member's bill in 2015 was all about the importance of opening up government. The Liberals were going to be different than the secretive Harper government. They want us to believe because they have enshrined proactive disclosure for ministers'

offices and the Prime Minister's Office that they have kept their promise. They have not kept the promise. They have betrayed Canadians.

It's not just the NDP and the Information Commissioner that are saying that this bill is woefully inadequate. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Democracy Watch, the Ottawa bureau chief of the Canadian press, the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, National Claims Research Directors who are doing research on land claims for indigenous people, The Canadian Association of Journalists are just a few that have strongly criticized this Bill. This is too important an issue for partisanship.

We want to work with government to fix this seriously flawed bill. We will be tabling amendments which will remove the regressive measures that the government has brought in. We must work toward a more progressive regime of which Canadians can be proud.

We are asking that the requirement to provide sufficient detail in a request be removed. The “frivolous and vexatious” language should also be removed to take away the right of departments and agencies to deny a request for information and to give this draconian power solely to the Information Commissioner.

We want improvements on to the order-making power of the Commissioner so that when she orders records to be released, those orders will be binding unless the government takes steps in the Federal Court to reverse them. The grounds on which an institution can deny a request should undoubtedly be reduced. Furthermore, the \$5 fee as the price of admission for an access request should be eliminated; it is telling that most provinces have no such requirement as a toll on a citizen's right to know.

To avoid the proposed black hole where information can be withheld, we must ensure information can be accessible from ministers' offices and the Prime Minister's Office -- not just with proactive disclosure of the boilerplate material that is now to be disclosed but to actually allow requests to be made so that these offices are fully covered by the Act, just as such offices are covered in other Canadian jurisdictions.

Liberal government economic update a distraction from finance minister's scandals

OTTAWA – The Liberal Government has fast-tracked their economic update to distract from the troubling questions about Finance Minister Bill Morneau's ethics and personal fortune. After backtracking on their botched tax change proposals and misleading Canadians about Morneau's continued involvement in his business interests, the government is still refusing to close major loopholes in our tax system, like the CEO stock options loophole and the use of tax havens.

“This update is more striking in what is missing from it, rather than what's in it,” said MP Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford). “There is no plan to deal with precarious work, to get seniors out of poverty, or to expand access to employment insurance”.

There are a few measures in the update that will benefit working Canadians, such as increases to the working income

tax benefit. However, the Liberals continue to lack the will to take real action that could truly improve people's lives like implementing a Pharmacare program so Canadians can afford the medicine they need or actually creating affordable childcare spaces rather than just handing out cheques.

“Just last week, the Liberals and Conservatives combined to vote down NDP motion in the House of Commons to begin talks for universal Pharmacare in Canada,” said MacGregor. “Last month the Parliamentary Budget Officer released a report that examined the costs of a national Pharmacare program and found that even with high levels of coverage, a public drug plan would save Canadians more than \$4 billion a year. Implementing universal Pharmacare in Canada would be a step toward building an economy that works for everyone, not just the few at the top.”



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MP Alistair MacGregor publishes a community report for the development of a food policy for Canada

DUNCAN – On behalf of the residents of Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, MP Alistair MacGregor submitted a comprehensive community report to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food September 19. More than 120 local farmers, producers, and food security advocates contributed to the report that will be used to inform the development of *A Food Policy for Canada*.

“In creating this submission to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, it is clear that Canadians have thoughtful, informed, and hopeful suggestions for the future of our food and food systems,” said MP MacGregor. “It is also clear that how food is produced, processed, and consumed has important social, economic, and environmental implications. I believe we need to look at the whole picture and bring an integrated approach to federal policy that connects agriculture, rural development, health, and income security.”

On May 29, 2017, the Government of Canada launched consultations to support the creation of *A Food Policy for Canada*, which would be the first of its kind for the country. On June 16, 2017, MacGregor hosted an extremely well-attended town hall to gather community input that, along with written submissions from constituents, make up the bulk of today's report.

“I commend the government for going forward with this process. New Democrats have had a vision for our food system for a number of years and are glad that the Government of Canada is moving toward that goal,” said MacGregor. “It is deeply important that the Minister takes careful consideration of these and other suggestions from Canadians across the country in drafting *A Food Policy for Canada*. It is equally important that once written, this policy be implemented with vigour and excitement and not left to collect dust somewhere.”



Alistair MacGregor
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
COWICHAN-MALAHAT-LANGFORD

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Liberals vote against the right to housing

OTTAWA — the Liberals defeated Bill C-325 on the right to housing on November 8. The Bill, tabled by New Democrat MP Rachel Blaney, aimed to incorporate the internationally recognized right to housing into Canadian law.

“Canadians are experiencing an unprecedented housing crisis and it's time to take a different approach. Taking a human rights lens to housing allows a more cohesive outlook by addressing the systemic causes of housing insecurity,” said Blaney. “Liberals like to talk about housing as a human right, but the fact that they don't want to legislate it shows a lack of responsibility and vision in light of an upcoming national housing strategy.”

The right to housing was a recurring theme during the government's housing consultations. Stakeholders clearly laid out the need for a legally recognized right to housing. They insisted that a national housing strategy should examine whether laws, policies and practices are sufficient to prevent homelessness, forced evictions, and discrimination in accessing adequate housing.

“In the coming weeks, the Liberals must announce the details of their housing strategy. This bill gave them the opportunity to demonstrate that they take housing seriously by formally recognizing everyone's right to have a roof over their head,” said the NDP Housing Critic, Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet. “Unfortunately, they did not seize the opportunity. It's time this government stops talking and starts acting.”



Randall Garrison (centre) MP for Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke, and Alistair MacGregor (left), MP for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, walk in the annual Gay Parade



Enjoying an informal discussion are, left to right: Sooke Mayor Maja Tait, Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke Constituency Assistant Elise Côté, Victoria City Councillor Jeremy Loveday, NDP Federal Leader Jagmeet Singh, MP Randall Garrison and Victoria City Councillor Ben Isitt.

MP hopes to restore federal protection for Lower Island water

VICTORIA – MP Randall Garrison (Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke) has tabled legislation that would restore federal environmental protections to rivers, lakes, and streams in his riding.

Garrison commends the many activists who are working to protect, restore, and enhance the bodies of water in his riding. “It is time for the federal government to support the many groups who are trying to protect local watersheds against further negative impacts,” says the MP, who has introduced legislation to protect waterways in his riding on two previous occasions. “The Liberals could start by restoring federal environmental protection to local lakes, rivers, and streams.”

The previous Conservative Government made drastic changes to the *Navigable Waters Protection Act* and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, leaving all lower island rivers, lakes, and streams without federal environmental protection. Since coming to power in 2015, the Liberal Government has failed to restore these much-needed protections.

Garrison is seeking to change this by adding the Sooke River, the Jordan River, Bilston Creek, Muir Creek, the Colquitz River, Tod Creek and Craigflower Creek to the schedule that lists protected bodies of water.

Garrison is hopeful that his legislation will spur the Liberals to keep their promise to restore federal environmental protection for the rivers, lakes, and streams in Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke.

NDP announces changes to shadow cabinet

OTTAWA – NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh announced changes to the strong NDP team in the House of Commons October 25.

Peter Julian (New Westminster-Burnaby) will once again be taking on the role of House Leader. Murray Rankin (Victoria), who had stepped in as House Leader a year ago, will be returning to his previous role as the NDP’s Justice Critic, while Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford) will continue his excellent work on the Justice file as the NDP’s Deputy Justice Critic.

Niki Ashton (Churchill-Keewatinook) will also be returning to her role as NDP Critic for Jobs, Employment and Workforce Development, to fight against the growth of precarious work in Canada, and Charlie Angus (Timmins-James Bay) will become the first NDP Critic for Indigenous and Northern Affairs (Youth).

“I am happy to announce these changes to our incredible team of MPs in the House of Commons,” said NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh. “Canadians need representatives in Ottawa that put people’s interests ahead of those of the wealthy and well-connected – and that’s exactly what we have in our talented shadow cabinet.”

The Jordan River is being brought back from the dead-- now, it needs federal protection

By Randall Garrison

In October, I presented my private members bill, Bill C-368, which asks for the Jordan River, along with other important watersheds on the Westshore, to be added to the schedule of protected bodies of water in the *Navigation Protection Act*. I hope that this bill will spur the Liberal Government to action, given that one-hundred percent of our Lower Island watersheds do not have federal environmental protection.

The Jordan River marks the boundary between my riding, Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke, and MP Alistair MacGregor’s riding, Cowichan-Malahat-Langford. Together, Alistair and I recently released a statement, commending the work of the Jordan River Stewardship Roundtable and calling on the federal government to do more to support the work of these activists.

The Jordan River, which runs through Pacheedaht territory, has been seriously damaged by mining and hydroelectric dams, and the roundtable is now working to bring it back from the dead. The efforts of these activists should be matched with federal environmental protections for this river, allowing it to thrive free of further environmental degradation.

Restoring such protections is even more urgent, given the commendable work that community members are undertaking on the Jordan River, and, indeed, most of the watersheds in my riding.

The Jordan River was seriously contaminated when a copper and gold mine on its bank exploded in the 1950s, and the once abundant Coho and Chum subsequently died out. Dams, first established on the river in the early 19th century, underwent changes in the late 60s and early 70s which reduced spawning habitat and caused uneven water levels. This resulted in the loss of the Pink run, and the river was then void of fish for over 40 years.

This changed several years ago when BC Hydro made a slight increase in water levels. The increased flow allowed more of the dissolved copper residue from the mine explosion to be flushed out and stray Coho and Chum from other runs began to find their way into the river.

This sparked the work of the roundtable

members, who hope to build on the fish currently coming to the river and have runs re-established by 2020. They are working hard to have the remaining contaminated soil removed and to restore critical habitat for the Chum and Coho that are coming to the river. Biologist David Burt says that the Jordan River is being brought back from the dead.

The previous Conservative Government made drastic changes to the *Navigable Waters Protection Act* and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, leaving all lower island rivers, lakes, and streams without federal environmental protection.

Since coming to power in 2015, the Liberal Government has failed to restore these much-needed protections, despite having promised to do so prior to being elected. This leaves the Jordan River, and all of the other watersheds in my riding, without federal environmental protection.

I am hoping to change this by presenting two private members bills to restore protection to rivers and streams in my riding. In the first bill, Bill C-368, I ask for the Sooke River, the Jordan River, Bilston Creek, and Muir Creek to be added to the schedule of protected waterways in the *Navigation Protection Act*. In the second bill, Bill C-367, I ask for the Colquitz River, Tod Creek, and Craigflower Creek to be added to the schedule as well.

Activists and community members are out working on many of these rivers and creeks as I write this. Salmon are coming back to most of these rivers and creeks, and activists are out monitoring them.

In other places, like the Jordan and Sooke rivers, groups are working to re-establish salmon, and in others activists and community members are working to protect these rivers and streams from negative impacts caused by development and industry.

Our water needs to have federal environmental protection. I hope that my two private members bills will spur the Liberal Government to take action, and I will continue to point out that the government needs to listen to BC and protect our watersheds and our salmon.

Randall Garrison is Member of Parliament for Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke .

Victoria MP welcomes long awaited supervised consumption site

VICTORIA – Murray Rankin, the NDP MP for Victoria, welcomed the August 3 announcement by Health Canada of a permanent consumption facility in downtown Victoria, in the midst of the opioid overdose crisis.

“This facility will save lives,” said Rankin, “After 72 opioid-related deaths on Vancouver Island in the first four months of this year, a permanent supervised consumption site in Victoria is long overdue.”

For the last four years Rankin has been pressuring the federal government to provide supervised consumption services for Victoria. He expressed relief that these new services are finally coming to the region.

“This crisis is affecting people of all backgrounds, ages and economic status,” said Rankin. “I’m very proud of the community in Victoria and together we were able to get it done.”

Rankin applauded the hard work of local officials, agencies, and organizations making up the Supervised Consumption Services Partners’ Project, which worked to open temporary consumption sites to address the overdose crisis.



Helping constituents with Federal government programs and services.



Randall Garrison, MP ESQUIMALT-SAANICH-SOOKE
2904 Tillicum Road, Victoria, BC V9A 2A5 / M-Th, 10-4 or by appointment
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MLA Report:

Looking back on work accomplished by new government

By Carole James

As we head into the holiday season, it's timely to look back and consider the year soon to pass. I was honoured to be re-elected in May as the MLA for Victoria-Beacon Hill. It is a privilege and I am so very grateful for the longstanding support from our community.

I am humbled by the opportunity to serve as Minister of Finance, and as Deputy Premier. Our government is taking action to make life better for people. We're working hard to address the problems and help people reach their full potential.

We're investing in education for our children, skills training for working people, and capital spending to build up our province and the services that people count on. We're supporting traditional industries and the new economy to create jobs and opportunity for people.

Some of the initiatives we've already announced are particularly welcome in our community. They include investments in construction of new units of affordable housing and an increase of \$100 per month for those living on income and disability assistance. We have implemented tuition-free Adult Ba-

sic Education and English Language Learning programs, and tuition-free programs for youth who were formerly in care.

We're also providing \$681 million to BC's kindergarten-to-Grade 12 education system over three years, including \$521 million to improve classroom supports for children. Government is allocating \$322 million to provide an immediate and evidence-based response to the fentanyl emergency.

In October we introduced legislation to close a major loophole in fixed-term leases and improve the rights of renters. The new legislation will mean landlords can no longer use the loophole to bypass annual rent control, meaning renters will now be protected against massive rent hikes at the end of a lease.

We've also added \$6.8 million in new funding for the Residential Tenancy Branch to reduce wait times for tenancy disputes and to establish a new compliance unit to take action against landlords and tenants who are repeat or serious offenders. A new online application will make it easier and faster for tenants and landlords to apply for dispute resolution. This has been a critical issue for our community, and I was so proud to see our action to begin to resolve the

backlog!

We've announced a new investment of \$189 million over three years through a federal-BC agreement that helps seniors with improved home and residential care. We're providing \$15 million over three years for the Healthy Kids Program, which provides hearing assistance benefits and improved rates for dental services.

In November, we delivered on our campaign promise to ask the BC Utilities Commission to freeze BC Hydro rates, putting an end to the years of spiralling electricity costs that have made life less affordable for BC homeowners and renters. Our government will conduct a comprehensive review of BC Hydro by spring of 2019, and any identified cost and revenue adjustments will be reflected in the rates as of April that year.

The Province has established a task force of experts to advise the government on eliminating Medical Services Plan (MSP) premiums within four years. By engaging a panel of respected experts in economics, law and public policy, we will ensure the path we take is fiscally responsible, fair and evidence-based.

The MSP Task Force will examine the best approach to replacing the revenue from

eliminating MSP premiums. Its final report is due to government by March 31, 2018. The task force's work will include an opportunity for British Columbians, businesses, academics and other stakeholders to express their views. People are encouraged to bring their ideas to this consultation process at <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/msptaskforce/>.

Effective January 1, 2018, MSP premiums will be cut by 50 percent. This reduction will save individuals up to \$450 per year, and families up to \$900 per year. We've also raised the income threshold below which households are fully exempt from MSP premiums and senior couples with a net income up to \$35,000 will pay no premiums in 2018. Single parents with two children and a net income up to \$32,000 will pay no premiums.

I appreciate hearing your concerns and perspectives on any government issues. My office is open Monday through Thursday to assist constituents. Best wishes to you and your family and loved ones for a safe and happy holiday season.

Carole James is MLA for Victoria-Beacon Hill. Readers can reach her at 1084 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K4, by phone at 250 952-4211, or by email at Carole.James.mla@leg.bc.ca. View her

BC needs a full public inquiry into fracking

By Ben Parfitt

Last year, more natural gas was produced in British Columbia than at any point in the past 10 years.

Even without the much-hyped liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry, natural gas production in BC jumped 70 percent over the past decade.

The ecological, human health and safety and climate costs associated with producing fossil fuel are generally poorly appreciated by urbanites. But First Nations, farming families and rural communities can quickly list a litany of problems.

A troubling increase in earthquakes. Contaminated groundwater and surface water sources. A sprawling network of unauthorized dams. Rapidly escalating indus-

trial water use and contamination. Massive fragmentation of Indigenous lands and lost opportunities to carry out traditional hunting and fishing activities. Troubling increases in methane emissions at gas wells and other natural gas industry facilities. Ongoing threats of sour gas leaks that can kill and maim.

A public inquiry about how natural gas is produced in BC is long overdue and something our new government can remedy.

The NDP's 2017 campaign platform actually called for a review of fracking. It just didn't get much attention.

Given the known impacts associated with recent fracking operations in BC, the NDP's commitment is a starting point. But to be meaningful and effective, the commitment must go beyond appointing a scien-

tific panel.

Some of the reasons why:

- In August 2015, the largest earthquake anywhere ever scientifically linked to a fracking operation occurred in northeast BC – a 4.6 magnitude tremor.

- BC Hydro is so concerned about its Peace River dams – among the most critical infrastructure in the province – it has quietly succeeded in getting fracking banned from near those facilities.

- Water use at BC fracking operations is off the charts with fracking companies actually building dozens of unlicensed dams across northeast BC to trap freshwater needed for fracking. They failed to notify those First Nations most directly impacted let alone the general public.

- Methane is leaking into the atmosphere at numerous gas well sites and may have also contaminated groundwater sources.

A fully funded public inquiry with expert witnesses is the least British Columbians deserve.

An inquiry should not be limited to scientific questions, but should focus on the risks associated with fracking and what should be done about them. It should address important questions like:

- Have natural gas companies and provincial regulators appropriately consulted with First Nations as required by law and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

- What is the true extent of public health and safety risks associated with fracking, including the risks posed by industry-induced earthquakes?

- Where are outright bans on fracking warranted and what other steps should be taken to comprehensively protect human health and safety?

- What are the environmental and water impacts?

- How much could accelerated gas drilling and fracking increase BC's overall greenhouse gas emissions and what should be done to ensure that industry emissions move steadily down, not up?

There have been several public inquiries into forestry in BC, but no such scrutiny of the province's oil and gas sector. The new provincial government should immediately rectify that.

Ben Parfitt is a resource policy analyst for the Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives BC Office. The CCPA is one of 17 organizations calling for a public inquiry into fracking in BC.

Rob Fleming's

Holiday Open House

Thursday, Dec 14, 4–6pm at 1020 Hillside Ave

Join me and my staff for our annual holiday open house at my community office

Please bring a donation of a non-perishable food item for the Mustard Seed Food Bank

Carole James and her staff invite you to their

Annual Open House

Wednesday, December 6, from 4-6 pm at the community office, 1084 Fort Street

BCUC report a bombshell that bursts Site C dam project

VANCOUVER – The Wilderness Committee is pointing to evidence revealed in the new BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) report released November 1 on the financial viability of the Site C dam project

National Campaign Director Joe Foy didn't mince words when describing the BCUC's findings.

"Finally an independent competent body, the BCUC, has been allowed to review the Site C dam project. Now we have their report and it's a clear description of an expensive white elephant publically funded mega-project gone rogue," said Foy.

"The dam project is wildly over budget only 2 years into a 9-year schedule. The BCUC report shows costs will likely pass \$10 billion and could end up 20 to 50 percent over budget. This is a completely irresponsible waste of British Columbians' hard-earned money."

The BCUC report found that increasingly viable alternative energy sources such as wind, geothermal and industrial reduction could provide similar benefits to ratepayers as the Site C project at equal or

lower cost.

"The report also shows there is a high cost to ratepayers for building a project that is too big and produces too much power," said Foy. "This is definitely the case with the Site C dam."

In order to produce the report, the BCUC held a number of public meetings around the province and spoke to energy experts as well. From Sept 23 to Oct 11, the BCUC held 11 Community Input Sessions in nine communities. More than 80 percent of the speakers were opposed to the dam.

"When you combine this report with the unacceptable impacts to farmland and First Nations rights, this dam project needs to stop," said Foy. "There is only one thing for the BC government to do. Shut down Site C now and forever before another penny is wasted."



Addressing challenges facing British Columbians a strong start in new government's first budget update

VICTORIA -- BC's new government has made a strong start in addressing crucial issues for British Columbians in its first budget update, which is a welcome change in direction from the last 16 years, says the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC Office.

"Investments in affordable housing, including 2,000 new units for people who are homeless, as well as new funding for the Residential Tenancy Branch is very good news," said senior economist Iglia Ivanova.

BC has one of the highest poverty rates in Canada. Priority investment in programs for the most vulnerable – people who are homeless and seniors, for renters, for the public education system and for the fentanyl emergency is essential and heartening," said public policy analyst Alex Hemingway.

"With a strongly performing economy and moves towards greater tax fairness, the government will be able to make investments in services that people rely on," he said.

Increases in the corporate income tax rate and in the personal rate on taxable income over \$150,000 will improve tax fairness and generate funds for much-needed investments in education, social programs like poverty reduction and child care and in health care and affordable rental housing, said Ivanova.

"The initial funding to develop a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy, including a basic income pilot program, is very welcome news. BC is the only province without such a strategy and it is long overdue," she added.

While \$20 million has been earmarked for new child care spaces, Ivanova said she will be looking to the full budget in February 2018 for a much more ambitious investment to begin implementing the \$10/day child care plan, which she has fully costed.

Increasing the carbon tax rate in April 2018 and increasing rebates for low and middle income earners are important steps in BC's commitment to reduce carbon emissions and address climate change.

BC Poverty Reduction Coalition welcomes appointment to Provincial Government's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction

On October 30, the BC government announced the launch of BC's first poverty reduction strategy with the appointment of a 27-person Advisory Forum and news of upcoming community consultations to be hosted throughout BC from November to March.

Trish Garner, Community Organizer of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, is pleased to be included on the Advisory Forum, and looks forward to getting to work with the diverse group of experts, which includes people in poverty or with past experience of poverty, advocates, indigenous leaders, representatives from business and organized labour, and academics.

"This is an exciting opportunity to bring BC from the back of the pack to become a national leader in poverty reduction," says Garner. "As the last province to consider a poverty reduction plan, we can learn from what has worked and what hasn't to ensure a meaningful impact on people's lives."

"For instance, Newfoundland and Labrador wish that they had included legislated targets and timelines to provide long-term accountability, so we can do that; Ontario now realize that an exclusive focus on child poverty, while a critical issue, misses so many in poverty so we can aim more broadly; and Quebec has a human rights framework to their poverty reduction legislation so we can build in those obligations here in BC to start from a place of dignity."

The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition also welcomes the appointment to the Poverty Reduction Advisory Forum of two of their executive committee members, Ste-

phen D'Souza, executive director of Burnaby Community Services, and John Millar, former Provincial Health Officer and member of the Public Health Association of BC.

The Social Planning and Research Council of BC will facilitate the community consultations to be held in 20 communities throughout BC, and the Coalition encourages everyone to participate either online, in person or by sending in a written submission.

However, Jean Swanson of Raise the Rates and a member of the Coalition's executive committee, cautions that "the government should not use consultation to stall on doing the actual things that need to be done, such as increasing welfare rates and making welfare offices more respectful of people on welfare, as well as building social housing."

As the Coalition has been saying for many years, a poverty reduction plan should include raising income supports and the minimum wage, and investing in social housing, universal child care, education and training, and community health care. The Coalition now has the support of over 400 organizations in BC for this form of strong, comprehensive, preventative plan.

After over a decade of government inaction, the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition is hopeful that the new government will take a leadership role in tackling the root causes of poverty and welcomes the opportunity to finally start working on a poverty reduction plan for BC.

British Columbians demand urgent action to clean up local politics

VANCOUVER -- Voters across British Columbia want to see corporate, union and out-of-province donations banned in municipal campaigns before next year's election, a new survey by Insights West has found.

"The appetite to eliminate the influence of big money in politics is not exclusive to provincial elections," says Mario Canseco, vice president of public affairs at Insights West. "This survey shows that British Columbia's voters would like to see similar legislation at the municipal level."

The online, province-wide poll was sponsored by Dogwood, a BC citizen group MLA

calling on the province to "Ban Big Money" in politics.

Eighty-six percent of respondents said they would support rules for municipal elections in line with the province's new regulations on campaign finance.

Seventy-nine percent of BC Liberal voters, 92 percent of BC NDP voters and 92 percent of those who supported the BC Green party said action should be taken before the next municipal election.

Aurora LNG pullout shows fossil fuels a bad bet

VANCOUVER - Wilderness Committee is celebrating yet another nail in the coffin for the fossil fuel industry as Nexen Energy cancels its proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal on Digby Island near Prince Rupert.

"We're seeing oil and gas giants pull the plug, left, right and centre," said Wilderness Committee Climate Campaigner Peter McCartney. "This is fantastic news for the climate and shows staking our future on fossil fuels is a grave mistake."

Nexen, owned by the largest energy company in China, announced September 14 it's ending its study into the possibility of putting a LNG plant in British Columbia. Local residents had opposed the project because of its close proximity to the historic

community of Dodge Cove.

"A tiny village of just 50 people faced down the Chinese state oil company," said McCartney. "This is a real David and Goliath story and I couldn't be happier for the people of Dodge Cove." Wilderness Committee and its allies opposed the project because of the 15 megatonnes of carbon pollution it would give off annually, more than the province's entire 2050 target.

"Aurora LNG would have made it nearly impossible for BC to meet its climate goals, so today we're saying good riddance," said McCartney. "It's time this province puts to rest the notion that fossil fuels will bring prosperity, and fully embraces a clean energy future."

BC's Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon administers the

Oath of Office to NDP Leader and newly elected Premier John Horgan in front of the new BC Cabinet July 18.
(internet photo)



Veronica Harrison elected president of Esquimalt-Metchosin NDP

The 2017 Esquimalt-Metchosin annual general meeting was upbeat, as New Democrats were still celebrating their successful spring campaign, their new MLA, Mitzi Dean, and transition to government after 16 years of opposition under the BC Liberals.

The meeting, held October 14 at Colwood Community Hall, saw a change in constituency leadership, as Jayne Ducker stepped down as president and has been succeeded by Veronica Harrison.

The 2017-18 Executive is Veronica Harrison, president; Jayne Ducker, vice-president; Barbara Riggs, membership secretary; Jock Bates, recording secretary; and Andrew Barrett, treasurer. Members at large are Andrew Cuddy, Darlene Gallant, Lawrence Herzog, Maurine Karagianis, Maureen Mitchell-Starkey and Trudy Spiller.

Members also elected 11 Convention

delegates, including one youth delegate.

President Ducker thanked members and other volunteers for their work in the "small but mighty" local NDP campaign last spring, which saw Mitzi Dean defeating two opponents who had run for office and a 4,761-vote margin over Esquimalt mayor Barb Desjardins, running for the BC Liberals.

In her MLA report, Dean thanked her predecessor, Maurine Karagianis, for her 12 years of service as MLA and her legacy to the community. She outlined NDP government actions and decisions since it took office in July.

Turning to constituency matters, Dean stressed the importance of keeping in touch with (and attending) community activities, and the opportunity they give to exercise some leadership in her role as Esquimalt-Metchosin MLA.

You are invited to our

Seasonal Open House

104-1497 Admirals Road

Tuesday, December 12, 4-6 pm

Light refreshments will be provided



Mitzi Dean MLA Esquimalt-Metchosin

250-952-5885 / Mitzi.Dean.MLA@leg.bc.ca / MitziDean.ca



John Horgan MLA Langford-Juan de Fuca

Thank you for your support! I look forward to continuing to serve you.

#122-2806 Jacklin Road, Victoria BC V9B 5A4

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Advancing social and ecological justice in local government

By Ben Isitt

With the next municipal elections less than a year away – October 20, 2018 – and a progressive provincial government in power at the BC Legislature, progressive forces are now turning their attention to making gains at the local government level.

I have been honoured to work with a team of dedicated volunteers in a grassroots initiative called Common Vision Common Action, which brought together more than 100 progressives from around the Capital Region at a conference in October 2017.

The purpose of the conference was to create a regional policy agenda for social and ecological justice. It brought together local NDP and Green Party activists, Indigenous and municipal leaders, representatives of neighbourhood associations and labour unions, and advocates from a range of non-profit groups pursuing progressive change.



In October 2017, progressives came together at the Common Vision Common Action conference to create a regional agenda for social and ecological justice.

Over the course of the conference, delegates refined a Solutions Statement that identifies actions for progressive governance in a number of policy areas:

- Housing and Land Use
- Transportation
- Governance
- Food, Water and Ecological Systems
- Education
- Inclusive Communities
- Energy Systems and Climate Action
- Arts and Culture
- People- and Planet-Oriented Economics

In 2018, Common Vision Common Action intends to host public outreach events in the Western Communities, Core Area and Saanich Peninsula, as well as educational events for candidates and volunteers who embrace the vision in the Solutions Statement.

This approach is aimed at increasing progressive representation in the 13 municipalities, 3 electoral areas and 4 school districts within the Capital Region.

I encourage you to get involved at the local government level over the next year. This can take the form of speaking to your local council and board of education on the issues that matter, organizing fellow citizens and community groups to take action, and supporting the efforts of incumbent and non-incumbent progressive candidates in your area.

To get involved, please contact me at ben.isitt@gmail.com.

Ben Isitt is a Victoria City Councillor and CRD Director.

The cost of doing nothing to prevent tragedy:

Fast facts: Missing and murdered indigenous women and girls

By Marina Puzyreva and John Loxley

As the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) continues, a new study looks at the problems of reactive government policy on MMIWG in Manitoba.

The complex impacts on family members of MMIWG are examined in *Cost of Doing Nothing: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*. This study is a preliminary estimate of the cost of doing nothing to prevent many Indigenous women and girls from going missing and being murdered. It gives an insight into the emotional journeys of the families left behind. It also assesses the current financial cost of dealing with this tragedy based on calculations drawn from the literature and estimates of the number of MMIWG in Manitoba.

In cooperation with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' Families First Initiative, this study collected and analyzed the testimonies of 37 family members and friends of MMIWG in Winnipeg, the Pas, Thompson and Sagkeeng First Nation, covering a total of 14 cases. In Manitoba, the discussion of this issue is especially relevant since the province continues to have the highest percentage of Indigenous people – 16.7 percent -- and a high proportion of MMIWG.

The study shows that not providing opportunities for Indigenous women to succeed in life and not helping Indigenous families to obtain justice in the case of a horrendous wrongdoing such as murder is not only a human rights issue, but also a problem with economic consequences. The study combines qualitative analysis of families' experiences and a numerical representation of the cost of doing nothing, wherever applicable. It recognizes that due to the complexities of the tragedy of MMIWG, we cannot "sum up" the experiences of the families and communities in a number.

The analysis in *Cost of Doing Nothing* reveals that at least \$7.0 million was spent in 2014 in direct government expenditures in Manitoba for both missing and murder cases, at an average of \$330,000/murder case in immediate expenses on police, court, funeral, counselling, etc. To put the total estimate in perspective, it is more than twice the annual \$3.5 million operating budget of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, a political advocacy body mandated through the Chiefs-in-Assembly, to devise collective and common political strategies and mechanisms for coordinated action by First Nations and their organizations.

Families of MMIWG are impacted on multiple levels: emotional, physical, financial, psychological, and social. Some practical problems like dealing with official agencies can have a profound emotional impact, which in turn is likely to affect physical health. Leaving work because of the physical pain and illnesses and seeking medical

treatment are some of the many factors that may subsequently impact families financially. One participant shared that she and her family had spent at least \$127,000 in total over a period of five years since the loved one's passing and this did not include any search expenses, which can be huge.

Some expenses can be recovered through the Compensation for Victims of Crime Program. However, an applicant is not eligible for compensation if the victim, in this case a murdered woman, had a serious criminal record. This has negatively affected some families of murdered women. It is important to make sure the people who are left behind are able to get the supports they need, including compensation from the Victims of Crime Program without further re-traumatization and impoverishment. Furthermore, while partial coverage of costs is available for the relatives of murdered victims, very few resources are available to assist families of missing women and girls.

Cost of Doing Nothing documents important but commonly overlooked issues related to the tragedy of MMIWG: lack of clarity on police procedures and investigation standards, the lack of opportunities to heal through Indigenous spiritual and cultural traditions, and lack of closure for the families of missing women. The social stigmatization of loved ones who may have led "risky lifestyles" reduces public concerns for their loss and puts further psychological pressure on families. Moreover, the children of MMIWG become a responsibility for remaining family members. All of these factors impose direct and indirect financial costs on families.

Apart from the devastating effect on family members and friends left behind, the issue of MMIWG also has an adverse impact on government. As the result of this tragedy, government agencies bear the costs of administering police investigations, the costs of the judicial system, of court proceedings, preventative measures, and the like. These costs can be substantial -- \$675 million annually in Canada according to a 2009 study¹.

Today we are seeing an increased and long-overdue attention to the issue of MMIWG with a number of new initiatives underway. The overriding emphasis of government policy must be to take action to reduce the cases of MMIWG, whatever its cost. There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that doing nothing to prevent this violence carries its own huge costs in both financial and human terms.

¹ An Estimation of the Economic Impact of Violent Victimization in Canada, 2009 (2014) by Josh Hoddenbagh, Ting Zhang and Susan McDonald. Marina Puzyreva and John Loxley are the co-authors of *Cost of Doing Nothing: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*. The report was done in partnership with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' Families First Initiative and funded by the Manitoba Research Alliance via the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.



Women in science, society and #MeToo

By Jonathan Lee

The appointment of Julie Payette as Canada's Governor General is an inspired and appropriate choice.

And yet the appointment has not received the acclaim and attention that it deserves.

In today's international media driven environment Canada is something of a desired model of progress and restraint – accepting that today's bar is set rather low. Yet the appointment of Her Excellency the Right Honorable Julie Payette, as the representative of the head of State of Canada has hardly been shouted from the rooftops – or the tweet choruses of Twitter.

Why is this? Julie Payette represents so many of the aspirations that are promoted to young women today. She's an engineer, an astronaut, a business executive and a scientist.

A Montreal native, she's fluent in French and English and has conversational ability in four other languages. She is a proficient pianist and singer and has been able to raise a son.

This is an incredible CV for her current position. What an incredible representative for Canada.

Julie Payette should be as loudly

celebrated and as prominently promoted to young people as – for example #MeToo. She is not so celebrated. That fact is sad and puzzling.

As a modern day scientist and worthy inspiration to our youth, Payette's work will struggle for recognition and space in the minds of young people. In part because she is female.

That's been the gender biased pattern in our societies that has failed to properly recognize the work of countless female scientists, from Marie Curie – ground breaking radioactivity research, through Rosalind Franklin – DNA research and discovery, to the Bletchley Park code breakers.

There are so many examples – too many to cite here.

Discussion abounds about the failure to properly recognize the achievements of female scientists while, at the same time lauding their male colleagues with Nobel honours. The case of the Nobel honours afforded Messrs. Crick and Watson for their discoveries in the field of DNA research, while denying equivalent honour to Rosalind Franklin's equally ground breaking work, is just one modern example.

Such bias is a sad fact. While attempts at amends are happening we still haven't



Governor General Julie Payette

come to terms with the truth that these talented people are scientists first and that gender has nothing to do with their work.

Of course the same arguments apply when looking at gender discrimination in any profession, but here we'll focus on science.

We know that the human capacity to study and practice scientific and technical disciplines has nothing to do with gender. There is not male or female science. Your MD's training was not diminished or enhanced by gender considerations. Your computer software won't be affected by the gender of the programmer.

We know that old habits die very hard and that there are, today, honest attempts to ensure that we identify and stimulate talent at the earliest opportunities in our education systems, void of gender discrimination. But still we struggle to overcome irrational bias.

Young women still must be convinced, at the earliest stages of education, that their talent is valid, in any field, simply because they are human – regardless of gender.

So we work to promote and deliver that message of equal opportunity.

Julie Payette is an example of an

inspiration that could move young women, and young men.

Payette's appointment should be recognized as a vehicle to show young people what can be possible and to show young women that talent and potential is equally distributed between genders.

It's such a clear message and easily delivered so that all young people can hear it.

But the message becomes a whisper when it must compete with the #MeToo amplifier.

The MeToo topic presents a real and unacceptable problem. It speaks to issues of harassment, intimidation and bullying, often as a result of the very gender discriminations that are being discussed here.

It can only be a good thing that light is shined on these social aberrations and that new codes of conduct are created and enforced. Young women and young men cannot thrive in circumstances of intimidation.

What is disappointing is that equal energy is not applied to the positive opportunity that the #MeToo profile now has.

The message of unacceptable behaviours is being heard, loud and clear. High profile names and voices have the attention of national and international media.

Personal stories of bad experiences will now result in actions and changes.

Now, while #MeToo has the media megaphone, it's also time to use the amplifier to change future culture as much as decrying past cultures.

Use the virtual megaphone to celebrate women who have succeeded. Speak loudly of the uncelebrated scientists, unknown only because they happened to be female.

These are stories of success and inspiration that should be as widely learned as the stories of petty and miserable harassment that are today's short term media currency.

#MeToo has a duty to bring a hopeful and positive message to young people that is forward looking.

A good place to start is with the brilliant and overlooked women of science. The new Governor General of Canada is a shining example of what is possible.

“An injury to one, is an injury to all”

By Bob Lyons

PepsiCo Argentina: PepsiCo, one of the world's largest producers of snack food, including Lays potato chips as well as the iconic drink, has faced fierce opposition from the 691 workers it has tried to lay off at its north Buenos Aires facility. Arriving to work in June, the workers were met with a locked gate and a notice that read that the plant was being closed.

The workers responded on June 20 with a plant occupation. Led by the factory stewards' committee, shop floor reps elected directly by the workers began to popularize their struggle across the country and internationally.

On July 27, the day after the workers were violently evicted from the plant by police, the Argentina labour tribunal ruled that the layoffs were illegal, and that PepsiCo Argentina had to immediately reopen the plant as there was no economic reason for its closure.

PepsiCo has refused to abide by the court ruling, and the workers continue their mobilization, despite repeated roadblocks put in their way by the Macri government.

Nadia Shoufani: After a yearlong battle against the attacks of right-wing Zionist organizations like B'nai Brith Canada, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, and the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre Canada, Nadia Shoufani, the Peel-Dufferin (just west of Toronto, Canada) Catholic School teacher accused of promoting violence and terrorism, and suspended for a month with pay by her employer, has been cleared of the charges leveled against her.



Nadia Shoufani (utube)

Posting on September 8 on Facebook, Shoufani said: “A victory for myself, for the Palestinian solidarity movement, for the freedom of expression”.

The Zionist organizations have lost another battle to silence those who criticize the Israeli apartheid state and its genocidal policies towards the Palestinian people.

Shoufani not only kept her job and defeated the attempts to silence her open support for the Palestinian liberation struggle and its political prisoners held by the Israeli state, her and her supporters, which included her Union, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association have scored an important victory against the Zionist lobby and its attempt to chill speech against criticism of the apartheid policies of the Israeli and international Zionist political movements.

Santiago Maldonado: The international campaign for the disclosure of the whereabouts of Mapuche indigenous rights activist Santiago Maldonado, kidnapped by the national police near Chubut in Patagonia, southern Argentina, has spread to Europe and the Middle East.

Palestinian activists staged a group demo demanding to know his whereabouts. In Madrid, Spain, hundreds of activists marched through the downtown in a militant display of international solidarity demanding to know: Where is Santiago Maldonado?

Maldonado is one of hundreds of Mapuche people organizing to defend their territory against imperialist encroachment on their traditional territories. The Mapuche people of Patagonia, have a traditional territorial connection which encompasses both Argentina and Chile. They have a history of unremitting resistance to colonialism and imperialism, and have suffered great repression for it.

The international dimension of the campaign around the kidnapping of Maldonado has created a political crisis for the Argentinian government, who first tried to dismiss the claims of kidnapping.

Now, in its latest manoeuvre, the government is trying to lay the blame for the disappearance of Santiago at the foot of five policemen. The policemen in their turn have said they were just following orders from their political bosses.

The immediate cause of the action, a blockade of the roadway leading to their lands, which precipitated the kidnapping, was an attempt by international clothing corporation Benneton to seize the Mapuche land with the connivance of the Argentine government. The colours of Benneton run red with the blood of Santiago Maldonado.

International Labour Defence believes that the campaign for the disclosure of Santiago Maldonado's whereabouts represents a start to the building of the type of international united front campaigns in defending the prisoners and victims of the class war. Like its namesake, ILD believes that the motto of “An Injury to One is an Injury to All” can serve as a basis of agreement of all of the non-sectarian left and progressive forces globally. Bob Lyons is an International Labour Defence coordinator

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Drain it: Petronas subsidiary ordered to take action at two controversial fracking dams

By Ben Parfitt

The provincial government has ordered Progress Energy to drain virtually all of the water trapped behind two massive dams that the company built in violation of key provincial regulations.

The company was told on October 31 to drain all but 10% of the water stored behind its Town and Lily dams near the Alaska Highway north of Fort St. John by Chris Parks, assistant director of compliance and enforcement with BC's Environmental Assessment Office (EAO).

The order comes after Progress Energy filed an extraordinary application this summer with the EAO asking the provincial environmental regulator to retroactively "exempt" the two dams from required environmental assessments. Both dams are higher than five-storey buildings.

By law, Progress should have filed its exemption applications well before the projects were built, not after. Progress built its Town dam in 2012 and its Lily dam in 2014. Both are part of a vast network of unlicensed dams that the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) first reported in early May have been built across northeast BC by fossil fuel companies to trap massive amounts of freshwater used in gas drilling and fracking operations.

Numerous organizations, including the Blueberry River First Nation (BRFN), on whose traditional territory the dams were built, have written to the EAO objecting to Progress's exemption request.

By law, Progress should have filed its exemption applications well before the projects were built, not after.

"BRFN has been repeatedly sounding alarm bells to the Crown (including through affidavits filed in court) about the diminished water quantity in our territory," wrote BRFN lands manager Norma Pyle. "We have been watching lake levels drop, muskeg disappear, mineral licks dry up and streams reduce to small versions of their former selves."

"Blueberry's concern goes beyond these two dams to the failure of regulatory oversight in their territory—it's not just these two dams, but dozens of them," BRFN's legal counsel Maegan Giltrow added in a separate email statement. "This is in the face of Blueberry's repeated concerns to the Crown about the diminishing water quality and quantity they are seeing. This September the Blueberry River itself ran dry—Blueberry members haven't seen that before. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of cubic meters of freshwater in their territory is being illegally impounded for oil and gas operations. And Blueberry had to learn about the problem from media reports—where was the regulator? The Nation still doesn't have answers to the questions it has put to the Oil and Gas Commission about all the illegal dams and water use."

Public inquiry into fracking needed

The presence of the dams — and a host of additional issues relating to how Progress Energy and other fossil fuel compa-

nies use the water stored in them for their fracking operations — are among the concerns that triggered a call this week by 17 organizations (including the CCPA) for a full public inquiry into natural gas industry fracking operations in BC.

In addition to the proliferation of unlicensed dams, the call for an inquiry was prompted by troubling events in the northeast of the province, including evidence of powerful earthquakes triggered by fracking, escalating water usage at BC fracking operations, rapidly increasing methane releases at gas well sites, local health impacts, and ongoing impacts to First Nation lands.

The groups encouraged the government to examine the impacts of fracking and related operations on First Nation lands and resources in particular.

Seventeen organizations (including the CCPA) have called for a full public inquiry into natural gas industry fracking operations in BC.

"We are deeply troubled that this dam-building free-for-all occurred on First Nation lands, that First Nations were not fully consulted about the true size and extent of these dams, and that our Indigenous Title, Rights and Treaty rights are still completely ignored or denied. There are still no substantive or meaningful opportunities to fully participate in decisions around how water resources are managed in our respective territories," said Grand Chief Stewart Philip, president of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. "We need a credible, strong, Independent Inquiry to get to the bottom of this."

The Environmental Assessment Office has yet to say how it will respond to the Blueberry River First Nation's letter and those of many other organizations urging the government to reject Progress's application for exemptions. David Karn, a senior public affairs officer with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, said in an email that he expects the EAO to make a decision about Progress's exemption request "in early 2018."

Both dams are considered "major projects" under BC's Environmental Assessment Act because they exceed a critical height threshold of 15 metres. The Lily dam dramatically exceeds that threshold. It is 23 metres high or as tall as a seven-storey apartment building.

Build first, ask for permission later

Both dams are among more than 50 large earthen structures built by energy companies on Crown (public lands) in northeast BC that are also subject to Treaty 8, the 1899 agreement reached between the Crown and the region's First Nations. Most or all of the dams were built without the companies first obtaining key provincial authorizations such as water licences. In addition, engineering specifications appear to never have been submitted to and approved by provincial authorities before the dams were constructed.

Dam safety and water licensing officials with the provincial Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

are also investigating additional fracking dams that have been built on private lands, including farmlands within the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve. BC's ALR was created in 1973 to preserve farmland.

It now falls to BC's Oil and Gas Commission (OGC), which allowed the dams to be built without the proper permits first being obtained, to retroactively review dozens of pending water licence applications, and to assess the health, safety and environmental risks posed by dams that may not have been built to proper engineering standards.

The first batch of retroactive water licence applications came in late December last year when Progress Energy on a single day applied for 13 such licences. Each application was for water rights at dams that had already been built and that were already impounding water. The applications did not include the water licence requests at the two dams currently under review by the EAO.

Most or all of the dams were built without the companies first obtaining key provincial authorizations such as water licences.

Recently, investigative journalist and author Andrew Nikiforuk reported that following publication of the CCPA's initial research in May, the OGC sent staff on a flyover of 51 unlicensed dams. The inspections revealed serious problems at seven dams or 14% of those visited. Progress Energy built five of the seven problematic dams (these five do not include the two before the EAO) and ConocoPhillips built the other two. Noted problems included erosion, slumping and water overflowing the top of some dams.

According to documents obtained through numerous Freedom of Information requests filed by the CCPA, all of the unauthorized dams were purpose-built to trap freshwater used in fracking operations, where huge quantities of water are pumped under intense pressure to fracture or crack open deep rock formations so that trapped methane gas is released.

During a Progress Energy fracking operation north of Fort St. John in 2015, 160,000 cubic metres of water — the equivalent of 64 Olympic swimming pools — was pressure pumped underground at a fracking operation, triggering a 4.6 magnitude earthquake.

Dam safety at issue

The EAO's order to Progress requiring it to drain its Town and Lily dams does not speak directly to the issue of how safe or unsafe those structures may be. Nor does it speak to the broader question of how the dams came to be built under the OGC's watch or whether or not the dams may be at risk because of ground motions triggered by nearby fracking operations.

The order notes, however, that "an environmental assessment certificate has not been issued for the Dams" and because a certificate has not been issued, the Environment Minister "may order that the construction, operation, modification, dismantling, or abandonment of the project cease, either altogether or to the extent specified by the Minister, until the proponent obtains an environmental assessment certificate."

Progress is then ordered to:

1) Maintain water volumes stored by the dams at no more than 10% of live storage capacity unless otherwise directed by the EAO's compliance and enforcement division.

2) Monitor and record water volumes on a weekly basis during frozen conditions and on a daily basis during conditions where flowing surface water is present, and provide that information to EAO compliance and enforcement upon request.

160,000 cubic metres of water — the equivalent of 64 Olympic swimming pools — was pressure pumped underground at a fracking operation, triggering a 4.6 magnitude earthquake.

Following this order, Progress Energy's president and CEO Mark Fitzgerald issued a statement to the *Globe and Mail* claiming "that it was his own company that identified

problems with some of its dams — including the failure to obtain proper authorizations — and brought the findings to the attention of the provincial government."

"He said an engineering review of the company's water-holding facilities found no structural issues, but noted that some were larger than permits allowed," the article continued.

"We own those mistakes, and are working with the [Oil and Gas Commission] to correct them. What's important to me is that we will not make these mistakes again," Fitzgerald said to the *Globe and Mail*. "We're committed to working closely with the regulators and to managing our operations in an environmentally responsible manner."

Self-reporting doubts

But records obtained from the Oil and Gas Commission through the CCPA's various Freedom of Information requests paint a different picture.

Progress Energy did not suddenly arrive at the conclusion that some of its dams were built without the required authorizations. Rather, the company—along with all its competitors operating in northeast BC—was told by the OGC in May 2016 to submit lists of all dams that it had built. Why the OGC apparently didn't know this and had to ask in the first place is not clear.

Two months later, after the companies had reported back to the Commission, then OGC chief hydrologist, Allan Chapman, wrote an email to the Commission's vice-president of applications (James O'Hanley) and its vice-president of operations (Lance Ollenberger), stating:

"Hi James and Lance. Progress Energy has confirmed that they built two Freshwater Storage Sites that exceed the EA Reviewable Projects Regulation of 15 metres. In their submission from Wednesday, they indicate that one is 23 metres, which is quite breath-taking. I have advised them they need to contact the EAO."

So clearly, the company did not voluntarily approach the Environmental Assessment Office. It was compelled to do so by the regulator, which should have prevented the dam from being built in the first place.

This case drives home why BC needs a full public inquiry into fracking activities.

Several problems with the Lily dam were also subsequently noted by Progress Energy in its own commissioned engineering report submitted to the EAO. The Lily Dam Project Description document noted signs of seepage, or water leaking from behind the dam's walls, and improperly graded water outlets for the dam. According to the engineering report, both issues had the potential to cause severe damage to — or failure of — the dam, if left unaddressed.

Whether those troubling words of warning influenced the Environmental Assessment Office's decision to order Progress to drain most of the water from its two largest dams is unknown.

If the company's application for exemption is ultimately denied and the two dams are finally subjected to a full provincial environmental assessment, the answer to that question and more may finally see the light of day.

Even so, this case drives home why BC needs a full public inquiry into fracking activities.

This investigation was undertaken as part of the Corporate Mapping Project (CMP). The CMP is a six-year research and public engagement initiative jointly led by the University of Victoria, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' BC and Saskatchewan Offices, and the Alberta-based Parkland Institute. This research was supported by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).



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End to grizzly bear hunt cause for wild celebration

VANCOUVER — The Wilderness Committee team were giving each other great big bear hugs to celebrate the BC government's announcement that the trophy hunting of grizzly bears will finally be banned by November 30.

"For 16 long years we've been demanding this ban," exclaimed Joe Foy, Wilderness Committee national campaign director. "Ever since Premier Gordon Campbell reinstated the bloody grizzly trophy hunt, we've been counting the days until the killing stops."

Since the trophy hunt restarted about 250 grizzly bears a year have been shot dead for the fun of it.

"Nearly 4,000 grizzly bears slaughtered for so-called sport. Premier Horgan is to be commended for ending this cruel and barbaric blood sport for good," said Foy.

According to the BC government there are around 15,000 grizzly bears in the province, which is about a quarter of the entire North American population. Hunting and habitat loss are the two biggest threats to grizzlies.

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) lists the western population of grizzly bears status as special concern. Within BC, grizzly bears have been wiped out of several areas including the south central part of the province from the US border to north of Quesnel. In the southwest, grizzly population numbers are dangerously low.

"We're glad the senseless killing of grizzly bears is coming to an end. Now this at-risk species has a better chance to recover," said Foy.

Federal government's orca symposium failed to establish concrete action on recovery measures, say seven conservation groups

VANCOUVER —The federal government's southern resident killer whale Symposium, held in Vancouver October 12, as part of the Oceans Protection Plan, failed to identify concrete actions to ensure the recovery of the endangered killer whales, according to seven environmental organizations.

"Threats to southern residents are well-documented and to support recovery we need to be implementing tangible measures immediately," says Christianne Wilhelmson, executive director of Georgia Strait Alliance. "We were encouraged that the federal government spoke of having to make difficult decisions; however, we did not hear any specific steps or measures that will be taken in the short term. Now is the time for the federal government to show strong leadership to protect critical habitat because orcas can't wait."

The southern resident killer whale population has had two deaths this year, seven in 2016, and calves have not been born since 2015. Today, there are 76 remaining, a very small population that is inherently vulnerable to the risk of extinction. This population of whales relies on BC's southern coastal waters from May to October.

The three main threats to southern resident killer whales are a lack of their preferred prey (Chinook salmon), noise and disturbance from vessels, and toxic contaminants. For recovery to be effective, efforts must focus on enacting measures that reduce these three major threats in their critical habitat.

Chinook salmon are themselves threatened and some of this year's southern resident whale deaths are linked to starvation. "We were hoping the government would be closing Chinook fisheries and creating whale refuges to avoid further whale starvation. The situation is urgent," says Jeffery Young, Senior Science and Policy Analyst with the David Suzuki Foundation.

"Analysis on this population shows these whales are unlikely to recover under existing conditions of prey availability, noise and disturbance," says Misty MacDuffee, Wild Salmon Program Director at Rain-coast Conservation Foundation. "Any further reductions in the quality of their critical habitat only hastens their slide to extinction. Our population viability analysis shows that reducing existing vessel noise and increasing Chinook availability increases their likelihood of long term survival."

"The underwater noise levels in the Salish Sea are alarming and already an impediment to the recovery of southern resident killer whales. We need assurance that new projects that expand shipping will further not increase noise levels," says Michael Jasny, the Director of Natural Resource Defense Council's Marine Mammal Protection Project.

Leading scientists have called on the government to adopt a minimum target for

the reduction of shipping noise by three decibels (dB) within 10 years and 10 dB within 30 years relative to current levels, recognizing that a greater reduction target may be appropriate for the Salish Sea and in the critical habitat of SRKW.

"The commercial shipping industry is taking steps to improve the situation for southern resident killer whales through the ECHO program of the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority," says David Miller, president and CEO of World Wildlife Fund Canada. "WWF-Canada urges the federal government to build on these efforts by setting a noise reduction target and supporting the implementation of practical measures by the industry to reduce underwater noise exposure and create conditions for the recovery of southern residents."

Approaches to the simultaneous management of these threats include the protection of critical habitat and key foraging areas and the strengthening of regulations. "We need to create networks of protected areas that act as refuges in key foraging areas for whales, where they have access to plenty of food, and safe, quiet spaces, free from harmful human activities," says Sabine Jessen, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society National Oceans Program Director. Work has already begun on the proposed Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area, which could protect an important part of their critical habitat.

"We can step up protection for endangered whales by strengthening the laws that safeguard marine wildlife and their habitat—including the *Oceans Act*, which is currently subject to proposed amendments. A stronger, more robust *Oceans Act*, combined with a network of marine protected areas, will help ensure the survival of the southern residents and other at-risk whales," says Linda Nowlan, Staff Counsel at West Coast Environmental Law Association.

We look forward to continued dialogue with domestic and international partners to achieve the following recovery actions:

Urgent actions that require strong government leadership to support recovery for Southern Resident killer whales:

1. Increase Salish Sea Chinook abundance by closing (non-terminal) interception Chinook fisheries.
2. Create whale refuges that restrict commercial and recreational boat access in key feeding grounds in the Juan de Fuca and Gulf Islands.
3. Reduce existing levels of vessel noise by setting underwauction targets and supporting the shipping industry to implement practical measures to reduce noise emissions.
4. Use Habitat Protection Orders to regulate noise and disturbance from private and commercial boats watching whales.
5. Create specific targets to reduce

BC has the fiscal room to make lives better

By Alex Hemingway

After analyzing the numbers, it's clear that BC can make significant reinvestments in critical public services that British Columbians depend upon and want.

Investments are urgently needed in universal, affordable, high-quality child care, in affordable housing, on climate action commitments, on strengthening education and health care and on a comprehensive plan to reduce and eliminate poverty.

Some commentators question whether we can realistically afford such large public investments. What they far too frequently fail to ask is: what is the cost of inaction?

BC's shameful poverty levels come at enormous economic cost: our research shows between \$8.1 billion and \$9.2 billion annually in lost productivity.

New public investment is the best way to reduce this economic waste.

The government's September budget update projects surpluses of at least \$200 million annually over the next three years, contingency funds ranging from \$300 to \$600 million per year and at least \$300 million per year for changes in forecasted GDP growth: approximately \$1 billion annually over the next three years.

The budget update cautiously forecasts revenue relative to GDP so the surpluses over these three years will be higher. A consistent feature of the BC budget process under the previous government was underestimating budget surpluses — often by well over \$1 billion, meaning public investments were needlessly foregone.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) rejects this overly cautious

approach to budgeting, which focuses too narrowly on producing an operating surplus and making the books look good for media headlines.

Fiscal health doesn't mean a year-end budget surplus but the debt-to-GDP ratio (the debt relative to the economy's annual income) and debt service costs (the debt interest payments relative to the size of the budget).

BC's debt-to-GDP ratio is a manageable 16.2 percent for 2017/18 — one of the lowest in Canada. Debt servicing costs are at historic lows with just over five cents per dollar of operating spending servicing the debt, leaving ample room for needed public investments.

There are critical needs to be met in BC and we can meet them.

The province's fiscal situation is bolstered by two welcome tax measures announced in the budget update: restoration of the top tax bracket on individual income above \$150,000 to 16.8 percent and a one percentage point increase to the general corporate income tax rate (from 11 to 12 percent). This will raise a projected \$579 million next year and make our tax system fairer.

The 50-percent reduction in Medical Services Plan premiums—BC's least fair tax—will reduce revenues by a projected \$1.2 billion. As the government phases out MSP premiums, it should ensure that all forgone MSP revenue is fully replaced with fairer personal and business taxes. CCPA modeling shows we can replace every dollar so that a majority of BC households have a lower total tax bill and better-funded public services.

We can afford to invest in critical public services. The question is if we can afford the continued cost of failing to act.

Alex Hemingway is CCPA-BC's Public Finance Policy Analyst. His work focuses on the state of BC's public services, including education, health care, social services and regulation. He also investigates the taxation system and its relationship to inequality and the capacity of government to provide high-quality and accessible public services.

the use and discharge of polluting, bioaccumulative and toxic chemicals to the marine environment.

6. Advance the establishment of marine protected areas, and complete the proposed National Marine Conservation Area in the Southern Strait of Georgia.

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Uniperspective drives unipolar world

By Bo Filter

Back around 4400 BCE, the 1st marauding horsemen created the first regional power centres headed by chieftains. As chieftain territories grew in size, new branding was introduced. Historians began to speak of kings and their kingdoms, which grew ever larger into empires. Emperors ruled with iron fists, killing anyone who dared to challenge their authority.

Since the rise of chieftains, political power has continued to become more and more centralized, using military might to enforce the laws created by and for the oppressors. Fast forward to the dawn of the 20th century. The world had been reduced to 10 colonial empires: Belgium, France, German, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Spain, and the United States. Further concentration of power during the century through two world wars saw a multi-polar world power structure of 10 whittled down to a bi-polar world of two superpowers—American and Soviet Union.

The Berlin Wall fell in 1989, prompting Neoconservative Charles Krauthammer to chortle about "THE UNIPOLAR MOMENT," in *FOREIGN AFFAIRS* magazine. He proclaimed: "The immediate post-Cold War world is not multipolar. It is unipolar. The center of world power is the unchallenged superpower, the United States, attended by its Western allies." This is the same guy who was credited with the rise of the Reagan Doctrine, which was highly supported by extremist organizations like the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute. You get what you want using military aggression, just like the early chieftains. But you must hide your true intentions if you want the support of the people, why they had to invent the Cold War.

After WWII, the Soviet army was on its knees, exhausted with over 20 million Russians killed. But the Americans lost only a quarter of one million men. Pentagon officials chided Congress to let them finish the job, attack Russia and proclaim world domination. The government hesitated. So, the CIA and Pentagon laid plans for a Cold War in National Security Council Memorandum – 68. To hide US aggression, the Soviet Union would be accused through war propaganda of trying to take over the world. Stopping them provided camouflage for their own goal of taking over the world, "saving the world from evil Communism," over and over until anti-Communism bled from every church steeple and every municipal building across the land.

So, the promise of world empire by the US is long in the tooth and any country that resists is labelled a Communist outpost then eliminated one domino at a time. Puppet dictators are installed in place of popular democracies, all the while blaming the Russians for disturbing the peace and forcing the US to come to "the rescue".

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in December of 1991, hegemonic-minded Americans saw the opportunity to advance Krauthammer's unipolar world, a one-world *Pax Americana* dictatorship. The Wolfowitz Doctrine quickly emerged, outlining how the US proposed to rule over the entire world using full-spectrum dominance.

However, not all politicians were on board. Senator Edward Kennedy made clear that it's "a call for 21st century American imperialism that no other nation can or should accept". Unfortunately, Kennedy was in a minority. Imperial hubris filled the halls of Washington. Kennedy had submitted a peace dividend bill, which was quickly squashed.

Plans for total war had been in the making for some time. Adding to the Wolfowitz doctrine, neoconservatives created a think tank called Project for a New American Century in 1997. PNAC's stated goal was "to promote American global leadership..." and that "American leadership is good both for America and for the world". They intended to build support for "a Reaganite policy of military strength and moral clarity", a leadership and morality of hegemony that requires no input from the peoples all around the world, just a fantasized direct line to heaven. As some countries remained outside the grip of US domination, impatience was revealed in the planning.

PNAC authored a document entitled, *Rebuilding America's Defenses*, a slick cover for sharpening their claws of aggression. A section named, "Creating Tomorrow's Dominant Force," included, "Further, the process of transformation, even if it brings revolutionary change, is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event – like a new Pearl Harbor." How prescient. Supreme Court-appointed US President George W. Bush insider Philip Zelikow received his Ph.D. for doing research on

searing and molding events. Post 9/11, Zelikow was given the position of executive director of the 9-11 Commission, the perfect position for censoring any and all information that might compromise the Bush Administration narrative of what came down on September 11, 2001. Several attempted criminal investigations into 9-11 were thwarted by Bush, a felony called Obstruction of Justice.

So, Washington's neocons and war hawks got their catastrophic and catalyzing event. 9-11 offered the "moral clarity" they could sell to the world as an innocent victim of foreign terrorists. Now the world must bow to American demands, and not one person on the planet is outside the radar of *Pax Americana*. Bush made it simple by declaring that you are "either with us or you are with the terrorists." Notice that there is no choice in the matter. This is an ultimatum.

Subsequent anti-Constitutional legislation in the form of the *Patriot Acts* claims to supersede Constitutional rights and make every American, like everyone else in the world, a terrorist if they criticize Washington. The critics of US foreign policy are pitted against its disciples.

One woman declared, "I don't care if 9-11 was an inside job, I won't believe it anyway!" To her, the facts are irrelevant, just her dream of America stands. And this takes us to a critical juncture. The success of the Neocon unipolar world will survive or die on the legend of their believers. Maintaining their parishioners both as audience and soldier base is essential. This is why control of the main stream media is crucial for unipolar success.

The nightly news acts as the hegemon's pulpit and the viewers who believe what they see and hear will carry the rulers message to the people at next morning's coffee clutch. The preachers keep the message simple and clear but seldom need to state it openly. Instead, nearly all stories lead to it, so that the conclusion is drawn subconsciously, privately, invisibly, a reductionist creed, a bullet-proof uniperspective: **evil east, angelic west**.

This slogan is policed vigorously. As an umbrella term, no one in the centrally-controlled main stream media is allowed to speak outside its shadow without serious reprimand and often dismissal. The code is not questionable. To suggest that there might be some good in the east or some bad in the west are grounds for immediate dismissal. Many journalists have lost their jobs for questioning the uniperspective.



Generations of uniperspective exposure has been built in to a seeming genetic code of American politics. This is why my friend couldn't believe that 9-11 was an inside job even if the facts prove otherwise. When you step on the toes of the uniperspective there is going to be blowback and denial, denial of facts and anger for *smearing* our great exceptional chosen nation.

When an American was asked, "do you realize that the US has invaded almost every country, sabotaged their elections, or applied crushing economic sanctions to collapse them," her response was adamant, "Yes, and they are better off for it!" This response could only hold value if the west was truly a mythical angel. She is a true disciple, and there are millions and millions more like her.

The very idea that *we are the chosen people* is just too enticing and intoxicating for many people to refuse. Religious leaders have known this and exploited it from time immemorial. The Zionist neocons are playing the same card. Their global hegemony depends on the uniperspective, a united front of *we are the chosen people*.

The chosen few Zionists need a large army to conduct the unipolar world, and what better source can be had than the ranks of millions of "onward Christian soldiers". In the world of sober minds, war is insidious, but in the world of beliefs and make-believe, everything becomes surreal. Generals are heralded as near mythical heroes. Instead of war crimes, their conduct of mass murder is protected by the myth of an angelic west. The love of killing is not only tolerated but respected. General Patton is just one of many who has proclaimed his love of war.

Generals frequent the nightly news, telling us that some new evil is lurking in the east wanting to attack us innocent God-fearing people of the west who would never hurt a flea unless justly provoked. This mass-held delusion blinds us to the illicit unlimited profits made by armament corporations, and it blinds us to the fact that never-ending wars have put us on the brink of extinction.

We have come down to a critical crossroads in human history. The imperial reach of the first chieftains has evolved to a final stage of unipolar tyranny. The intoxicating dream of absolute power over every creature of the earth is in reach, Neocons believe. Ideologically and militarily out of control, they cannot stop themselves from trying, even if it means nuclear annihilation. NATO Christian missiles of Armageddon now ring the Russian border. The purported evil east villain Vladimir Putin is alleged to be advancing west to get us, and the media is telling us how he is doing it.

CNBC recently announced that Russia had moved its border right up to the NATO line. What is a north Atlantic defence organization doing on Russia's border but looking for trouble? It can't get any crazier than this. Still, gullible viewers will believe that Russia has moved its geographical border, like magically to the Atlantic coast of "NATO's line". When beliefs prevail over facts, any preposterous claim can be advanced, and this is a perfect example of it.

The crossroad we face is sanity versus insanity. Will sober voices of sanity prevail, or will the sirens of unipolar wars out of Washington take us over the precipice of existence?

If Putin had put nuclear missiles on the Canadian and Mexico borders of the United States, would Washington make a pre-emptive nuclear strike? You better believe it. Since the crazies in Washington have done the equivalent to Russia, the burden of a 1st strike nuclear war has been placed squarely on Putin's shoulders.

Thankfully, he is not one of the Armageddon nuts in Washington. He understands that extinction is final. If sober voices in the west join Putin in averting a nuclear catastrophe, we may be able to stop the unipolarists in time. Future generations will look back in wonderment and disbelief as to how many of us alive today would have had to have been truly holding our breath. I know that I'm one of them.

Bo Filter is a veteran social scientist, geopolitical analyst and author of *The Cause of Wars and Aggression: Book 1*, available at www.globaljusticepublishing.com

**Saanich North and the Islands
New Democrats**

Stay in touch!

**You can reach your president Allan Collier
at silcol@telus.net**

**Oak Bay-Gordon Head
New Democrats!**

**You can reach your executive
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There is no excuse for racism

By Ron Duffy

Racism is all Europe's fault.

A bacillus incubated in the petrie dish of Europe, whose spores have been traced as far back as Aristotle in the 4th century BC, racism evolved in tandem with European exploration and the conquest of much of the rest of the world. It had grown into a fully formed pathogenic mutation by the time Christopher Columbus reached the Americas. As new peoples were encountered, fought, subdued, and ultimately enslaved, theories about "race" were devised and used to justify the inhuman treatment of people classed as belonging to different "races".

Robert Knox, a Scottish doctor, published his theories in 1850: "With me, race, or hereditary descent is everything; it stamps the man." Knox placed the races he classified as "Slavonian" and "Gothic" at the top, above "Saxon", "Celt", "Italian".

In 1853 the French aristocrat Comte de Gobineau produced his *Essay On the Inequality of the Human Races*, a complex theory which linked racial superiority with class: "A society is great and brilliant only as far as it preserves the blood of the noble group that created it, provided that this group itself belongs to the most illustrious branch of our species."

Europe is a complex region with many cultures in a relatively small area of land. As a result, this diminutive continent, which required foreign colonies into which to expand and flex its muscle, has throughout history brought about innumerable conflicts and wars, not only within its own crowded borders but within the colonial territories it eventually abandoned to rival ethnic groups, including North America. These ethnic groups then fought among themselves for control of the lands once ruled by their European overlords.

In this way, racism became a global pandemic, like the flu of 1918-1920, that infected people around the world, from remote Pacific islands to the Arctic, "making it one of the deadliest natural disasters in human history".

From the institutionalized racism of European colonial times, when racist beliefs—even eugenics—were accepted, to modern times when fundamentalist right-wing politics are still contagious, racism is unique as being a universal disease with no acceptable causation.

"Races" within humanity do not exist. That is the informed opinion of an evolutionary and population biologist, Alan R. Templeton, professor of biology in Arts and Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis. Templeton's analysis of DNA from global human populations has revealed that while genetic variation exists, most of it is individual only. In fact, scientists like Templeton have found more genetic variations *within* so-called "races" of people than between them. This objective analysis, using the latest molecular biology techniques, shows, in Templeton's words, that "There's nothing even like a really distinct subdivision of humanity... In the scientific sense, the world is colour-blind."

The late Sir Peter Medawar, a Nobel Prizewinning biologist agreed: "Our recommendation, accordingly, is that the term 'race' be abandoned..." In other words, there is no excuse for racism.

Debates on the origins of racism suffer from this lack of clarity about the term. Many conflate recent forms of racism with earlier forms of ethnic and national conflict. Earlier forms had to do with struggles over control of land and strategic resources. Too often they were tied to religious intolerance, most notably as between Jews and Arabs.

This three-thousand-year conflict still disastrously contaminates Middle Eastern politics, its poison kept toxic for their own selfish political ends by unscrupulous potentates within and outside the Middle East.

As in the Middle East, ethnicity and nationalism have fuelled wars between religious empires, like the Muslim Turks and the Catholic Austro-Hungarians, or between minor antagonists, like Britain and Ireland, or the peoples of Rwanda, Biafra, Sudan, Syria, to name but a few.

More recently, globalization has added a new stimulant to ethnic and nationalist conflict: immigration. Anti-immigration has become a passionate subject of dispute that has influenced, and in many cases decided, the outcome of several recent elections around the world. Immigration has become a top-selling media headliner. As the world globalizes in terms of national economies, trade, and investment, borders are opened more easily for the free flow of goods, products—and people, a flow regarded as a haemorrhage in the body politic by nationalists who would have it staunch.

Despite the fact that no biological evidence exists to support racism, it continues to cause suffering for those who are its undeserving prey. As followers of the false creed of racism, today's depraved bigots have singled out different groups as the victims of their oppression. They have ignited racism and discrimination, like the torches of the KKK, to enflame fear or hatred of others.

The American Anthropological Association says that race is "a powerful idea and an enduring concept, invented by society". This "powerful idea", being a social invention, lacks any basis in fact, yet it has for centuries promoted inequality and intolerance, and influenced how groups of hate-mongers relate to other human beings.

Racism is now a cause for concern in all the nations of the world. Far from being an evil restricted to one or two benighted states, the moral disease of racism spans communities, countries and continents; it is a worldwide issue. Those infected are blinded to the fact that all the people on this planet belong to one human fraternity.

Suffering from this affliction, racists have been unable to embrace and celebrate the uniqueness of each of the multitudinous ethnic groups within a global society. Instead, the virulent fear known as xenophobia has taken hold among them. Xenophobia, defined as an intense fear and dislike of foreign people, or simply intolerance of ethnic and cultural differences, is a psychological, even pathological, disease that has reached pandemic proportions.

Nazi ideology is perhaps—some would say certainly—the most malignant manifestation of racism, Nazism drew on the doctrines of the Comte de Gobineau; of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, the self-proclaimed "Evangelist of Race"; on the nationalism of Heinrich von Treitschke, a German historian and fervid partisan of Prussia; and on the "hero-cult" of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Nazis often transformed the ideas of these thinkers to suit their own insidious cult. Nazi dogma, partly as articulated by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, was elaborated by the fanatical Alfred Rosenberg, a leading member of the German National Socialist party.

Vague and mystical, Nazism was not a system of well-defined principles, but rather a glorification of prejudice and myth. Its mainstays were the doctrines of racial inequality and of adherence to the leader, or Führer; its constant theme was nationalist expansion.

Nazi expansionism was linked to race in the geopolitical theories of the German geographer, Karl Haushofer. From the degenerate Slavs in particular the Germans would wrest *Lebensraum* or "living space". Strength and discipline were deified by the Nazis, and democracy was spurned as a depraved form of government that protected the weak and the mediocre.

According to Nazi dogma, races could be scientifically classified as superior and inferior. The highest racial type was the Nordic or Germanic; blacks, Jews and gypsies were the lowest. Nazis claimed that ethnic intermarriage contributed to the deterioration of the superior race, and accused the Jews, who were aware of this, of encouraging prostitution and seduction to defile the purity of the German *Volk*. Consequently only small islands of the pure remained, but their destiny was to govern their inferiors and, through scientific

breeding, to extend the "master race" and limit "inferior races".

The Nazis blamed Jews for obstructing the conquering path of the "master race". Marxism, international finance, and Freemasonry were all said to be Jewish plots to dominate the world. Even Christianity was denounced by Rosenberg as a Jewish creation, but Hitler hedged on this point. International Jewry was blamed for the humiliation of Germany in the Treaty of Versailles in 1919; and German Jewry was accused of betraying Germany in World War I. As the world now knows, European Jews suffered most horrifically in the Nazi death-camps and gas chambers, and as slave labour in the service of the unspeakable Third Reich, one of the most atrocious tyrannies of all time.

Regrettably Nazism did not end with the defeat of Hitler's Germany. Born-again Nazism employs social or political movements of the post-war era to revive the hateful, hate-filled, ideology of the once-dead Nazism. Some neo-Nazi groups closely adhere to the ideas propounded in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, others espouse related beliefs derived from older Catholic, nationalist, or other local traditions. Some openly embrace the structure and aspirations of the Third Reich by displaying swastika flags and glorifying Nazi achievements, while others seek to mask their ideology and agenda.

Neo-Nazi activity has surged and declined in unpredictable waves in Germany, France, England, Russia, the Scandinavian countries, the United States, Canada, South Africa.

In April 1993, after a series of incidents, the Italian government passed an emergency measure aimed at punishing racial, ethnic and religious discrimination. The Mancino Law permits prosecution of individuals who incite violence by using a range of provocations, including the display of "symbols of hate". Hundreds of youths have since been convicted under the law.

In February 2005, European Union ministers agreed to continue a long-term debate over the regulation of racism and xenophobia. Among the proposals under consideration was making it punishable by law to deny the Holocaust or other crimes against humanity.

Major factors in the global neo-Nazi upsurge include unstable economic, political, and social conditions, and their many causes. The causes included, in the 1970s, simultaneous inflation and recession—stagflation—due in great part to dependence on Arab oil. Then came the disruptions of globalization and the collapse of the Soviet empire; waves of non-white immigration into Europe from countries formerly ruled or dominated by Europeans; the constant threat of war, especially in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf; and the continued sense among white men that they were losing power and prestige in areas ranging from world affairs to their living rooms and their relations with women, the feminist threat.

In the United States, racial issues not resolved in the 1960s, took the form of conflict over school desegregation, affirmative action, social welfare provision, and government social spending in general. Moreover, the failure of the Vietnam War and more recently the debacle in Iraq produced an atmosphere of political and cultural resentment on the right that became increasingly strong over time, leading to extreme right-wing, Christian fundamentalists like those of the Tea Party, and culminating in the election of the openly racist Donald Trump as president.

Leaders of neo-Nazi groups skilfully exploited the anxieties caused by these and other factors. The world-view of neo-Nazis is shaped by the way leaders frame issues and use narrative stories. That most neo-Nazi frames and narratives are based on myths, demonization, and scapegoating does not make them less effective in building a functional identity for individuals.

This process allowed neo-Nazis to adapt to changing historic conditions and expand their targets beyond Jews and black people. Neo-Nazism has freely borrowed elements from Nazi doctrine, including fascist ultra-nationalism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, anti-Semitism. Holocaust denial is a common feature, as is incorporation of Nazi symbols and admiration of Adolf Hitler.

Neo-Nazi activity has grown into a global phenomenon, with international networks and organized representation in many countries. Some European and Latin American governments have passed laws that prohibit the expression of pro-Nazi, racist, anti-Semitic or homophobic views.

Many Nazi-related symbols are banned in European countries in an effort to curtail neo-Nazism. This is like stamping on a campfire and leaving it for the next gust of wind to fan into flames again. In many cases the catastrophic result is a raging forest fire.

Cowichan Valley New Democrats Stay in Touch!

Contact us at PO Box 102, Duncan, BC, V9L
or email us at cowichanvalley.NDP@shaw.ca

Saanich-Gulf Islands Winter Appeal



**We are building momentum for the NDP here in Saanich-Gulf Islands.
The next federal election is only 2 years away and
we need the funds to help elect an NDP government.
Look in the mail for your winter appeal letter, enjoy a cup of tea on us,
and write a cheque to help us build in Saanich-Gulf Islands.
Thank you for your ongoing support!
Teale Phelps Bondaroff, President**

Nancy MacLean, *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America*

Book Review by Jim Manly

Driving into Nanaimo on Jingle Pot Road, Eva remarked with disgust on stretches of potholes and rough patches that were poorly repaired. Although the road had been in this condition for years, I jokingly replied, "It's that damn NDP government."

It will be no joke, however, as the Horgan government works to repair years of Liberal neglect and right wing policies. The list is long, beginning with disgracefully low social security payments, minimum wage standards, understaffed schools, long waiting lists for medical procedures, the need not only for more social housing but also to bring the cost of home buying back into an affordable range; the list carries on to the need to rejig our forest industry and to solve the financial problems of BC Hydro, ICBC and BC Ferries. Underlying everything is the urgent need for action on climate change and the need to shift to a truly sustainable economy. All of these problems will take both time and money to fix.

Last month, MLA Adrian Dix gave a good example of the kinds of problems faced when he outlined the issues around Seniors Care. Not only is the number of seniors increasing (Hello, Baby Boomers! Welcome, Fellow Canadians!) but they are living longer and face more serious health problems. After Ottawa capped transfer payments, the BC Liberals followed suit. As a result, 90% of seniors in care have not been receiving the provincial standard of care: 3.36 care hours per day.

The shortage of care workers has been accentuated by the practice of selling or re-organizing care homes. Because the low level of public subsidies does not enable Care homes to meet union scale wages and conditions, union workers are laid off and rehired at much lower wages. Small wonder that many skilled and caring workers leave the profession and that new recruits are harder to find.

When a problem like this is put into the mix with all the other complex problems left by the Liberals, we can understand that it will take more than a few weeks to repair. We have to be prepared for some shifts and increases in taxes to meet both backlogs and growing demands. We can be sure that the Liberals and their media friends will use every trick in the book to encourage ordinary citizens to cast blame for all these issues on "the damn NDP government".

The Site C Dam illustrates other aspects of the Liberal legacy. Almost as though they had some deep recognition that this project didn't make sense, the Liberals ignored the need to refer it to the Public Utilities Commission and rushed construction with the hope that it would soon be past "the point of no return". As a result, whether the project is cancelled or continued, British Columbia taxpayers have been saddled with huge costs. Either way, people will blame "that damn NDP government".

One of the new government's early actions was to drop the curtain on BC's Wild West Show of Political Fundraising. In its place we now have a system that provides political parties with a stated amount of money for every vote received; this recognizes the important role that political parties play in our democratic system and their need for some financial stability. As we might have expected this was heavily criticised by many people who pretended that contributions from big corporations had no price tag.

The right wing agenda that the Liberals followed did not drop from heaven like snow on Mount Seymour; it was the result of careful planning and strategizing. The people behind the scenes, those who planned, pushed and financed the political implementation of this agenda, will continue their work; they will not give up because of an election hiccup.

Nancy MacLean's book, *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America*, details the careful work that these ideologues have done in the United States. As the title suggests, the book outlines the history of a movement that seeks to bind democracy and to limit the power of government so that unfettered capitalism can reign. The work of Nobel Prize winner, James McGill Buchanan, combined with the money and ambition of Charles Koch, provides the key to much of their thinking and strategy.

As Buchanan told a 1980 conference in Pinochet's Chile, "We are formulating constitutional ways in which we can limit government intervention in the economy and make sure it keeps its hand out of the pockets of productive contributors." (158) In other contexts

he argued that their work should not focus on who rules but on changing the rules. (193)

MacLean begins her story with the 1954 US Supreme Court decision that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. To help hard line segregationists get around this decision, Buchanan advocated a system of vouchers for parents to send their children to private schools, which could admit or reject children as they wished. Thus, the public school system became the first target for limiting and negating the role of public institutions. As this has spread, teachers' unions in public schools have come under ever greater attack.

In 1956 Buchanan became head of the economics department at the University of Virginia with free rein to chart a new course. Advocating fiscal restraint and opposition to government deficits in all circumstances, his theory of tax fairness claimed that people should not have to pay taxes for projects which did not directly benefit them; in other words, rich people should not be taxed to support social security. (Anticipating this kind of thinking when Family Allowances were introduced in the 1940s, Stanley Knowles insisted that they should go to every family, not only those in need.)

Later at Virginia Tech, Buchanan and like minded colleagues reached out to business leaders and right wing foundations looking for ways to oppose progressive government programs. Among other think tanks that Buchanan worked with was Canada's own Fraser Institute. Among these leaders, Charles Koch became a steady contributor for implementing Buchanan's ideas. Two week seminars for promising right wing intellectuals and payment for research papers helped to build the network. Different attempts were made to form organizations to spread these ideas and strategies. In 1974 the Cato Institute founded with Koch's money relied heavily on Buchanan both for his knowledge and his contacts.

Contemptuous of the traditional Republican Party, Koch and his brother David had originally backed the new Libertarian Party, contributing heavily to its finances. They later shifted back to the Republicans and worked to control it, forcing candidates to follow their dictates or lose their seats through primary challenges.

Along with their allies in Congress, they proposed small measures that attracted little attention but were important jigsaw parts of a radically different American society. Side by side with these measures, they pushed for "reforms" of popular Social Security programs with the pretended goal of protecting them from bankruptcy but, in reality working to hollow them out until the public had lost confidence in them. (Sound familiar?)

Through privatization, the prison industry, has developed into a lucrative business and by calling for ever longer sentences it continues to thrive.

Under pressure, universities raised tuition rates which eliminated many lower income students. With less government support, universities sought more corporate contributions and in exchange gave corporations a greater voice in administration and designing programs. Cut-backs on tenured positions and using low-paid contract teachers had the double effect of saving money and discouraging faculty members from speaking out on public issues.

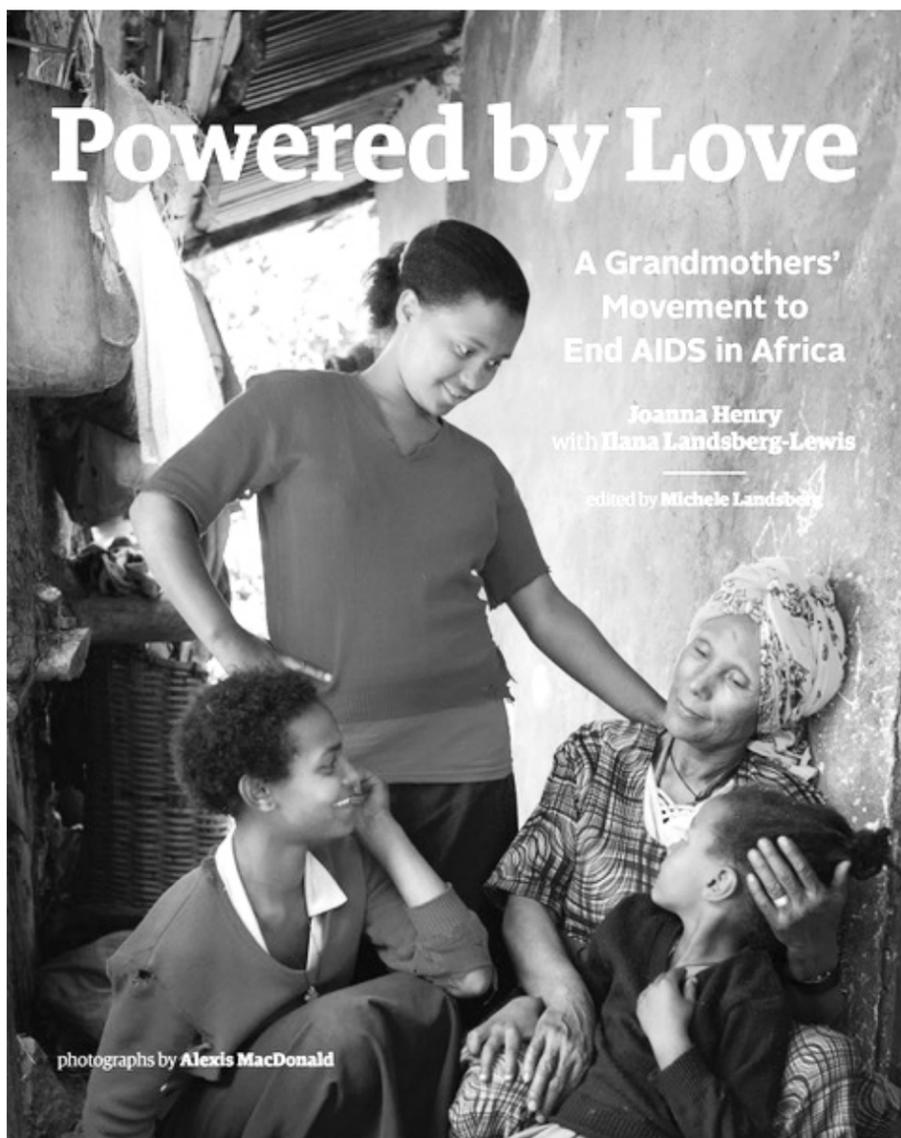
The attack on unions can be seen most clearly in Wisconsin where in 2011 public employee contracts were limited to one year and could not include working conditions or benefits. There would be no more automatic check-off for dues and unions would have to hold recertification votes each year. Right to work legislation is also being pushed in other states.

In political debate liberty and freedom are the watchwords. In 1941 when President Roosevelt spoke of four basic freedoms, he included "Freedom from Want" but this has nothing to do with the freedom libertarians seek. Instead they quote a saying from the 18th Century: "I love liberty; I hate equality." (19)

Citizens groups, feminists, environmentalists, unions are categorized and dismissed as "Special interests."

Even under Gordon Campbell and Christie Clark in British Columbia and Stephen Harper in Ottawa our governments have not been as right wing as they have become in many parts of the United States. In spite of attempts to privatize and in spite of its shortcomings we still have Medicare and we look forward to Pharmacare and Dentalcare. We still have public schools and Canada's Supreme Court has ruled that, through their union, teachers can have a say in class composition and size. We still have a social security system even though it needs to be ramped up. We still have an immigration system that welcomes people, including refugees from widely diverse parts of the world.

And we still have "that damn NDP government".



Powered by Love: A Grandmothers' Movement to End AIDS in Africa, by Joanna Henry with Ilana Landsberg-Lewis; photographs by Alexis MacDonald; Goose Lane

Book review by Starla Anderson

If you give this book to someone, include a handkerchief. The stories and colourful photographs of the indomitable African grandmothers and their struggles to raise their orphaned grandchildren make one weep--weep in sisterhood with them and weep at our incompetence in defeating the monster that is AIDS.

Powered by Love is the compelling tale of the grandmothers in sub-Saharan Africa and the grandmothers in Canada who raise money through the Stephen Lewis Foundation to help the grannies feed, house and educate their grandchildren.

It's about such women as Siphalele, who trained to become Swaziland's oldest and first woman carpenter so she could support her grandchildren; or Ida from Zambia who lost her husband and brother to AIDS, is HIV positive herself, but has a daughter about to graduate as a lawyer.

Their stories and pictures resonate with hope and determination.

By the time the AIDS pandemic in Africa had reached its height in the early 2000s, millions of children had been orphaned. In the face of overwhelming loss, the grandmothers of Africa stepped in to hold families and communities together. Author Joanna Henry and photographer Alexis MacDonald visited eight African countries, interviewing and photographing hundreds of grandmothers (including Sarah Obama, Barack Obama's grandmother) who are reclaiming hope and resurrecting lives.

All royalties from sales of *Powered by Love* will be directed to the Stephen Lewis Foundation to support organizations run by and for African grandmothers who are raising children orphaned by AIDS. *Powered by Love* is available in Victoria at Munro's and in Sidney at Tanner's. You can also order online at <http://Grandmotherspoweredbylove.com>.

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 executive, 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.

LANGFORD-JUAN DE FUCA NEW DEMOCRATS will hold their Annual General Meeting on Sunday, November 26, in the small hall of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, 798 Gldstream Avenue, in Lang-

ford. The meeting will begin at 1:30 pm, with registration from 1:00-1:30 pm. Guest speaker will be Premier John Horgan. For information contact President Sharon Wilkinson at sawilkinson@shaw.ca or 250-478-5907.

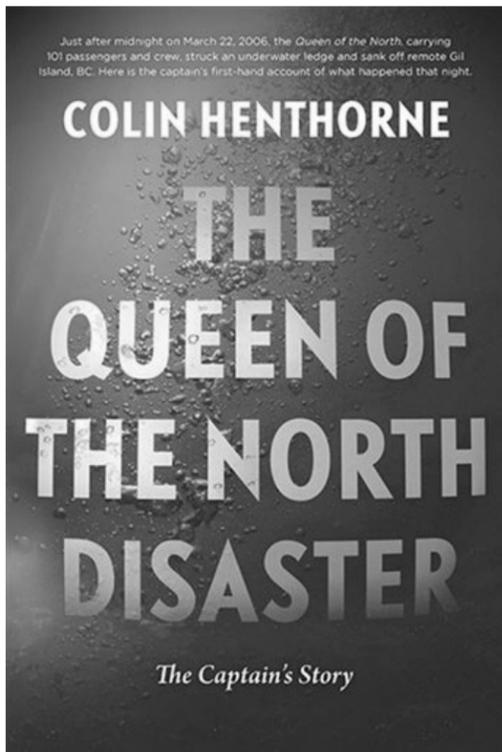
MLA CAROLE JAMES AND HER STAFF invite you to their Annual Open House on Wednesday, December 6, from 4-6 pm at the community office, 1083 Fort Street.

MLA MITZI DEAN AND HER STAFF invite you to their Seasonal Open House on Tuesday, December 14, from 4-6 pm, at 104-1497 Admirals Road. Light refreshments will be provided.

MLA ROB FLEMING AND HIS STAFF invite you to their HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE on Thursday, December 14, from 4-6 pm at 1020 Hillside Avenue. Please bring a donation of a non-perishable food item for the Mustard Seed Food Bank.

PLEASE JOIN MP RANDALL GARRISON for light refreshments and holiday cheer in his constituency office at 2904 Tillicum Road, on Monday, October 18, from 4-6 pm. We hope to see you there. Please RSVP on Randall Garrison's facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/events/883197455168912/perm>

Victoria author wins national nautical book award



Victoria author **Colin Henthorne** has been awarded the Canadian Nautical Research Society's Keith Matthews Award for a book deserving special recognition, *The Queen of the North Disaster: The Captain's Story* (Harbour Publishing, 2016).

The award is given to a maritime book published the preceding year, which, in the view of the award committee, "offers an important record that would, in the future, be cited by historians". The jury lauded Henthorne's book for providing a comprehensive and balanced account of the marine tragedy.

In *The Queen of the North Disaster*, Henthorne reflects on the 2006 sinking of the BC Ferries passenger vessel *Queen of the North*, which happened off Gil Island, approximately 135 kilometres south of Prince Rupert. The impact tore open the ship's bottom and ripped out the propellers. In just over an hour, she sank to the

bottom of Wright Sound. And despite the crew's skilled evacuation, two passengers went missing and have since been declared deceased.

No one knew the ship, the crew and the circumstances that tragic night better than Henthorne, the *Queen of the North's* long-serving captain. This valuable record recalls with accuracy and detail that ill-fated voyage and reveals an inside look at a modern marine disaster.

Colin Henthorne was born in Vancouver and grew up in British Columbia. He has spent nearly all his life living and working on the water. He got his first command at the age of 21 and his entire career has been dedicated to command. He sailed as a master with BC Ferries starting in 1990 and was 52 when the *Queen of the North* sank. He has continued to work aboard and to command ships. At the time of writing he is a Canadian Coast Guard Rescue Co-ordinator at the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Victoria, BC.

The winners of the Keith Matthews Awards were announced in August at the Canadian Nautical Research Society's annual conference in Halifax, NS.

ENGLER, YVES. *A Propaganda System: How Canada's government, corporations, media and academia sell war and exploitation.* 2016. Red Publishing and Fernwood Publishing. Canada

Review by Theresa Wolfwood

"Why do nine in 10 Canadians think this country is a force for good in the world even though our governments have long advanced corporate interests and sided with the British and US empires? This book is an attempt to answer this and other related questions."

Yves Engler continues in this latest book to analyze and expose to Canadians the fallacy of our belief that Canada is a "nice guy" and a peace loving democracy. Instead as he shows we perpetrate and nourish a culture of war. This state of real politic in Canada is part of the fabric not only of government but also our corporate media and institutions of higher learning.

As are his previous books, this is well-documented and written in clear, straight forward language as Engler describes how government after government has funded

military research at universities as well as arms fairs; how we fund aid agencies that support mining companies that exploit societies and the environment. More than that, our governments pump out propaganda which is spread by the supportive corporate media and think tanks with a right-wing corporate bias.

However Engler states that citizen activism can cause change and expose collusion as in the case of activists who focussed on Canada's policy of destroying democracy in Haiti. He shows that our propaganda system although well-resourced can be challenged; "...this Goliath can be weakened by a small band of dedicated David activists armed with sling shots that spread the truth."



A frequent reporter for *Lower Island News*, **Diane Walsh** appeared at The National Press Club (NPC) in Washington DC on October 8 along with Arifa Nasim, executive director of Educated to Eradicate, a London, UK, based NGO providing girls at risk with training in schools and community agencies, in conjunction with UN Global MDGS. Both Walsh and Nasim raised awareness at the Club, and attended the annual Walk in the US Capital against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Walsh has written in detail about the world-wide problem of FGM. Walsh was formerly media accredited as a United Nations foreign correspondent from 2010 - 2014.

Anti-SLAPP legislation at UBCM

By Michele Murphy
Saanich Voice on Line

Lots may be coming out of the 2017 annual general meeting of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). The theme this year was "Roots to Results" looking at the increasing leadership of local government in matters of federal and provincial jurisdiction. This year's program included keynotes, policy sessions, and workshops on climate action, the opioid crisis, and the need for a deeper response to homelessness and housing affordability.

Resolutions that were brought to the annual forum by councillors hopeful of gaining support included litigation for the destruction and prevention of wildfires, the handling of recreational marijuana at the community level, dealing with rats, Canada geese, deer, and UBER, daylight savings time, and Oak Bay Coun. Kevin Murdock's successful motion to put some long-overdue restrictions on and transparency in BC's wild-west of municipal campaign financing.

There were approx. 144 motions being voted on during the five-day convention, most of which had to do with lobbying the new provincial government to take action on various issues. Central Saanich Coun. Zeb King went to this year's meeting with just that intention - to once again ask that the Province create and enforce anti-SLAPP legislation.

According to Wikipedia, a strategic lawsuit against public participation (SLAPP) is a lawsuit that is intended to censor, intimidate, and silence critics.

The BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) says that SLAPPs represent a real and present danger to the exercise of free expression in BC, saying that lawfully participating in the political life of this province can be a risky business.

In plain language, a SLAPP is a lawsuit that a person or company with deep pock-

ets starts in order to shut down someone that is speaking out against them. King's motion contended that SLAPPs are intended to penalize or deter citizens and municipalities from participating in public affairs, unnecessarily burden overcrowded public court system, exists in other Canadian jurisdictions and as such requests that the BC Government enact robust anti-SLAPP legislation that will protect the right to communicate on matters of public interest.

This won't be provincial anti-SLAPP legislation's first time around in BC. The last time the BC NDP were in power, in 2001, they passed what BCCLA said was perhaps one of North America's most robust and innovative laws of the type. BC's *Protection for Public Participation Act* was Canada's first anti-SLAPP legislation. Weeks after it was passed the BC NDP were defeated in the provincial election and the BC Liberals immediately axed the SLAPP legislation. Despite repeated requests to reinstate the legislation, the BC Liberals refused to do so.

But there's a new sheriff in town.

Reporting in from UBCM King says that after some last-minute drama around AGM process his motion to ask the Province to enact this legislation passed. King added that he spoke briefly to Attorney General David Eby who thanked him for the anti-SLAPP resolution and said it is on his agenda for next session. Saanich Voice on Line may be found at <http://www.saanich-voiceonline.ca/2017/09/29/anti-slapp-legislation-ubcm-tales/> Author Michele Murphy, who is editor of Saanich Voice on Line, writes, As a small independent newspaper, with a limited legal budget (\$0.00), Saanich Voice Online follows the progress of this legislation with great interest. Without the protection of our courts, media outlets are extremely vulnerable to SLAPP and have to make difficult editorial choices to avoid putting themselves in the cross-hairs of deep-pocketed news subjects.

Directory of locations, organizations, publications of interest

MLA COMMUNITY OFFICES

Esquimalt-Metchosin Community Office, Mitzi Dean, MLA: 104-1497 Admirals Road, View Royal, BC, V9A 2P8, phone: (250) 952-588, fax: (250) 479-5003, email mitzi.dean.mla@leg.bc.ca.

Langford-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.

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 2A5, 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 3X1, or contact president Ian Morrison, at 250-710-1227.

Esquimalt-Metchosin New Democrats: Write Apt 604, 105-1497 Admirals Road, Victoria, BC V9A 2P8 or email esquimaltmetchosin@gmail.com.

Langford-Juan de Fuca New Democrats: Phone president Sharon Wilkinsn 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 treasurer Jamie Dopp at jdopp@uvic.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 Contact President Donna Marentette at 250-590-2306 or email dmarentette1@shaw.ca

Saanich-Gulf Islands New Democrats: Con-

tact president Teale Phelps Bondaroff, by phone at 778-678-8325, or by email at tealepb@gmail.com.. See also Facebook: @Saanichgulflands or Twitter: @SGI_NDP.

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@vcn.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 Tyee 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 Manton, 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@coast-net.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 maynot 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.

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 the Multilateral Agreement on 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 amd 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 progresssive voices in Canada.

http://socialcoast.org

http://socialenvironmentalliance.word-press.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.