

BOUNDARY PEACE INITIATIVE

A Peace Program for Canada

Regina Peace Council - March 30, 2019

By: David Gehl as presented at 'Yes to Peace and Progress, No to NATO and War' Conference

Good afternoon,

You've heard from the previous speakers about the role of NATO in spreading war and suffering around the world and the need for a reinvigorated peace movement at this critical juncture in human history; a time when our very existence as a species is threatened by climate catastrophe and thermonuclear war.

The threat of climate change is widely recognized as real and is the focus of a broad spectrum of environmental and other non-government organizations. Only the most ignorant climate change deniers dismiss the dangers posed by human impacts on the global ecosystem. Public pressure is forcing governments to take action to mitigate the effects of climate change. These actions are accompanied by new ways of thinking, international cooperation, invigorated research and innovation. To avert climate disaster we need radical rethinking of how we obtain and use energy, build cities and use land. To avoid nuclear war we also need new ways of thinking.

In comparison to climate change, the threat of nuclear annihilation receives scant attention in our main stream media and from our political leaders. It's not considered a key issue of public concern. Let there be no illusions. A nuclear war involving either or both the United States of America and Russia would exterminate human life on earth.

Canada can play an important role in preventing a nuclear Armageddon but not by continued subservience to American militarism. To play a positive role in preventing war Canada must break free from its traditional servility to a dominant great power. Only by adopting an independent foreign policy will Canada further the cause of peace and disarmament.

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(From last column) A Peace Program for Canada

So where are we now in 2019? As a member of NATO Canadian foreign and military policy is based on fundamental concepts:

- In the first place a commitment to the first use of nuclear weapons by NATO member states.
- Permanent or perpetual war under the auspices of a *war on terrorism*.
- Military intervention anywhere in the world by justification of a *Responsibility to Protect*, a 21st century version of *The White Man's Burden*.
- Regime change policies using political, economic and military means to undermine and overthrow foreign governments not conforming to the norms of behaviour demanded by the so-called western democracies.
- Hybrid warfare utilizing western-sponsored non-governmental organizations to incite civil unrest, chaos and sectarian violence in target countries.
- Intense propaganda campaigns using the main stream media to create *enemy states or regimes* thereby generating public support for increased military spending and preparation for war.
- External economic warfare against target countries utilizing sanctions, tariffs and financial blockades.
- Alliance with reactionary, right-wing forces in key areas of geostrategic importance including the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Latin America.
- Circumventing the role of the United Nations by rejecting the principles defined in the articles of the UN Charter. Establishment of a so-called *rules based* international order governed by *principles guiding international relations* as defined at a recent meeting of the Atlantic Council.

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(From page 1) **A Peace Program for Canada**

As long as Canada is a member of NATO our country is committed to follow policies dedicated to American world domination and war. Therefore, a Canadian foreign policy for peace must start by withdrawal from NATO and subsequent actions for its dissolution.

Canada should pursue an independent foreign policy based on respect for the sovereignty of all countries as defined by the Charter of the United Nations. Canada should cultivate friendly relations with all countries irrespective of differences in political or economic systems rather than attempting to impose governments and values at odds with the history, culture and beliefs of other societies. This means rejection of Western hegemony, regime-change militarism, hybrid warfare and illegal economic sanctions.

Only by leaving NATO will Canada be able to add its voice to the international campaign for nuclear disarmament by signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as endorsed by an overwhelming majority of countries at the UN General Assembly last year.

Canada must stop exporting weapons of war which only add fuel to existing conflicts.

If humanity is to triumph in its efforts to avert a climate change catastrophe it is crucial that the immense resources wasted on war preparations be invested in fighting climate change and improving conditions of human life. By leaving NATO Canada will end its commitment to expend 2% of GDP on war preparations and thus be able to greatly increase expenditures on fighting climate change, funding education, health care, clean water and other human needs.

Yes to Peace and Progress - No to NATO and War
Regina, Sask. March 30, 2019

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A world without nuclear weapons is possible, Pope says in Japan

By: Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service Nov 24, 2019

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN — Saying it is "perverse" to think the threat of nuclear weapons makes the world safer, Pope Francis urged a renewed commitment to disarmament and to the international treaties designed to limit or eliminate nuclear weapons.

Pope Francis began his first full day in Japan Nov. 24 with a somber visit in the pouring rain to Nagasaki's Atomic Bomb Hypocenter Park, a memorial to the tens of thousands who died when the United States dropped a bomb on the city in 1945. In the evening, he visited the Peace Memorial in Hiroshima, honoring the tens of thousands killed by an atomic bomb there, too.

From our sister publication: GSR in the Classroom is a supplementary curriculum for use in Catholic middle and high schools and faith formation programs.

"The use of atomic energy for purposes of war is today, more than ever, a crime not only against the dignity of human beings but against any possible future for our common home," Francis told several hundred people gathered with him in Hiroshima.

"The use of atomic energy for purposes of war is immoral, just as the possession of atomic weapons is immoral," he said. "We will be judged on this."

"Future generations will rise to condemn our failure if we spoke of peace but did not act to bring it about among the peoples of the earth," the pope said. "How can we speak of peace even as we build terrifying new weapons of war? How can we speak about peace even as we justify illegitimate actions by speeches filled with discrimination and hate?"

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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.

(From page 2) **A world without nuclear weapons**

A policy of nuclear deterrence -- counting on mutually assured destruction -- to keep the peace makes no sense, the pope said. "How can we propose peace if we constantly invoke the threat of nuclear war as a legitimate recourse for the resolution of conflicts?"

The pope spoke in Hiroshima after listening to the horrifying stories of two survivors of the blast: Yoshiko Kajimoto, who was 14 in 1945; and Koji Hosokawa, who was 17. Almost everyone they knew then is gone.

Kajimoto was working in a factory when the bomb was dropped. She was buried under timber and tiles, but eventually managed to get free. "When I went outside, all the surrounding buildings were destroyed," she told the pope. "It was as dark as evening and smelled like rotten fish.

Helping evacuate the injured, she saw "people walking side by side like ghosts, people whose whole body was so burnt that I could not tell the difference between men and women, their hair standing on end, their faces swollen to double size, their lips hanging loose, with both hands held out with burnt skin hanging from them."

"No one in this world can imagine such a scene of hell," she said.

Hosokawa, was not able to attend the ceremony with the pope, but his testimony was read out: "I think everyone should realize that the atomic bombs were dropped, not on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but on all humanity."

"War," he wrote, "makes people crazy, and the ultimate craziness is the atomic bomb that negated human existence."

The pope began the day honoring victims of the bombing in Nagasaki, laying a wreath of flowers at a memorial to the 27,000 people killed instantly the day the bomb was dropped and the tens of thousands who died over the next five months from burns and radiation sickness, the pope prayed silently. Then he lighted a peace candle.

The Atomic Hypocenter Park is near the ruins of the city's Catholic cathedral, which was the largest church in East Asia until the bomb destroyed it. The ruins, including a damaged wooden statue of Mary, are reminders, the pope said, of "the unspeakable horror suffered in the flesh by the victims of the bombing and their families."

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If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships - the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world at peace.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The hottest place in Hell is reserved for those who remain neutral in times of great moral conflict.

Martin Luther King Jr.

(From last column) **A world without nuclear weapons**

Thinking that developing, stockpiling and modernizing nuclear weapons is a deterrent to war provides only a "false sense of security," the pope said. What is more, it feeds fear and mistrust, which hinder dialogue.

"Convinced as I am that a world without nuclear weapons is possible and necessary," the pope said, "I ask political leaders not to forget that these weapons cannot protect us from current threats to national and international security."

Pope Francis warned of the risk that the international arms control framework is being dismantled. The Vatican has expressed increasing concern about U.S. President Donald Trump's continuing delay in beginning talks with Russia on extending or renewing the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and for allowing the U.S.-Russian treaty on intermediate-range weapons to expire.

"A world of peace, free from nuclear weapons, is the aspiration of millions of men and women everywhere," the pope said in Nagasaki.

The use of nuclear weapons is not the only threat the arms pose, he said, pointing to the billions of dollars spent each year on maintaining nuclear stockpiles and developing new weapons when millions of people are starving and dying in poverty.

"No one can be indifferent to the pain of millions of men and women whose sufferings trouble our consciences today," he said. "No one can turn a deaf ear to the plea of our brothers and sisters in need. No one can turn a blind eye to the ruin caused by a culture incapable of dialogue."

While acknowledging that many of the people who joined him at the hypocenter were not Catholics, he still asked them to join him in echoing the prayer of St. Francis and asking God "to teach us to be effective instruments of peace and to make every effort not to repeat the mistakes of the past."

A famous photo stood on an easel next to the small covered platform where the pope spoke. The picture, taken by U.S. Marine photographer Joseph Roger O'Donnell, shows a small boy carrying on his back his dead little brother, taking him to the crematorium in Nagasaki.

In late 2017 and early 2018, Francis had prayer cards printed with the image on it and distributed widely, including in Japan. On the back of the card, the pope wrote, "The fruit of war."



Oct. 2019--Packaging 10,000 White Poppies @ Peace Pledge Union, London, UK



WHAT'S UP?



Once again we're at the end of a year and will welcome 2020 in a few weeks. The BPI had a busy year with regular events as well as various conferences around the country.

A very significant event sponsored by the BPI was the highlight of 2019: Peace In, Peace Out! was a hit. Hopefully we'll be able to organize another in 2020 (the committee meets in January).

But, as promised, we will hold a conference in the spring with guests from near and far. So watch for announcements.

In the meantime, we thank every person who helped in any way throughout the year. For without caring volunteers and those who help with funds, we would not be able to publish this newsletter, maintain a website or hold events. We hope at least 3 of you will commit to a monthly meeting to help with planning of actions.

Thank you, Brothers and Sisters for your past support, encouragement and participation and we do look forward to working with you in 2020 and beyond.

Enjoy the upcoming holidays with family and friends and do take a moment to send loving energy to all those suffering from war and conflict, all the homeless and hungry, all the ill and disposed, all who face the effects of climate change, all who face violations of human rights, and all the creatures who suffer because of humanity's inhumanity.

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>**

Canada's fossil fuel subsidies amount to \$1,650 per Canadian. It's got to stop. October 3, 2019

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's vow to phase out 'inefficient' subsidies for coal, oil and gas still hasn't happened — despite the escalating costs of the climate emergency

By: *Erin Gray and Calvin Sandborn, lawyers at the University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre and Emilie Benoit and Sydney Hamilton, students at the University of Victoria Environmental Law Centre.*

According to a new International Monetary Fund (IMF) [report](#), Canada subsidized the fossil fuel industry to the tune of almost \$60 billion in 2015 — approximately \$1,650 per Canadian.

Yet subsidizing one of the world's wealthiest industries is folly.

Such subsidies not only hurt Canadian taxpayers and the economy — they also exacerbate the climate emergency.

Indeed, the G20 countries have already agreed that subsidizing fossil fuels is irrational in a warming world — and have called for action to eliminate inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that distort markets.

The problem is that subsidies encourage the production and wasteful consumption of fossil fuels all while impeding the shift to cleaner renewables.

For these reasons, during the last election campaign Justin Trudeau sensibly committed to “phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.”

The problem is that government has not yet delivered on this promise.

A new 2019 report by Canada's Auditor General reveals government's review of such subsidies is “incomplete and not rigorous,” is “not based on all relevant and reliable information” and “did not consider economic, social and environmental sustainability over the long term.”

Canada continues to subsidize the fossil fuel industry in myriad ways. First, it provides tax breaks under the federal Income Tax Act. For example, in 2015 the federal government introduced a new accelerated depreciation rate for equipment used in LNG facilities, which was a change proposed by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

Second, government provides funding to the fossil fuel industry at favourable rates through direct financing and loan guarantees. A recent example is Export Development Canada's administration of a nearly \$5 billion loan to support the government's controversial purchase and operation of the Trans Mountain pipeline.

Ottawa has no plan to recoup that principal cost from industry — and is also subsidizing half the interest expense with taxpayer dollars.

Third, Canada provides direct funding to the fossil fuel industry through research, development and other services provided by federal agencies.

For example, the federal government is paying \$1.5 billion for the Oceans Protection Plan, an initiative to safeguard bitumen transport through the Port of Vancouver. This plan was necessitated by new oil tanker traffic — and should be paid for by oil shippers.

Yet now, taxpayers will pay up to \$6 billion for the plan over the next 20 years.

Finally, there is the \$60 billion subsidy that the IMF focused on — the “social costs” of carbon that governments pay, instead of fuel producers.

Lacking adequate carbon taxes, governments continue to pick up the tab for the impacts of climate change — for example, repairing damage from extreme weather events, building new levees, sea walls and storm sewers and paying for wildfire control and increased health costs.

Fortunately, implementing carbon taxes and eliminating fossil fuel subsidies will pay off in the long run.

The IMF estimates that elimination of global fossil fuel subsidies would reduce CO2 emissions by 28 per cent and reduce premature air pollution deaths by 46 per cent.

Equally important, the IMF concluded that elimination of subsidies would actually result in a net *economic* gain. Eliminating fossil fuel subsidies will be a win for the environment *and* for the economy.

In sum, Canada needs to implement robust carbon taxes to pay for the massive climate change costs that society now confronts.

Just as important, Canada must finally follow through on its specific promise to phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.

After all, claiming to fight climate change while subsidizing fossil fuels is as crazy as brushing your teeth while eating Oreos. It may make you feel virtuous, but it isn't going to work.