



BOUNDARY
PEACE INITIATIVE

An Urgent Appeal for Unity against the Growing Danger of War

From the Canadian Peace Congress

To all those who share our sense of urgency about the worsening international situation, and the grave danger that war poses for the world today, we issue this Appeal for a united and powerful response.

At this critical moment, ending militarism, aggression and war, averting climate catastrophe, and tackling poverty, social disparity and related global problems should be humanity's top priorities. Instead, political elites, especially in the countries of the NATO alliance including Canada, are pushing the world in the opposite direction.

We are witnessing the emergence of a 'new cold war' and the deliberate cultivation of Russophobia and Sino-phobia, along with other forms of fear-mongering and demonization. In North America, rearmament, bullying tactics and glorification of militarism seem the order of the day. While US President Donald Trump has been particularly shrill in his attacks against peace, his Democratic Party rivals frequently attempt to out-flank him with their hawkish rhetoric. The principles of international law – respect for the full equality and sovereignty of all countries, non-interference, and the resolution of disputes through peaceful negotiation, not threats and aggression – are being increasingly violated. Important agreements such as the Iran Nuclear deal (JCPOA) and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces/INF treaty are being unilaterally cancelled.

The arms race is accelerating, and weapons systems relentlessly "modernized". Globally, military spending is now over a trillion dollars a year, with the expanding US military budget leading the way. Foreign military bases are spreading like a metastasizing cancer, and the world's armed forces are now the largest single global source of carbon emissions from fossil fuel consumption.

As regional and international flashpoints sharpen, the danger of global war – involving the main nuclear powers – looms ever larger. The NATO encirclement of the Russian Federation is tightening, and economic and military pressures, as well as propaganda attacks against the People's Republic of China are growing.

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Backed by Washington, Israel's rulers are escalating their repressive, apartheid policies against the Palestinian people in besieged Gaza and the Occupied West Bank. Imperialist "regime change" campaigns are targeting Venezuela, Nicaragua and other countries around the world. The US occupation of Afghanistan is now entering its 18th year, with no end in sight. Canada's arms sales are helping the Saudi regime conduct a vicious war against the people of Yemen. Even the hopeful signs of progress on the Korean peninsula towards a peaceful resolution of that longstanding conflict are being undermined by hawkish forces inside the US Administration and the military-industrial complex.

The widespread advance of racist, national chauvinist, and neo-fascist movements is adding to global instability. The deepening economic crisis of capitalism is fuelling increased rivalries, trade and tariff wars, even predictions of another global economic meltdown. The crisis of climate change is already bringing destructive weather systems, droughts, rising ocean levels, and other dire consequences.

Canada's Role

In the face of this rapidly deteriorating situation, Canada should and must be a voice of reason and restraint, and a principled advocate for peace and disarmament. Instead, however, Ottawa has become one of the most bellicose voices marching to the 'drums of war'. The current Liberal government of Justin Trudeau and Chrystia Freeland has tilted Canadian foreign and defence policies in a far-right, militarist and interventionist direction, and its bloated war budget squanders valuable resources which would be better spent on socially useful purposes. Any hope that this government would slash carbon emissions, or prioritize the needs of workers, Indigenous peoples, the poor and marginalized, seniors and youth, has vanished. Instead, Canadian military spending is skyrocketing, from the current levels of \$20 billion, to a projected \$36 billion by the middle of the next decade.

Across Canada, a number of useful and important peace & solidarity initiatives are taking place. But we must face the reality that overall, the peace movement in Canada and internationally today is not sufficient to address these many dangerous and interrelated threats. Unlike earlier periods – the 1980s with its huge mobilizations against the danger of nuclear war, or the early 2000s when millions protested the invasion of Iraq – the anti-war movement today is far smaller. The doctrine of "responsibility to protect",

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which the imperialist powers use as a pretext for their geopolitical agenda, has disoriented and neutralized popular resistance.

Today it is more urgent than ever to foster greater cooperation, and unity of action among all of the forces for peace, solidarity and social justice. In the view of the Canadian Peace Congress, the absolutely imperative task of our times is to build powerful mass mobilizations for a decisive shift in Canadian and global politics, away from confrontation and militarism, and towards peace and disarmament. Only such a change can give the human race a realistic chance to save the planet from war and environmental disaster, and to improve the lives of billions of people.

But success requires far more than well-meaning phrases. Common action to transform Canadian foreign and defence policies toward peace and disarmament is needed now! We call upon all the diverse forces in our movement to set aside differences, unite around our shared concerns, and build campaigns to push back the threat of war and militarism, before it is too late!

The Canadian Peace Congress stand committed to this urgent and decisive goal, and welcomes dialogue and joint action with any and all peace and solidarity groups and other concerned organizations and movements to help work for its realization.



We invite you to share this Unity Appeal with other activists and concerned organizations, and we would welcome your thoughts and suggestions. You can reach us at info@canadianpeacecongress.ca, or through the post at Box 73593, Wychwood PO, Toronto, ON M6C 4A7

I can have peace of mind only when I forgive rather than judge.

Gerald Jampolsky

Pursue some path, however narrow and crooked, in which you can walk with love and reverence.

Henry David Thoreau

Every breath we take, every step we make, can be filled with peace, joy and serenity.

Thich Nhat Hanh

City of Victoria recommends class-action lawsuit against the oil and gas industry

Alstairs Spriggs and Frances Bula: Vancouver; Special to the Globe and Mail January 2019

The City of Victoria has become the first municipality in B.C. to support filing a class-action lawsuit that seeks to have oil and gas companies help pay a portion of the costs associated with climate change and is hoping other municipalities follow its lead.

A Victoria council meeting, held on Jan. 17, found that the impacts of climate change have resulted in substantial costs for local B.C. governments, and asks the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to examine the possibility of initiating the lawsuit.

“Our province is in a climate emergency and response from fossil fuel companies has been inadequate,” Victoria Councilor Ben Isitt said. “The cost of climate change has been overwhelming for local governments in B.C., and taxpayers shouldn’t be the only ones paying for the impacts.”

The decision comes days after the Insurance Bureau of Canada estimated that Canadian governments paid up to \$5.7-billion for uninsured damages caused by extreme weather events in 2018. A report in 2015 estimated that storm surges and a one-metre rise in sea level, which is projected by the year 2100, could cost Victoria businesses up to \$415,557 a day.

“We’re all facing the consequences of climate change in different ways, but we have to respond as one,” Mr. Isitt added.

A similar campaign established in 2017 saw 16 municipalities across the province write letters to the 20 largest fossil fuel companies in the world, requesting them to pay for the impacts of climate change. The Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities, representing 53 local governments, joined the movement, but the motion was narrowly defeated at the UBCM annual meeting last year.

Victoria council received only one reply in the 2017 campaign, from Shell Canada.

According to Mr. Isitt, Shell Canada’s response demonstrated no binding commitments to shift away from the use of fossil fuels, or any attempts to mitigate the costs for affected communities.

Andrew Gage, a staff lawyer at West Coast Environmental Law, which is working with municipalities on the campaign, says that although the oil and gas industry is dismissing municipalities’ concerns, some communities are prepared to take a more aggressive stance in the form of litigation.

The City of Victoria is instructing staff to track the city’s climate-related costs, and is seeking legal advice in relation to the letter from Shell Canada concerning the companies’ responsibility as they prepare

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to endorse the resolution at the 2019 UBCM annual meeting in September.

The new Vancouver council hasn't taken a stand yet, but Green Party Councilor Pete Fry said the councilors in his party, along with those from COPE and OneCity, as well as the mayor, support the idea of the city joining a lawsuit.

He said the initiative is going through internal discussions because it involves complex legal issues and judgments about how useful it would be for the city to get embroiled in a lawsuit.

"The lawyers have been looking at it. At a certain point, we will take a decision from council. Then we will have to decide how much political capital to stake on that. On a party level, we have been pushing for it."

Mr. Fry said he recognizes that the public doesn't like it when city councilors start taking on what seem to be symbolic political causes – "they didn't elect the Don Quixote council" – and they wouldn't be enthusiastic about paying millions for a lawsuit that produces nothing. But, he said, they may come to support a lawsuit when they realize how high the costs will be for cities to cope with the impacts of climate change.

In response to the momentum building around B.C., Tara Lemay, head of media relations at Shell Canada, says filing lawsuits against the procedures of energy providers is not the answer.

"We believe co-operation is required," she said.

Continued from last issue: The Minutes of the BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition Conference will run in a series. They were compiled by Laura Savinkoff from comprehensive notes by Beth Novokshonoff.

B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition Conference, October 27, 2018. At The Slavonic Senior Citizens Centre, Grand Forks, BC

Laura stated that to date she has not volunteered for much on the CPCOn Executive because she is still in the process of learning about the organization and how it functions and has not had the opportunity to meet the people involved, except for Miguel. The Convention will be helpful in that regard and if she remains on the Executive, since it will be by election on the floor of the Convention, she will see if she is able to contribute more fully on the board.

We launched into a discussion of the proposed changes to the CPCOn Constitution where Laura asked for direction on how to vote. She explained that everyone on the Executive was asked for input and that her recommendations/suggestions were all incorporated into the proposals. Don said he has carefully reviewed both versions and thinks the proposed changes are common sense. Laura added that the proposal for Convention/AGM be changed from 2 years to every 3 years so as not to overburden the CPCOn and the members; if it is possible and necessary the Executive can call a meeting earlier. All agreed to the changes to the CPCOn Constitution and directed Laura to vote in favour but asked for some clarifications.

- a) Clarification on the status of Associate individual Members where you have the same responsibility but not the same rights and voice at the table;

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- b) A more clear definition of rights and responsibilities of all levels of membership although the proposed changes strengthen the equality of rights and responsibilities at each level of membership;
- c) How will the Executive be structured as the CPCOn grows to reflect representation without becoming cumbersome if every member group is to have a seat on the board;
- d) It is vital that the seat for Indigenous/Aboriginal representation be filled and Laura will speak with Grand Chief Stewart and Joan Phillip to see if one of them or as one unit they are willing to come to the Convention and then decide if they wish to take on this role;
- e) All agreed that adding the position of Recording Secretary is good to ensure minutes are taken and promptly circulated (at present the President is doing this task and that is not a good idea for one person to do everything);
- f) JJ recommended that the structure should be as simple as possible to prevent confusion;
- g) Don recommends that the Convention focus on developing a foundational document that focuses on where we have been and where we wish to go—a Program for Peace, so to speak;
- h) We must ensure that as we work for peace we cannot support any form of violence, so it is good that the Constitution states this clearly

Due to the lack of funds within the CPCOn there is unlikely to be a Travel Subsidy, therefore Laura is seeking funds to offset travel costs; she has booked a flight, arranged a place to stay with friends, and will need to stay over in Kelowna prior to the flight to and from Kelowna, registration for Convention and food costs.

The following Financial assistance was forthcoming: Don Currie - \$100; Kelowna Peace Group- \$200; BPI--\$100 with a pledge of \$200 from the USCC.

After a short discussion the following Resolution was moved by Hannah, Seconded by Don and unanimously accepted:

BE IT RESOLVED that BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition contribute \$200 to Laura Savinkoff towards costs attend the Canadian Peace Congress Conference/Convention

A suggestion was made that a budget to incorporate costs for attending conferences and conventions be established to avoid our representative and/or coordinator seeking funding to attend events and conferences on a case by case basis. It was agreed that this can be addressed at the Spring conference of the BCSIPC. (Continued page 4)

Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org

BPI meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet monthly. To commit call (250) 444-0524 or (250) 442-0434 or email L4peace@telus.net.

What's Up?

For Our Earth: Praise High Our Coastal Heroes on Sunday April 14th from 10am to 4 pm at the Brilliant Cultural Center

Do you value life of Earth? Then find a way to mark Earth Day on April 21st that does not add to pollution and destruction of the planet.

BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition Conference June 1st hosted in the Kootenays. Details on venue and agenda will follow. Remember to include a Resolution in the agenda send it to Laura at L4peace@telus.net.

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434** or email L4peace@telus.net.

The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>

B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition Minutes Oct. 2018

Resolution #2: On Foreign Military Bases: (*Attachment # 9*)

During discussion JJ cited that the first causality of war is the truth so we must be aware that the truth is somewhere hidden among the rhetoric of media and government reports. It was agreed that we must be careful in our wording so as to use facts not speculation. The following suggestions were made to be incorporated by the Communications committee.

- a. In the first whereas remove reference to Canada
- b. In the second whereas remove reference to Canada
- c. In third whereas remove reference to Canada
- d. Add: Whereas Canada, as a member of NATO, is complicit in aiding and abetting the above.

The resolution was moved and seconded and passed as amended. (who moved & seconded was not in the notes).

We now broke for Lunch--Borscht and all the fixings. Laura explained that the vegetables were donated by Save-on-Foods, the fruit by Buy Low Foods; Bread by the USCC Bread Committee; and all the rest by individuals who generously contributed to the lunch, snacks and beverages.

As we reconvened for our afternoon session, Laura explained that a few years ago Kelowna began presenting two Peace Awards at conferences in their region. At the last BCSIPC conference we passed a motion that each region, when hosting a conference, presents two Peace Awards. The Boundary Peace Initiative therefore is awarding two Peace Awards to founding members of our group who have continually worked for and Live Peace: Christine Medvedoff at 95 years old has and continues to attend events and contribute; Harold Funk at 92 has stepped back because of health concerns but was a mainstay of the BPI and therefore the BCSIPC. Christine was very moved and happy to be recognized. Harold was unable to attend but Laura will arrange a time at the Silver Kettle facility to present the award.

Guest Speakers:

Laura introduced two people whom she met back in the 1990s when they came to Grand Forks to speak about Joan's trip to Chiapas and continued to work with them on Banning Uranium Mining in B.C., which we did succeed at with a Legislated Ban. Now we work on stopping the Kinder Morgan Pipeline that has morphed into the Trans Mountain Pipeline owned by the Government of Canada as of a few months ago.

We warmly welcomed *Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and Joan Phillip*.

Joan offered greetings in Sto:lo and then spoke to the fact that the Indigenous people have a long history of respecting and preserving the land. She gave a brief outline of her activism beginning with the Native Indian Brotherhood which pretended to be a Christian organization for a time. She stated that 'what we don't accomplish in our lifetime we pass onto our children and grandchildren to deal with. Therefore we, parents and grandparents, have 4 main responsibilities—to the land, to people, to our respective cultures and attaining and living spiritually. We all share the same space, air, and land no matter our culture or belief system or way of life and must find ways to work together so as not to destroy the Eco-system, our environment, our planet. Part of that responsibility then is to ensure that Big Oil is not allowed to increase production of the Tar Sands, expand pipelines, increase tanker traffic; they must be stopped and it is up to us to do that so our children and grandchildren have a planet to live on.

(More next issue)

Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. I am not unmindful of the fact that violence often brings about momentary results. Nations have frequently won their independence in battle. But in spite of temporary victories, violence never brings permanent peace.
Martin Luther King, Jr.