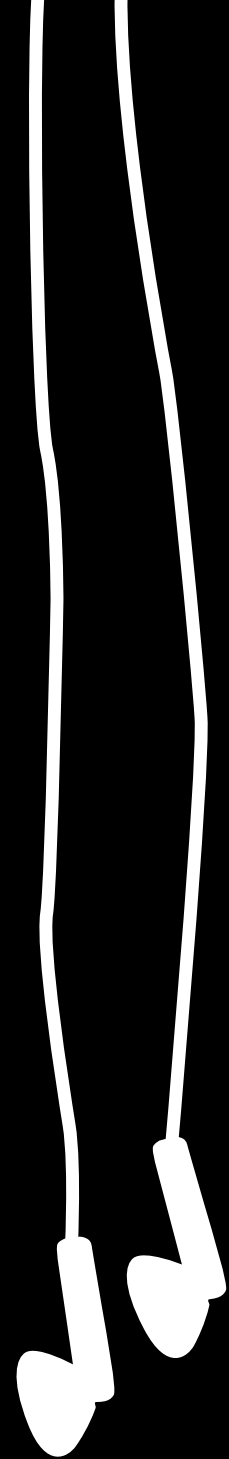


# MONITOR

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, March/April 2016



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## 18/ Registering truth, performing reconciliation

Perspectives on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report and calls to action, and our shared responsibility to correct historic and current injustices done to Canada's First Peoples.

## 32/ The 5,000-km diet

Amy Wood on how Canada's planned trade deal with the European Union (CETA) threatens public support for local food and farmers.



## 41/ Sizing up Trudeau in the post-Harper era

Ed Finn explains why his 2015 anthology with Ralph Nader, the fortuitously named *Canada After Harper*, is an even better read today than it was before the election.

# MONITOR

VOL. 22, NO. 6

ISSN 1198-497X

CANADA POST PUBLICATION 40009942

CCPA MONITOR IS PUBLISHED SIX TIMES A YEAR BY THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES.

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE CCPA MONITOR ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHORS AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE CCPA.

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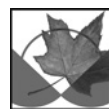
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### Julie Flett

This month's cover artist is an award-winning author, illustrator and artist of Cree-Métis descent currently living in Vancouver, B.C. She received the Christie Harris Illustrated Children's Literature Prize and was nominated for the Governor General's Award for Children's Literature for her book *Owls See Clearly at Night (Lii Yiiiboo Nayaapiwak lii Swer): A Michif Alphabet (L'Alphabet di Michif)*.

## “A new way of living together”

“THE TREATMENT OF children in Indian Residential Schools is a sad chapter in our history,” said former prime minister Stephen Harper in his June 2008 apology. On behalf of all Canadians he acknowledged the schooling program, run by the government and various Christian churches for about a century beginning in the 1870s, was intended to “isolate children from the influence of their homes...based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal.” He blamed the “policy of assimilation,” in part, for social problems in many First Nations communities today, and hoped that the implementation of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, beginning in 2007, “gives us a new beginning and an opportunity to move forward together in partnership.”

The Federal Court-ordered settlement established the terms under which residential school survivors (Ted Fontaine prefers the term “victors”—see page 20) would be compensated for the abuse—physical, emotional, sexual—they and their families suffered. It also mandated the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) whose goal was twofold: to record the experiences of Indigenous peoples within the residential school system, and the consequences of this legacy for current generations; and “to guide and inspire Aboriginal peoples and Canadians in a process of reconciliation and renewed relationships that are based on mutual understanding and respect.” Over several years, the TRC accepted written testimonials, conducted research, and held public events across Canada as it carried out this process.

During this time, Harper’s apology seemed to melt away as the government continued to pursue an assimilationist policy toward First Nations. As Dan Wilson noted in his chapter for *The Harper Record 2011–2015*, the post-2011 Conservative ma-

jority government passed several new laws, including the Matrimonial Real Property Act, Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act, and First Nations Elections Act, which undermined enshrined Aboriginal and treaty rights. The First Nations Accountability Act was “clearly designed to embarrass First Nations leadership and fuel allegations of corruption,” he wrote. When, in 2012, two budget implementation bills (C-38 and C-45) rolled back land and water protections and gutted the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, the powerful Idle No More movement formed to, in the words of founders, “assert Indigenous inherent rights to sovereignty and reinstitute traditional laws and Nation-to-Nation Treaties by protecting the lands and waters from corporate destruction.”

In June 2015, when the TRC released a summary report of its findings and 94 “calls to action” for the government, Canadians were on the cusp of a potentially transformative election. The report’s lead paragraph states the goals of the Indian Residential Schools Program were part of a Canadian policy to “eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct, legal, social, cultural, religious and ethnic entities in Canada.” This was “cultural genocide,” said TRC Chair Justice Murray Sinclair.

This is more than an unfortunate episode in Canada’s history. The residential schools are part of a foundational violence that continues to define this country—a genocidal governing architecture that must be dismantled for true reconciliation to be possible. This violence is today quantifiable in the funding gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services (education and health care in particular), the human rights violations in the child welfare system (see Andrea Auger on page 27), the overrepresentation Aboriginal women in vi-

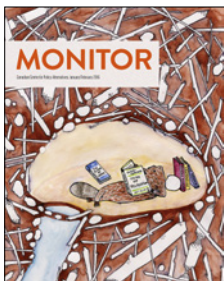
olent victimization and homicide statistics and of Aboriginals generally in the prison system, the number of communities under boil-water advisories, including Shoal Lake, which provides clean drinking water to the City of Winnipeg, and the list goes on.

Reconciliation will mean different things to different people; there will also be remarkable similarities between otherwise disparate visions. For the TRC it is about mutual respect and building a framework in which “Canada’s political and legal systems, educational and religious institutions, the corporate sector and civic society function in ways that are consistent with the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.” For AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde (page 25) reconciliation includes “full participation of Indigenous peoples in resource and development decision-making, and in the design of climate change strategies and energy strategies.” For Erica Lee it can be “recognizing that migrant lives are worth more than borders,” as well as taking opportunities to learn Indigenous languages. “Reconciliation is #BlackLivesMatter,” she writes (page 18).

The Trudeau government has promised a “renewed, nation-to-nation relationship with First Nations peoples.” In December, the prime minister committed to removing the 2% annual cap on funding increases for First Nations programs in the 2016 federal budget. Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett is considering ways to incorporate Aboriginal law into the planned inquiry on missing and murdered Aboriginal women. In this sense, at least, the election may prove truly transformational.

But reconciliation must also live outside politics. In the words of the TRC: “Together, Canadians must do more than just talk about reconciliation; we must learn how to practise reconciliation in our everyday lives—within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of worship, schools, and workplaces... For Canadians from all walks of life, reconciliation offers a new way of living together.” (Stuart Trew)

## Letters



### Victims of sex work

Discussions about the sex trade and sex workers always send me into emotional and mental turbulence. I certainly don't condone conditions where women are abused, cheated and degraded. At the same time, I don't agree with those who maintain that when sex workers are protected there are no victims.

How are wives, partners and offspring affected when a husband/father secretly purchases the use of a sex worker's body?

There are the obvious matters of money, disease and the possibility of arrest. Further, there are the issues of secrecy and deceit. Family members are often deeply scarred when one member is secretly living a life of deception.

As an aside, I'd like to see an in-depth and balanced examination of why males represent over 99% of the

people paying for sex. I'd also like to know how most men would react if they discovered their partners were secretly paying to get it on with someone else.

**Barbara Bambiger,**  
Victoria, B.C.

The article "When sex works" in the January-February issue of the *Monitor* was breathtaking in its attempt to minimize the context of gender, class, ethnic and racial oppression that accompanies the sex trade industry. The authors assert, "While issues of economic insecurity and violence are at play in some sex workers' lives, they do not define who sex workers are or what sex work is about."

Actually, these issues do define what sex work is about for many oppressed and exploited women. Poverty and violence, including histories of childhood sexual abuse, are powerful forces at play in these women's lives and the choices they perceive to be available to them. Minimizing this reality is another way to silence them and render their experiences invisible.

**Adrienne Montani,**  
Vancouver, B.C.

I was disappointed to read the article on the sex industry in your last issue ("When sex works," January-February 2016), which paints the decriminalization of pimping and sex-buying as a labour issue. Authors Jenn Clamen and Kara Gillies rely on the classic neoliberal tactic of using exploitation-hiding language. Conservatives,

for example, frame union-busting legislation as the "right to work," focusing on the workers' so-called rights, but completely hiding the owners—the ones who are actually doing the exploiting and who benefit from a weakened labour movement.

Similarly, "sex work" rhetoric focuses on the "rights" of women to be prostituted while obscuring the real exploiters: the johns, the pimps and the traffickers. Where pimps appear at all in the article, it is only obliquely, using bland euphemisms like "management" or "third party." The term "sex worker" is not a neutral term. It is strongly rejected by many women who have been in the sex trade as it completely erases the violence and coercion that they experienced and that the industry is based on.

Who benefits from the decriminalization of pimping and sex-buying the authors argue for? Certainly not Indigenous and working class girls and women. The real beneficiaries are the "third parties," the pimps who profit from the sexual exploitation of women and girls (and, less often, of men and boys).

**Alison Simpson,**  
Kitchener, Ont.

### Democracy at Work

I was very pleased to read the article written by Pierre Ducasse in the January-February issue of the *Monitor*. If we are to wrest control of our economy away from multinational corporations

and address inequality, we must democratize the workplace through a transition to employee ownership. The article provides us with several models of how this can be done, from co-operative enterprises like the MONDRAGON Corporation in Spain to the worker-shareholder co-op approach illustrated by the Laiterie de l'Outaouais in Quebec.

Another important element of a transition to a democratic workplace must be access to local equity capital. The multipurpose co-operative structure available in some provinces provides for this by allowing co-ops to include non-employee members who invest in the enterprise while still having only one vote. The success of renewable energy co-operatives in Europe, Ontario and Nova Scotia has shown that, given sound information and assessment of risks and benefits, individuals will move their savings from conventional investments into locally owned, democratically managed enterprises. Other vehicles for democratizing the local economy include "benefit" or "community interest" corporations—a new corporate structure that puts community benefit, including employment and the environment, ahead of shareholder returns. The United Kingdom, several U.S. states, B.C. and Nova Scotia have this type of legislation in place. In Quebec the multi-stakeholder body Le Chantier de l'économie sociale co-ordinates

strategic support services to co-operative and other community-managed enterprises in the province.

As the article concludes, it is surprising that employee ownership and local investment are not part of current political discussions on economic recovery and the reversal of inequality. There are many policies that could be used to support a transition, including the following examples: enacting legislation defining worker-shareholder co-operatives and benefit/community-interest corporations, which would be supported by tax and other incentives to encourage existing corporations to convert to these corporate structures; support for training programs in worker and multipurpose co-op management; loan

guarantees and seed funding for worker co-ops, community financed co-operative enterprises and benefit corporations; and exempting policies that favour co-operative enterprises and benefit corporations from foreign investment protection (free trade) agreements.

I hope that the *Monitor* continues to include articles on this important topic, and that political parties and unions treat workplace democracy and community ownership as keys to a fairer and stronger economy.

**Roger Peters**, Ottawa, Ont.

### Canada and the “war on terror”: author’s response

**R**aphael Fischler makes an important point in his letter (“Agency and terror,” January-February 2016), reminding us that

terrorists must be held accountable for their actions. Agreed. Those terrorists who survive their violent acts should be, and are, subject to the full force of the law in the jurisdictions where they are tried.

My intent in reviewing two recent books containing widely differing points of view on terrorism was to indicate that the analysis that takes into account past and present political and economic actions in North Africa and the Middle East holds a far greater degree of truth as well as explanatory power. It is also a view that is seldom heard, except in a dumbed-down version of the colonized exacting revenge on the colonizers.

The second view under discussion, that terrorism is the product of an individual psychological predisposition to violence

that can be identified in advance, is simply inadequate. As most of the individuals currently considered potential terrorists are mostly Muslim, it is also racist.

One does not need to look far to see that the number of deaths and casualties, the extent of the devastation in countries of this region, and the resulting desperate refugee issue that has arisen are all connected to foreign policy decisions of powerful countries with interests in the area. It is similarly not a stretch to expect that a certain number of individuals – yes with agency – will decide that only violent action will draw attention to the injustice.

**Clare Mian**, Toronto, Ont.

Send us your feedback and thoughts:  
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– CCPA’S THIRD ANNUAL –

# TELEPHONE TOWN HALL



**MARCH 22 @7PM ET**

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## New from the CCPA

### Getting serious about poverty and inequality

During the 2015 federal election, the Liberal party campaigned vigorously on a promise to tackle inequality and substantially reduce child poverty. Proposals such as the Canada Child Benefit and a 10% increase to the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for low-income seniors are steps in the right direction, but ultimately inadequate to the task. A new technical paper by CCPA economists **Armine Yalnizyan** and **Seth Klein**, ***Better is Always Possible: A Federal Plan to Tackle Poverty and Inequality***, expands on proposals in the 2016 Alternative Federal Budget that show it would be possible to reduce poverty by 40% by 2020, and by 75% within a decade. Likewise, the government could reduce the growing income gap in Canada (see Power Lunch infographic on opposite page) by enhancing public services (child care, housing support, infrastructure funding), supporting unionization and a \$15 minimum wage, and making the tax regime more progressive, among other measures.

### The case for free university tuition

In today's rapidly changing economy, a truly affordable and accessible post-secondary education system needs to be a priority. The current system, with its high up-front costs and resulting unsustainable levels of student debt, acts as a barrier for many people to full participation in the economy. In his new CCPA paper, ***Eliminating Tuition and Compulsory Fees for Post-Secondary Education***, **Glenn Burley** of the **Canadian Federation of Students** proposes using current federal funding—from loan-based financial assistance, education-related tax credits and the RESP—to instead reduce post-secondary tuition and other compulsory fees to zero. This \$3.3-billion transfer would ease the financial burden on new graduates, with clear spinoff benefits for the wider economy, writes Burley.

### Oral history and education

The winter 2016 issue of ***Our Schools/Our Selves*** presents a thoughtful and multifaceted collection of articles about oral history (the process of recording, preserving and disseminating our understandings of the past through life narratives), education, political engagement and youth. Along with a special section on oral history education, the issue contains articles on poverty, inequality and education; dress

codes for teachers; culturally responsive teaching; becoming and remaining an ally to Indigenous students; and the relationship between vocational schools and the economy. As always, you can purchase a copy for \$15 at the CCPA online bookstore.

### TPP: What's the Big Deal?

Two new CCPA reports explore the likely negative health impacts of ratifying the Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Agreement (TPP). In the first, ***Involuntary Medication: The Possible Effects of the Trans-Pacific Partnership on the Cost and Regulation of Medicine in Canada***, York University professor **Joel Lexchin** explains how the TPP would require Canada to extend patent terms to compensate brand-name pharmaceutical firms for regulatory delays in approving drugs, adding up to \$636 million annually to the price of drugs in Canada. The second study, ***Major Complications: The TPP and Canadian Health Care***, by CCPA trade expert **Scott Sinclair**, finds that TPP investor protections would make it more difficult and costly for Canadian governments to establish new public health programs, including pharmacare. Both reports are part of a new CCPA series, ***What's the Big Deal? Unpacking the Trans-Pacific Partnership***, that will cover environmental protection (by **Jacqueline Wilson**, Canadian Environmental Law Association), culture

(by **Alexandre Malthais**, Institut de recherche en économie contemporaine), investor rights (by **Gus Van Harten**, Osgoode Hall Law School), and other areas.

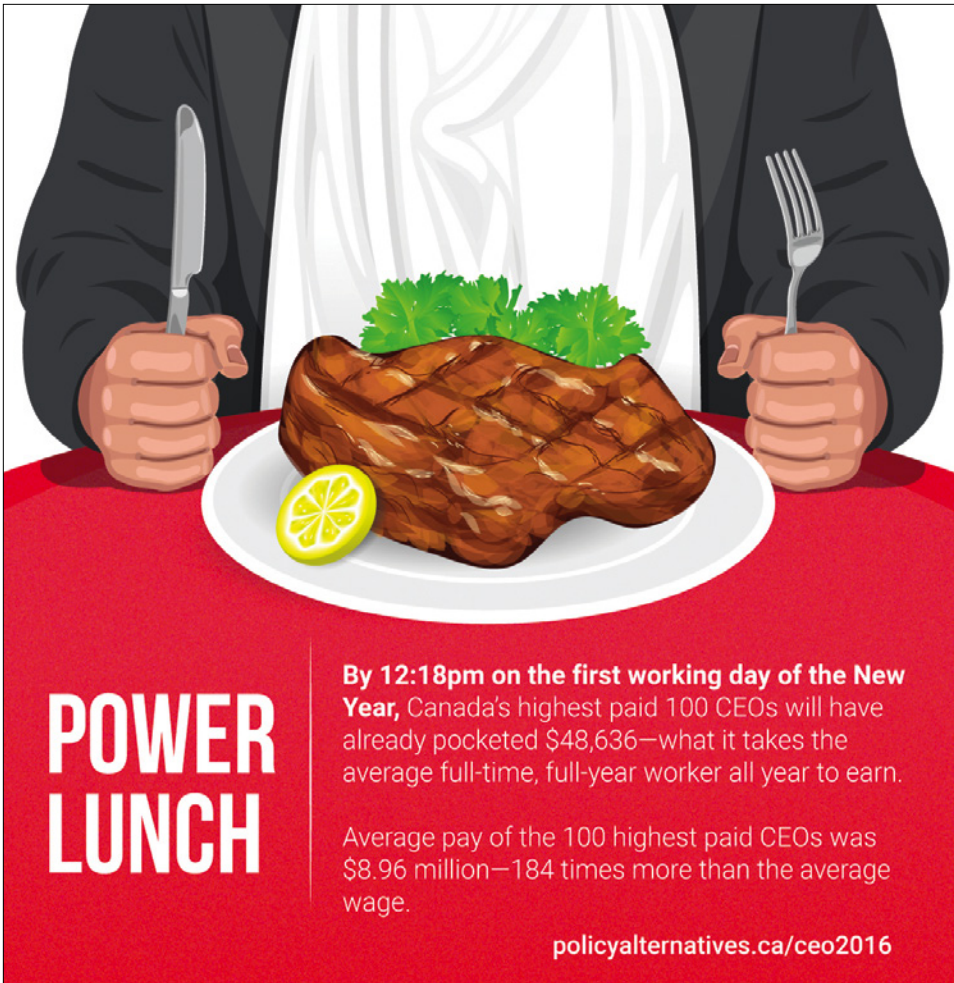
### Underinvesting in Saskatchewan schools

Despite taking in record amounts of revenue during the economic boom years, Saskatchewan's government has failed to maintain K-12 education funding, writes **David McGrane** in the **CCPA-SK** report ***Underinvesting in Our Future***. Since 2007, K-12 funding has fallen from an average of 3.08% of GDP to only 2.6%, lower (as a percentage of the provincial economy) than under any past government in recent history. Had current spending kept up with the last four years of the Calvert government, McGrane writes, there would have been about \$2.4 billion more spent on K-12 education from 2008 to 2014. The report points out that recent changes to Saskatchewan's education property tax regime have exacerbated the chronic underfunding of K-12 and should be revisited, preferably with a view to increasing funding to 3% of GDP.

### How good is Housing First?

The Housing First model is an increasingly popular, and many argue more effective, approach to housing homeless Canadians. But little attention has been paid to the challenges





# POWER LUNCH

**By 12:18pm on the first working day of the New Year**, Canada's highest paid 100 CEOs will have already pocketed \$48,636—what it takes the average full-time, full-year worker all year to earn.

Average pay of the 100 highest paid CEOs was \$8.96 million—184 times more than the average wage.

[policyalternatives.ca/ceo2016](http://policyalternatives.ca/ceo2016)

involved, particularly in the Canadian context. A new **CCPA-MB** paper by **Matthew Stock** attempts to fill this research gap. **Ending Homelessness? A Critical Examination of Housing First in Canada and Winnipeg** examines the difficulties associated with providing Housing First programs to participants with unique needs, as well as problems the model faces when operating in rural communities and areas experiencing a shortage of affordable and/or social housing. Stock argues that, to be effective, Housing First programs need to adapt to the unique circumstances in which they operate, and be but one part of

a more comprehensive homelessness strategy.

## MIA: Canada's peacekeeping record

While Canada provided significant military contributions to global peace operations over the last half-century, very little of it happened in the past decade. A new study by **A. Walter Dorn** and **Joshua Libben**, **Unprepared for Peace?**, published jointly by the CCPA and **Rideau Institute**, shows Canada is currently far behind other nations in its readiness to support the United Nations and train for modern peacekeeping. The Canadian Armed

Forces (CAF) now provides less than a quarter of the peacekeeping training activities it did a decade ago, notes the report. Dorn and Libben recommend reinstating and updating the many training programs and exercises that have been cut in recent years, and introducing new training activities to reflect the increasing complexity of modern peace operations.

## Never mind the Ontario deficit

The Ontario government was expected to present its 2016 budget in late February or early March. In her January report, **No Crisis on the**

**Horizon: Ontario Debt, 1990–2015**, CCPA-ON Senior Economist **Sheila Block** proposes the province should focus on supporting economic stability rather than worrying about debt and the deficit. Ontario's net debt-to-GDP ratio grew at a slower pace following the 2008 recession than it did after the 1990-91 recession, explains Block. "Ontario is at historically low interest rates and will likely have a federal partner at the table to correct fiscal transfer inequities. Both will help the province's bottom line, so the real focus in this year's budget should be on stabilizing the economy." Despite rising debt, the share of revenue taken up by interest on debt rose marginally from pre-recession levels of 8.6% in 2007-08 to between 9% and 9.2% since that time, Block explains. Interest costs took up a much larger share of revenue in the late-1990s and early-2000s, peaking at 15.5% of revenue in 1999-2000."

For more reports, commentary and infographics from the CCPA's national and provincial offices, visit [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca).

Jeremy Appel

# Farm worker rights in Alberta

**A**LBERTA'S NDP GOVERNMENT has encountered fierce opposition to its efforts to extend basic workplace safety and labour regulations to the province's farms and ranches. Prior to the introduction of Bill 6, the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act, Alberta was the only province where farms were not bound by mandatory occupational health and safety standards. As of January 1, Alberta's farmers now have the right to refuse unsafe work, receive overtime pay, apply for workers' compensation in case of injury, and unionize.

The bill, passed by the NDP majority in Alberta's parliament on December 10, amends four pieces of previous legislation—the Employment Standards Code, Labour Relations Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, and Workers' Compensation Regulation—to bring farm workers under the same regulatory regime as other workers. Each of these laws had exemptions for farmers and ranchers. Bill 6 repeals these provisions, applying labour and safety regulations across the board.

The changes were spurred by the death, last October, of three girls on a farm in the Central Alberta hamlet of Withrow. The three sisters, aged 11 to 13, suffocated under a truckload of canola they were playing in. Alberta's agriculture minister, Oneil Carlier, responded by calling for measures to enhance farm safety with the stated goal of protecting rural children. In late January, Carlier announced the creation of six working groups, made up of a dozen people each, who were to begin developing a rollout plan for Bill 6 at the end of February.

"Years of promises made and promises broken by Conservative premiers



Farmers and ranchers protest Bill 6 at a December rally in Medicine Hat.

Photo by CHAT TV

is enough," wrote Alberta Federation of Labour President Gil McGowan in November. "Agricultural workers can now expect a minimum wage. Hazards in the workplace will have to be labelled. Workers will have the right to refuse unsafe work without penalty... In the event that someone dies at work, there will be an investigation."

Opposition critics and some agricultural associations, on the other hand, challenged the government as trying to impose unnecessary labour laws under the guise of protecting public safety. The legislation also stoked outrage from family farmers who felt their bucolic work methods were being trampled on by a social democratic government few of them voted for. Bill 6 "appeared to disregard the traditional community approach to farming in Alberta, in which family members are active on the farm and neighbours help neighbours with various tasks," wrote Michael Hughes, a lawyer who advises employers on labour issues, in December.

As a direct response to this criticism, the government amended the bill to preserve family farming. "Alberta farm and ranch producers with paid employees who are not the owner or related to the owner will be affected by Bill 6," reads a government statement. "This means that family members can continue to contribute to farming operations as they always have and neighbours can still volunteer to help each other out."

Still, many are calling it a bad communications blunder for the government. Wildrose party leader Brian Jean, who as recently as March 2015 told CBC he supported new farm safety regulations, is using the opportunity to denounce the NDP as anti-democratic. Generally the right in Alberta is using dissatisfaction with the govern-

ment's handling of the bill to whip up wholesale opposition to the NDP's policies—namely the carbon tax and a recently wrapped-up oil royalty review.

Though the Alberta Federation of Agriculture (AFA), which represents the province's farmers, ranchers and other agricultural workers, supports the broader goal of enhancing farm safety, it, too, has reservations about the way the bill was rolled out.

"AFA's position on Bill 6 is that while we welcome some of the changes in the proposed legislation, more consultation and communication are essential," reads the organization's website. "The quick implementation schedule and unclear communication about the scope of this legislation has meant a significant learning curve for farmers."

Bob Barnetson, professor of labour studies at Athabasca University, staunchly supports the bill, which he says represents "a long overdue change that brings Alberta employment law for farm workers into the mainstream." Barnetson attributes farmers' opposition to the legislation as a desire to squeeze every bit of profit out of their employees.

"Farmers are no different from any other business owner," he says. "They typically dislike the additional costs associated with paying workers living wages and offering them safe workplaces. They would rather externalize those costs onto the workers."

Barnetson points out small family farms are untouched by the legislation, but their plight is being used as a wedge issue by the two conservative opposition parties to mask their support for big agribusiness.

"Who's really affected by Bill 6? There's about 43,000 farm operations... in Alberta, but only about 13,000 of those have paid workers, so only about 30% of farms are affected by Bill 6, and those tend to be the biggest farms."

Barnetson concedes the government failed to convince Albertans that the legislation is in the public's interest. "Much of the opposition to this bill is frankly hysterically misinformed," he says. "I would think if the NDP could do this again, they would adopt a different communications strategy... Even the premier has publicly accepted that the communication was bad." ■

Murray Dobbin

## Do the Liberals want fair elections or not?

**P** RIME MINISTER JUSTIN Trudeau's election pledge (and subsequent confirmation) that Canada will not have another election under first-past-the-post has morphed into a growing controversy. Trudeau's evident attraction to one option for electoral reform—the so-called preferential ballot, or instant runoff vote (IRV)—and his stated opposition to proportional representation has some analysts and commentators smelling a rat.

That's because IRV is a system that favours parties who are able to lay claim to the ideological middle ground. That is, with a preferential ballot (where voters' second choices determine the outcome in most ridings) the centrist party can garner second-choice votes from both the right- and left-wing parties—as the Liberals clearly did in October's vote.

Is the fix in? Is Trudeau's, and more importantly the Liberal brain trust's, sudden love affair with electoral reform just a plan to stay in power permanently? Trudeau, as you would expect, denied any such nefarious motivation, but more on that later. Let's first look at the claim behind the suspicions.

A political junky friend of mine established the following rules for applying IRV to Canada's federal scene. "When I did the calculations, I assumed that Bloc Québécois votes would split roughly 70% to the NDP and 30% to the Liberals and that Conservative votes would split roughly 70% to the Liberals and 30% to the NDP. I also assumed that Green votes would split roughly 50-50 between the NDP and the Liberals, and that Liberal votes would split roughly 70% to the NDP and 30% to the Conservatives."

Let's apply that formula to a hypothetical riding in which first-choice ballots came in as follows: NDP 35%,

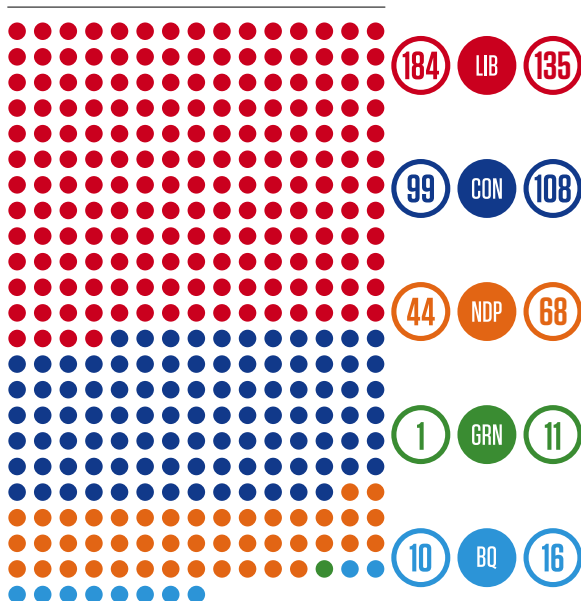
Liberals 30%, Conservatives 25%, Greens 10%. As the Greens received the fewest votes, these are redistributed based on the second choices of the Green voters. Based on our assumption of what these second choices would be, that might give you: NDP 40%, Liberals 35%, Conservatives 25%.

As nobody has reached a majority, the Conservative votes are then distributed based on the second choices of the Conservative voters. With 17 Conservative percentage points going to the Liberals and eight to the NDP you get NDP 48%, Liberals 52%. So the Liberals win, whereas under first-past-the-post the NDP would have won.

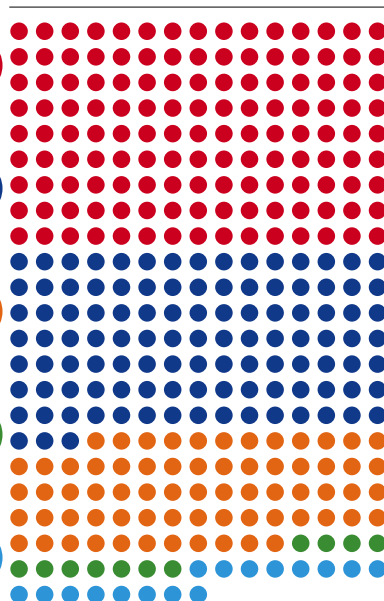
Applying the same rough formula regarding voters' likely second choices to the October 2015 election, we find the Liberals would gain 15 seats from the Conservatives, seven from the NDP, one from the Bloc and lose one to the NDP for a total of 206 seats (actual count: 184). The Conservatives would lose 15 to the Liberals and seven to the NDP for a total of 77 seats (actual count: 99). The NDP would gain seven from the Conservatives, one from the Liberals, one from the Bloc and lose seven to the Liberals for a total of 46 seats (actual count: 44). The Bloc would lose one seat to the NDP and one to the Liberals for a total of eight seats (actual count: 10). The Greens would remain unchanged at one seat.

So under IRV the Liberals, with 39.5% of the vote, would be awarded 61% of seats. That is even more undemocratic than the system that IRV is supposed to fix. Under first-past-the-post that 39.5% vote *only* got the Liberals 54% of the seats. Under first-past-the-post in the October election the Conservatives received pretty much what they deserved: 32% of the vote got them 29% of seats. But under the allegedly more democratic

## First Past the Post Actual distribution of seats in the 2015 election



## Proportional Representation Distribution using proportional representation



IRV their 32% vote would have given them just 23% of the seats. (For the NDP it was a wash: the party's 19% got them 13% of the seats under both IRV and first-past-the-post.)

Yes, this reflects just one election, but it is easy to see why the Liberals would love to have IRV in place. In an election where they started off in third place they ended up winning by successfully occupying the middle ground. Of course you have to be smart to do that consistently, but the NDP and Conservatives would have to be even smarter given that their political bases include large numbers of voters on the left and right respectively.

It is simply a mistake to refer to IRV as a form of proportional representation because that is not what it sets out to achieve. Proportional representation is just what it suggests: a party receives seats in Parliament proportional to the percentage of votes it receives nationally. In the recent election, strict proportional representation would have seen the Liberals awarded 135 seats, the Conservatives 108, the NDP 68, the Greens 11 and the Bloc 16, mandating a minority government and some form of inter-party co-operation.

The agitation for electoral reform among civil society groups has been

focused almost exclusively on the fact that people's votes are wasted under first-past-the-post, that the parliamentary seats awarded often have little relationship to the total number of votes received. Fair Vote Canada points out one glaring example: "In 2008, the Bloc Québécois and the Green Party achieved almost the same number of votes—but Bloc voters elected 49 MPs and Green Party voters elected zero."

While the wasted vote phenomenon is most obvious with small parties like the Greens it can be just as true for the mainline parties. The last two elections were typical in that both the Conservatives and Liberals achieved majorities of 54% of the seats with just 39.5% of the votes. Justin Trudeau's statements and actions on the issue reveal he knows what the problem is, but is loath to do what is necessary to solve it. "I've met and heard from far too many Canadians who are frustrated that they don't feel like their votes count," he told *iPolitics.ca*.

That is precisely the complaint that proportional representation is designed to address. But while Trudeau identifies the problem, he has repeatedly rejected the only genuine solution. On December 19, 2014, Trudeau voted against an NDP motion call-

ing for a system of proportional representation called mixed member proportional (MMP). In a free vote the Liberal caucus was evenly split, with left-wing Liberals generally voting for the motion.

Following the vote, Trudeau's office replied to a letter from the Canadian Electoral Alliance, a group supporting proportional representation, criticizing Trudeau's "no" vote. It stated, in part, "[Mr. Trudeau] does not support proportional representation, as he very deeply believes that every Member of Parliament must represent actual Canadians...not just the political party that appointed them to the House of Commons."

But this is such an obvious red herring that it cannot sustain 18 months of scrutiny—the timeline for legislation on the issue. Trudeau's stated objection to proportional representation assumes it involves a system in which voters will not have a local elected representative; in effect, that MPs will be appointed by the parties.

But MMP, the system contained in the 2014 NDP resolution, does retain the riding system so every voter has access to a locally elected MP. The parties provide lists of regional candidates who are also voted for and used to top up the final number of MPs for each party in line with the percentage of votes each received. No MP is just "appointed."

Asking people whether they want IRV or MMP is about the same as asking whether they would prefer a watermelon or a toaster. The two electoral reforms address different issues. IRV seeks to increase the legitimacy of the elected member by ensuring the winner actually receives 50% or more support based on voters' preferences. But MP legitimacy has not been a major cause of concern in Canada.

First, MPs in our multi-party system are not freelancers. They are tied to parties that express a set of values and policies, and supporters expect them to vote for those values and policies. Most of the day-to-day "representation" done by MPs is related to help with filling out forms or addressing unfair treatment at the hands of some government agency. The desire for electoral reform is driven not by a

passion for better quality representation in the riding, but by a desire for a genuine, robust democracy where peoples' votes actually count.

The evidence in favour of proportional representation is overwhelming. Eighty-five per cent of our peer countries in the OECD have some form of proportional representation. As Fair Vote Canada argues, they get what

we want: "fair results, a representative Parliament, greater voter engagement, more collaboration, more accountability, better representation of diversity and voter choice, and stability."

And if Prime Minister Trudeau genuinely wants more legitimate MPs he can have that along with proportional representation. There is nothing stopping him from including a ranked

ballot as a feature of a proportional system. Now he just has to do it and continue to reject calls for a referendum. Sixty-three per cent of electors voted for parties that want to make every vote count. That is as strong a mandate for any policy that a government is likely to get. **M**

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Robin Yassin-Kassab

## Peace, not pacification, in Syria

**A**SI WRITE in early February, state representatives are attending the theatre in Geneva. In Syria, meanwhile, reality prevails: in one day a tented camp of the displaced in the Latakia hills is bombed, barrel bombs rain on the south and the Damascus suburbs, Russia's cluster bombs crumple over the north, and up to 100 people are asphyxiated by chlorine gas in Moadamiyah. Let's hope the seats in the theatre are comfortable.

Russia, the prime mover of the process, is inviting its own "opposition" delegates. It complains (with Assad and Iran) that the actual opposition delegation contains "terrorists." The thousands of Iranian-backed transnational Shia jihadists in Syria are not considered terrorists and should not be discussed at this stage.

The United States accepts these terms, and instead of the "transitional government" agreed upon as the ultimate goal in previous Geneva talks, it speaks now of a "national government." In other words, Assad, who is responsible for the overwhelming number of civilian casualties and displacements, can stay so that all may confront the "greater evil" of jihadism.

Yet 80% of Russian bombs are falling not on ISIS but on the opposition to both ISIS and Assad; that is, on the communities which previously drove ISIS from their areas. A quarter of a million more people have been displaced as a result of the Russian as-

sault, which hits courthouses, schools, hospitals and aid convoys.

The clear aim of this campaign is to annihilate the democratic-nationalist opposition so that only Assad and the jihadists remain. Then, Putin assumes, the world will have no choice but to assist him in winning the whole country back for Assad. But demographic realities will ensure that a large chunk of Syria remains forever out of Assad's grasp.

So long as the traumatization of this scorched territory continues, so too will radicalization. Because it declares an end-times war on everyone, ISIS will eventually be defeated. But Jabhat al-Nusra (al-Qaida's Syrian branch), or a successor organization, will inherit.

There is no real peace process. "Geneva 3" is better understood as a pacification process, as appeasement. We should at least speak honestly. Syria's downward spiral cannot be halted until the aerial bombardment of civilian areas is stopped. This would involve robust (diplomatic, economic) argument with the Russians, something Obama has avoided over Ukraine as well as Syria. It would mean either establishing a no-fly zone, shooting down whatever planes bomb civilians, or allowing the currently defenceless opposition access to anti-aircraft weapons.

Once the bombing stops, and sieges are lifted, the displaced can return and economic and social life can be revived. Space will grow for democratic

activism even as it shrinks for jihadism. And then a genuine settlement process could begin. What might that look like?

The opposition's High Negotiations Committee came out of a meeting in Saudi Arabia that brought together the National Co-ordination Committee (a Damascus-based body semi-tolerated by the regime), the Istanbul-based Coalition, and the leaders of democratic-nationalist (Free Army) and nationalist-Islamist militias. The latter included, at the more extreme end, Jaysh al-Islam, and Ahrar al-Sham, Salafist Syrian pragmatists who must be involved in a final settlement, as must regime-loyalist Alawi communities, lest they act as spoilers.

Jaysh al-Islam, the dominant militia in the eastern Ghouta, is probably responsible for the abduction of the revolutionary activists known as the Douma Four, including Razan Zaitouneh, a human rights lawyer and founder of the Local Co-ordination Committees. My book with Leila al-Shami, *Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War*, is dedicated to Razan, a woman of fearless principle whose fate in some way is emblematic of Syria's. Worse, Jaysh al-Islam's leaders have sometimes made sectarian threats that wound the revolution by further alienating minority groups. Its position on democracy as a desired end is ambiguous at best.

For these reasons civil revolutionaries often find themselves opposing Jaysh al-Islam's authoritarianism

while at the same time insisting that it be recognized as part of the revolution and part of the settlement. Despite its abuses, the militia is subject to popular pressure. Its assaults on activists are exceptions, therefore, whereas in Assad or ISIS areas they are the rule. Free elections have been held in Jaysh al-Islam territory. And Jaysh al-Islam has been the most effective opponent of ISIS in the Damascus region.

Ahrar al-Sham pulled out of the Saudi meeting complaining that the conference did not recognize Syria's "Muslim identity" and gave too much representation to the National Co-ordination Committee, which is not really a revolutionary body. Difficult though it is, it is important to try to bring such groups into the political process and to distance them from Jabhat al-Nusra, Syria's al-Qaida, with whom they sometimes collaborate on the battlefield.

If Syria is to survive, the fighting men of the nationalist and Islamist opposition must merge with whatever remains of the post-regime Syrian army to take on ISIS, Nusra and other transnational jihadists (including the Shia ones). But for this to happen, the immediate threat of Assad's scorched-earth policy must be lifted.

Even as they execute their own opposition clerics and endlessly bomb Yemen, the Saudis should be congratulated for bringing together a broad spectrum of the Syrian Arab opposition. If current circumstances change so that a real peace process becomes viable, the High Negotiations Committee could perhaps form a credible negotiating team to sit down with the PYD (the dominant party/militia in Syria's Kurdish areas) and representatives of pro-regime communities.

The Saudi recipe, however, misses a vital ingredient—the local councils, sometimes called revolutionary councils, which have been established throughout the country. These are practical, not ideological organizations. Their members are civil activists, family and tribal leaders, and people selected for technical or professional skills. They do their best in the very worst conditions to provide humanitarian aid and fulfil basic

needs where the state has either collapsed or deliberately withheld them, including water, electricity, waste disposal and health care.

The idea started with activist Omar Aziz, who wrote an influential paper on self-organization in the revolution's eighth month. Aziz was an anarchist who believed that protesting the regime by itself was useless if revolutionaries did not build alternatives to repressive state structures. He advocated forming councils as grassroots community forums, and helped set up the councils in Barzeh and Zabadani before his arrest and then death in prison in February 2013.

Council members are appointed by some form of democratic process, though the form differs from place to place, and is most severely restricted in regime- or ISIS-controlled areas where the councils must operate in secret.

Aziz Asaad, one activist we interviewed for our book, described the challenges this way:

It was difficult for us—particularly in the middle of a revolution calling for pluralism and democracy—to select revolutionary representatives by democratic process.... It was made worse by the fact that we were in a regime-controlled area and so constantly feared arrest. When we formed the local council in Salamiyah we adopted what you could call "the democracy of the revolutionary elite." In secret we chose 11 people from about 55.

In the rebel-held "liberated" areas, however, the councils are selected by democratic ballot—the first free elections in Syria in over four decades. In recent elections in the Ghouta, militia leaders were not allowed to stand. Fighters were, but none were elected. In recent months, provincial elections have been held in the Daraa region, too, where the Free Army's Southern Front holds sway.

It is a sad irony (and one reason why we wrote our book) that the previous decade's invasion of Iraq was supposedly done for the sake of democracy, yet almost nobody in the West today

is aware of the Syrian people's self-organized experiments in democracy. The western public, failed by journalism, are more likely to question Arabs' capacity for democracy than to marvel at the Syrian achievement under full-scale military assault.

The councils are not always perfect. Sometimes they are rendered dysfunctional by factionalism or intimidated by warlords. But they are the closest thing we have to true representatives of the Syrian people, and they should therefore be strongly present at any meeting discussing Syria's fate.

If world powers are genuinely interested in moving the region away from war and jihadism and toward peace and democracy they should support the councils more powerfully than they are already doing. Financial support is not enough; there's no point gifting new rubbish-collection trucks if they will be bombed in their first week. At the same time, Syrian oppositional elites and militias should be encouraged to recognize the central democratic achievement of the local councils, and thereby to develop a decentralized vision of the future.

The myth that a strong central state ensures the strength and dignity of its people runs deep in oppositional consciousness—nationalist, leftist and Islamist—despite all the evidence to the contrary. But decentralization is the best way to deal with Syria's currently explosive ethnic and sectarian polarizations. It would mean a recognition of autonomy for the Kurds, who have set up their own council system. It would also mean that different areas could govern themselves according to their social and sectarian composition. So alcohol, for instance, may be banned by one council but permitted by another.

The alternative to decentralization is partition, which in any case is the natural end to Putin's bombardment. Partition means greater ethnic cleansing than yet seen. It means the permanence of refugee camps. It means an Assadist rump on the Mediterranean coast to be squabbled over by Iran and Russia, and a vengeful, burnt Sunni territory cut off from the sea. It would be a disaster for the Syrian people, and for global security too. **M**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALISHA DAVIDSON



LYNNE FERNANDEZ

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISES CUT CARBON

In a new SSHRC-funded report for the CCPA-MB I explain how a combination of governmental policies and initiatives in Manitoba allows social enterprises to reduce Manitoba's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while training and employing inner-city workers. The provincial government and Manitoba Hydro are supporting social enterprises in two emerging "green" sectors: building retrofits, and alternative energy installations.

I examine three social enterprises in the report. The first, Aboriginal-owned Aki Energy (Aki is Oji-Cree for Earth), works with Manitoba Hydro to connect First Nations—the majority of which rely on expensive electric heating—to pay-as-you-save (PAYS) financing. This money pays for the upfront equipment and installation costs of geothermal systems, which is then recovered on consumer utility bills for 20 years. Since the savings are greater than the

financing charge, participating First Nation households see relief from day one.

In its first year, Aki Energy trained 30 First Nation workers in geothermal installation and installed 110 residential geothermal systems in Peguis First Nation and the Fisher River Cree Nation. Families who received the new systems will cumulatively save about \$44,000 per year in reduced utility costs. Manitoba Hydro recently announced plans to install \$18 million worth of geothermal to about 1,200 homes over the next three years, and Aki Energy is currently expanding this program to a number of other First Nations.

Building Urban Industry for Local Development (BUILD), which started up in 2006, and the Brandon Energy Efficiency Program (BEEP) are Manitoba social enterprises that train people facing multiple barriers in the workforce. Located in the city of Brandon, and administered by the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (part of the gov-

ernment's Neighbourhoods Alive! program), BEEP currently works with 12 government-funded trainees who were previously unemployed and/or collecting federal EI or employment and income assistance (EIA) from the province. Participants install attic, basement and wall cavity insulation—all highly marketable skills. So far, BEEP has completed energy, water-efficiency and insulation upgrades in over 600 provincial housing units. More recently, Manitoba Housing hired BEEP to complete asbestos and mold remediation on 25 duplexes in Brandon prior to completing exterior refreshes.

BUILD now works with 50 trainees per year. They tend to be Aboriginal men who live in Winnipeg's inner city or the North End, but there are also some newcomers and females among the trainees. Almost all of them are reeling from the effects of racism and colonialism; they are under-educated, lacking stable housing, and have often had contact with the justice system.

For two months, trainees learn trades-based math for 1.5 hours every morning in preparation for an essential skills assessment. They then move on to hard skills training in building insulation, taping, mudding, hanging doors and drywalling. Soft skills cover everything from nutrition, parenting and budgeting to stress management and work ethics. Those who successfully work through the training program have the opportunity to move to the social enterprise side of BUILD where they work on government procurement jobs through Manitoba Housing and Manitoba Hydro.

Another social enterprise, Manitoba Green Retrofit (MGR), does energy-efficient retrofits for Manitoba Housing, as well as property management, demolition and salvage, "make readies" (repairs), and offers an effective bed bug treatment, Bug N Scrub, that is free to vulnerable renters or purchasable directly from the company. Many MGR employees graduated from the BUILD program, demonstrating the success of these enterprises at transitioning people into the labour market.

Of all the government support for these programs in Manitoba, the Ener-

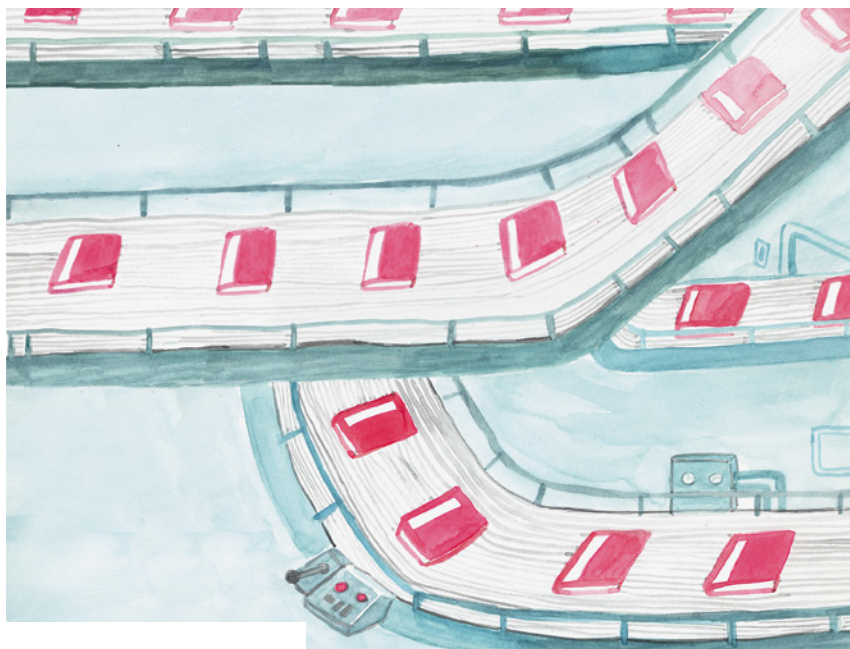
gy Savings Act is particularly helpful in its promotion of social enterprises to improve energy efficiency and reduce GHGs. Given their potential to simultaneously train and employ previously unemployable workers, the legislation could go further. For example, we could use some hard targets for building retrofits in more low-income housing units, and the province could be exploiting the social enterprise model in areas outside of housing and hydro. The City of Winnipeg should take note as well.

One more element in the model needs to be puzzled out: how to help trainees transition into a tougher private sector where employers are not as supportive. Research by the CCPA-MB suggests it would be helpful in this regard to adopt an Aboriginal-focused Labour Market Intermediary (LMI), which the province is currently considering. An LMI is a network of community-based organizations that provide important services (e.g., addictions counselling, child care, resume writing, drivers licences) to workers facing multiple barriers to entering the workforce. Ideally it would also include educational institutions, interested employers and relevant trade unions, and could, if implemented, help complete the province's social enterprise strategy.

Social enterprises have come a long way in Manitoba over the current government's 15 years in office. Using government procurement to support social enterprise has great potential for lowering incarceration and welfare costs, boosting revenue through increased taxation and meeting Manitoba's labour market needs.

With provincial elections in April, many wonder how the sector will fare if there is a change in government, whether a different party would see the value in what has been so painstakingly built up. It would be tragic if the social enterprise framework were to be dismantled when it clearly produces environmental and job-training results. Much has been gained, but there is much more left to do.

LYNNE FERNANDEZ HOLDS THE ERROL BLACK CHAIR IN LABOUR ISSUES AT THE CCPA-MB AND IS THE AUTHOR OF THE NEW REPORT, *HOW GOVERNMENT SUPPORT TO SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CAN REDUCE POVERTY AND GREEN HOUSE GASES*, AVAILABLE AT [WWW.POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA](http://WWW.POLICYALTERNATIVES.CA).



WAYNE ANTONY

## CANADA'S CULTURAL POLICY NEEDS LOVE

In the 1970s, 98% of book publishers were located in Toronto and Montreal. By 2009, there were at least 235 publishers in 80 cities. Currently, Canada's more than 300 independent publishers issue 10,000+ new titles a year. In Manitoba, for example, local publishers put out as many as 120 titles a year, the majority of them authored by Canadian and Manitoba writers.

In addition to enhancing our quality of life, writing and publishing are important to the Canadian economy. Domestic publishers provide more than 9,000 jobs and generate \$2 billion in revenue annually. In Manitoba, locally owned independent publishing is a \$4-million industry. Publisher dollars stay in Manitoba at a level higher than in most other industries (76%), with 84% of that going to wages and salaries.

Still, the industry faces serious challenges. Writers' incomes decreased by 27% between 1998 and 2015, and 80% of writers earn writing incomes below the poverty line, averaging \$12,879 per year. Wages in publishing (for editors,

designers, publicists and others) are low compared to other workers in Canada, and life is precarious for many independent publishers.

There are three main public policy challenges to fixing the situation: erosion of copyright protection, frozen funding that has not kept pace with inflation, and ineffective foreign ownership policies. The federal government must see books through the lens of cultural policy, as historically was the case, rather than purely capitalist economics.

The Copyright Modernization Act of 2012 has had and will continue to have a negative impact on independent Canadian publishers, most notably by adding education to the list of "fair dealing" exceptions to copyright law. Educators in the K-12 (kindergarten to Grade 12) and post-secondary sectors have broadly interpreted the act's fair dealing provisions by stopping or drastically reducing payment for copyrighted work.

The financial impact of these interpretations has been significant for



publishers and writers. According to a 2015 study by PricewaterhouseCoopers, publisher revenues related to copyright decreased by 12% between 2010 and 2014. Because this revenue represents 16% of earnings, its loss can be the difference between staying in business or not for small and mid-sized Canadian publishers.

As these revenues continue to erode, many small firms will be forced out of the industry, which will lead to more consolidation and domination by multinational publishers. This, in turn, will result in less content diversity, less Canadian cultural and political content, higher prices and fewer works by Canadian writers.

Litigation over fair dealing is unnecessarily costly—one of several good reasons to address these concerns before the 2017 mandatory review of the Copyright Modernization Act. An immediate review would help clarify the fair dealing provisions and facilitate negotiations on fair dealing between educational institutions, producers and creators.

Governments in Canada do invest in independent publishing. The federal government does this mainly through the Canada Book Fund (CBF) and the Canada Council for the Arts, both administered by the Department of Culture and Heritage (DCH).

The CBF provides eligible publishers with operating support and special project grants. Provincial culture departments also invest in operating support, marketing assistance, special projects and, in some provinces, tax credits. Provincial funding varies from province to province, with Ontario and British Columbia at the high end and the Atlantic provinces nearer the bottom. This situation tends to lead to consolidation on a national level—a disproportionate number of books published about urban and Central Canada and B.C. issues.

There is a significant return on government investment in publishing. For example, the \$30 million invested in the CBF's Support to Publishers Program helps generate \$413 million in sales. In Manitoba, government investment is returned dollar for dollar.

The total CBF budget of \$39 million has not changed in over 15 years; in fact, it has gone down when inflation and

costs are taken into account. A very modest part of that money (\$100,000 annually), which publishers match dollar for dollar, went toward a professional development travel subsidy, but this program will be terminated in 2016. Without this support, Canadian publishers, especially those outside of major cities, will find participating in professional training opportunities virtually impossible.

To achieve cultural goals, funding for Canadian book publishing needs to be stable, and at least keep up with inflation and industry needs. The government should increase CBF funding to \$48 million and reinstate the professional development subsidy.

About 4% of publishers in Canada are foreign-owned, but they account for 44% of total sales and 67% of sales in educational books from kindergarten to Grade 12. Canadian-owned publishers account for 56% of publishing industry revenue, but produce 80% of new Canadian-authored books.

In distribution and retailing, of Canada's 3,000 bookstores Chapters accounts for 44% of sales, Walmart and Costco take 10% each, and independents account for 20%. The four largest distributors are foreign-owned. In Quebec, the publishing and distribution landscape is completely different: there are no foreign-owned publishers, and distribution and retailing, while concentrated, are dominated by Quebec- or Canadian-owned firms.

In 1992, the federal government revised the rules governing foreign investment in publishing and distribution through changes to the Investment Canada Act. The new rules have two key elements: new firms or acquisitions by foreign firms must be Canadian-controlled, otherwise there must be a "net benefit" to Canada from the sale or new firm. Between 1999 and 2010, 99% of all foreign investments in cultural industries were approved; only two of 46 foreign book-publishing applications were declined.

In a 2010 review of the policy, most Canadian publishers advocated at least maintaining ownership restrictions in both publishing and distribution (including retail). Some publishers advocated expanding the Canadian ownership restriction. No policy changes resulted from the review.

Since 2011, there have been numerous exceptions to the policy that have no benefit for Canadian publishing and which eroded capacity of the Canadian-owned sector. For example, the government allowed Amazon to set up a Canadian warehouse, let Simon and Shuster establish in Canada, and green-lighted the sale of McClelland and Stewart (M&S) to Random House.

Amazon was allowed to create Amazon.ca on the rationale that without a domestic workforce or physical presence in Canada it was exempt from ownership rules. The government then bent (or ignored) the rules again by allowing Amazon, with its new Canadian footprint, to establish a warehouse. M&S was sold to Random House (owned by German publishing behemoth Bertelsmann) with very few conditions. Long-term investment by the Canadian government was lost, staffing levels dropped, and all sales, marketing and production have been consolidated into Random House. Fewer books are being published by M&S, while its backlist of classic Canadian titles is now owned by a non-Canadian corporation.

When the playing field is level, Canadian publishers can enrich us culturally and economically whereas multinationals use their power to enhance profits and market share. At a minimum the federal government needs to abide by the ownership conditions that were instrumental in fostering an independent Canadian publishing infrastructure. It could easily go much further to enhance cultural development by implementing recommendations from the 2010 foreign investment policy review and expanding ownership restrictions in publishing.

The federal government has failed Canadian culture at every critical juncture over the past decade. The effect of its actions or inactions has been to support a central capitalist economic tendency toward ever-increasing concentration and centralization, which is in the interest of big corporations, but not the public. Without significant changes, we risk a situation where there is no one to preserve our diverse stories and histories, and nothing but imported books to read.

WAYNE ANTONY IS A CO-PUBLISHER AT FERNWOOD PUBLISHING AND A MEMBER OF THE CCPA-MB STEERING COMMITTEE.

# LAV at first sight

## Canada's arms deal with Saudi Arabia



### \$14.8 billion

The amount Saudi Arabia will pay General Dynamics for an undisclosed number of LAV III vehicles to be built at its plant in London, Ontario. The deal was negotiated by a Crown corporation, the Canadian Commercial Corp., in 2014.

### \$12.6 billion

Estimated annual revenues from Canadian defence industries, half of that from exports. The arms sector employs about **109,000** people, according to the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries.

### \$80.8 billion

Saudi Arabia's defence purchases in 2014, more than **10%** of its GDP, making it the fourth biggest spender, dollar for dollar, in the world, and

amounting to **4.5%** of total military spending globally. The spending is expected to increase despite the low price of oil, as Saudi Arabia flexes its muscle in the region.

### 89%

Amount by which military exports to countries other than the United States shot up between 2006 and 2013 under the Harper government. Nearly a quarter of Canada's exports in 2013 were to Saudi Arabia.

### 2,100

Jobs at General Dynamics' Edmonton and London operations. The company recently posted a job opening for a business development officer to help expand opportunities in Saudi Arabia and "selected countries in the Middle East" as western defence spending declines.

**1,400**

Number of LAV-type vehicles, with various weapons systems, that General Dynamics Canada has sold to Saudi Arabia over the last 20 years.

**58%**

Percentage of people in Canada who believe a country's human rights record is more important than domestic jobs when deciding where to sell arms.

**2011**

Last year the federal government issued a report on human rights in Saudi Arabia.

**152**

Number of executions in Saudi Arabia in 2015, including **62** for minor drug-related charges, according to Human Rights Watch.

**47**

Number of people beheaded on January 2, 2016, including an Iranian cleric.

**100,000**

Fine in Saudi riyals (**US\$70,800**) handed to a Saudi man in 2015 for using social media "in order to practice homosexuality."

**15 years**

Sentence handed to activist Waleed Abu al-Khair in 2014 for criticizing the Saudi Arabian human rights record in the media.

**1,000**

Number of lashes assigned to blogger Raif Badawi who was sent to prison in 2014 for allegedly insulting Saudi clerics. Badawi's 32<sup>nd</sup> birthday was celebrated in Montreal on January 16, while his wife, Ensaf Haidar, continues to push the Canadian government to call for his release.

**119**

Number of coalition air strikes in Yemen that have involved violations of human rights, according to a UN study. Saudi Arabia is the lead player in the coalition and responsible for about **70%** of air sorties. The UN panel noted "three alleged

cases of civilians fleeing residential bombings and being chased and shot at by helicopters." Satellite imagery taken before and after bombing campaigns "revealed extensive damage to residential areas and civilian objects as a result of internal fighting and coalition airstrikes." The UN panel recorded 10 airstrikes on transportation routes, four supply roads and five storage facilities for food aid, "along with airstrikes on an Oxfam warehouse for storing equipment for a water project funded by the European Union in Sana'a."

**2,800**

Estimated civilian deaths in Yemen as a result of Saudi-led bombing using military equipment purchased from the U.S., U.K., France and other western allies.

**250**

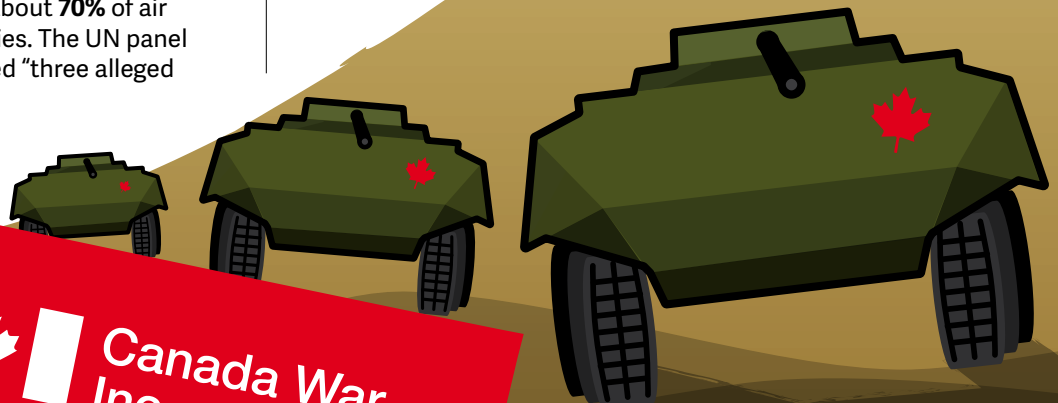
The target number of demilitarized LAV III's that will be repurposed by Militex Coating Inc. and Fanshaw College students to sit as monuments to Canada's Afghanistan war veterans in applicant cities across Canada.

**1**

Fredericton, New Brunswick is the only city to house a LAV monument so far, with interest from Aurora and Sarnia, both in Ontario.

**1**

Class action lawsuit against the Saudi arms deal filed in February by a professor and students at the University of Montreal on the grounds it is illegal.



 **Canada War Inc.**  
**SALES, ARMoured VEHICLE DIVISION**  
**Poor human rights record?**  
**No problem!**

SOURCES: Employment opportunities from General Dynamics Canada website; David Pugliese, "After Saudi Executions, New Canadian Leaders Still Back \$16B Vehicle Sale," *Defense News*; LAV III Monument Program website; Awad Mustafa, "Saudi Defense Spending Rises Despite Budget Challenges," *Defense News*; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database; Ewan MacAskill, "UN report into Saudi-led strikes in Yemen raises questions over UK role," *Guardian U.K.*; Adam Kerlin, "Saudi Arabia's Enemies Are No Longer Just Knocking at Its Gate," *Vice News*; Elizabeth Thompson, "Canada's weapons exports grew more than 69% under Harper," *Politics*; Steven Chase, "Majority rank human rights above job creation in Saudi arms deal: poll," *Globe and Mail*; Human Rights Watch (Saudi Arabia).

## A special feature on reconciliation



ILLUSTRATION BY JULIE FLETT

Erica Lee

# Reconciling in the Apocalypse

**D**iscussions about reconciliation are often exhausting, because it's not my story or the story of my people.

I am writing this from Kisiskâciwan (Saskatchewan), which became the centre of national attention in January 2016 for the school shooting at La Loche, a northern Métis and Dene community of about 2,600 people.

With the release last year of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report on residential schools, the idea of "reconciliation" is still fresh on the tips of Canadian tongues, though it seems few have an understanding of what it means to practice reconciliation in the face of ongoing colonialism.

As each decade passes, the number of people who will advocate for outright genocide of Indigenous peoples decreases. However, we aren't past the stage where Canada's biggest magazines will still pay for regurgitated ideas of reserves and Northern communities like La Loche as "doomed," and of Indigenous peoples as inherently "tragic," disregarding the theft and dispossession preceding these labels. By some of the nation's most progressive, we are looked down upon with a sense of pity, as if reconciliation means it is the duty of Canadians to learn to be *kind* to Indigenous people.

But it seems that with any idea of reconciliation I've heard, there is an unspoken requirement of Indigenous forgiveness and Indigenous consent to continued occupation. Even within our own communities, the onus is on women, Two-Spirit people, and children to forgive those who have harmed us. Healing, we are told, cannot begin to happen until we forgive colonial sins of the past.

The real task of reconciliation, however, is not in Canada waiting around to be forgiven for colonialism so business can carry on as usual; it is for Canadians to end the ongoing colonial violence that still suffocates Indigenous lives.

### Indigenous futures

At a gathering this summer at historic Gabriel's Crossing, Métis elder Maria Campbell told us the job of writers and artists is to be mirrors for the people; that "we build what could've been, what should've been." In knowing the histories of our relations and of this land, we find the knowledge to recreate all that our worlds *would've been* if not for the interruption of colonization.

Far from being tragic or doomed, as Indigenous communities we are working toward our futures daily; we are working toward futures that Canada tried endlessly to curtail, control and eliminate entirely. Thanks to the work of generations, In-

Indigenous futures have never been so clear and bright. Indigenous futures look like the resurgence of our languages, our knowledges, our governance systems, and journeys home to our traditional territories.

A key requirement for any of these futures to exist is a healthy world capable of sustaining our futures. When the idea of traditional Indigenous knowledges is raised, Canadian political theorists will roll their eyes as if the idea of “living in harmony with nature” is something cliché, stereotypical and naive. On the contrary, to return to the lands of our ancestors is the most radical and revolutionary practice of all.

Unfortunately, Indigenous people are no longer the only ones responsible for the well-being of this land. This is where reconciliation really matters.

## Canada on the world stage

I was part of the Canadian Youth Delegation to Paris for the COP 21 climate conference. This conference was touted as a significant moment for climate justice and a turning point for an unsustainable system on the verge of collapse.

While in Paris, the Canadian Youth Delegation met with Environment Minister Catherine McKenna in December 2015. We were told the federal government’s responsibility was to welcome Enbridge, Suncor and other mining companies to the table with Canadians and Indigenous people, to discuss a climate solution that would work for us all. To appeal to the youth, there was even a Twitter hashtag: #AllInThisTogether.

A classic case of worldviews colliding: as Indigenous people, we will never be able to sit at a table with mining companies and reconcile. No person can sit at a table and claim to give consent to fracking, mines or pipelines on behalf of the lands, waters and more-than-human lives that make up Indigenous territories.

Reconciliation is about Indigenous liberation, and it is about the liberation of the earth. We are never “all in this together” while Indigenous communities are stripped to the bone for the fat to maintain Canada.

## What is reconciliation?

Reconciliation includes the land. Reconciliation includes not only humans, but “more-than-human” creatures. If we follow the Native Youth Sexual Health Network’s philosophy of “Connected to Body, Connected to Land,” reconciliation has a lot to do with consent. Just as we follow rules of consent with intimate partners, Indigenous people reserve the right to choose which settlers with whom we are willing to reconcile.

This can seem an abstract idea until we break it down to its core: reconciliation as the restoration of good relations. Restoring good relations requires fundamentally breaking with a vastly unjust world to a focus on how we relate to each other and the world around us. If we move forward on the principles of good relations and consent, what would reconciliation look like?

Reconciliation is no more Indigenous kids dropping out of university because they can’t afford it. It is Canadian courts ceasing to prosecute Indigenous land defenders for shutting down pipelines on our own territories. It is all missing Indigenous women and girls returned home.

Reconciliation is recognizing that migrant lives are worth more than borders. It is opportunities to learn Indigenous languages.

Reconciliation is #IdleNoMore. Reconciliation is #BlackLivesMatter.

Reconciliation is funding that reflects the amount of reparations owed by governments, and the abolition of colonial systems of policing. It is mining corporations shutting their doors and paying every last cent of their worth into rebuilding devastated habitats.

Reconciliation is the end of queer and trans Indigenous youth driven to suicide by a colonial state that cannot contain their multitudes. It is the end of poverty, homelessness and hunger, the end of sexual violence, the end of colonial violence.

Reconciliation is the realization of worlds that *should have been*.

Sitting in a boardroom, these things might seem irrational or impossible, but on the land, we recognize these

visions as vital to the survival of our worlds. After all: this is how Indigenous communities operated for centuries before colonization.

A living example of reconciliation is Idle No More’s One House, Many Nations project. In collaboration with Mini Homes of Manitoba, Idle No More volunteers (Indigenous and settlers alike) are building fully self-sustainable mini homes as a hands-on response to deplorable housing conditions imposed on First Nations communities. The very first Idle No More mini home was placed in Big River First Nation this January. With tens of thousands needing safe housing in this country, the reality is we don’t have time to wait for the duty or kindness of politicians while our people are homeless.

Home by home, we are rebuilding nations.

Do you know how many Indigenous languages have been nearly extinct?

Word by word, we speak languages back into existence.

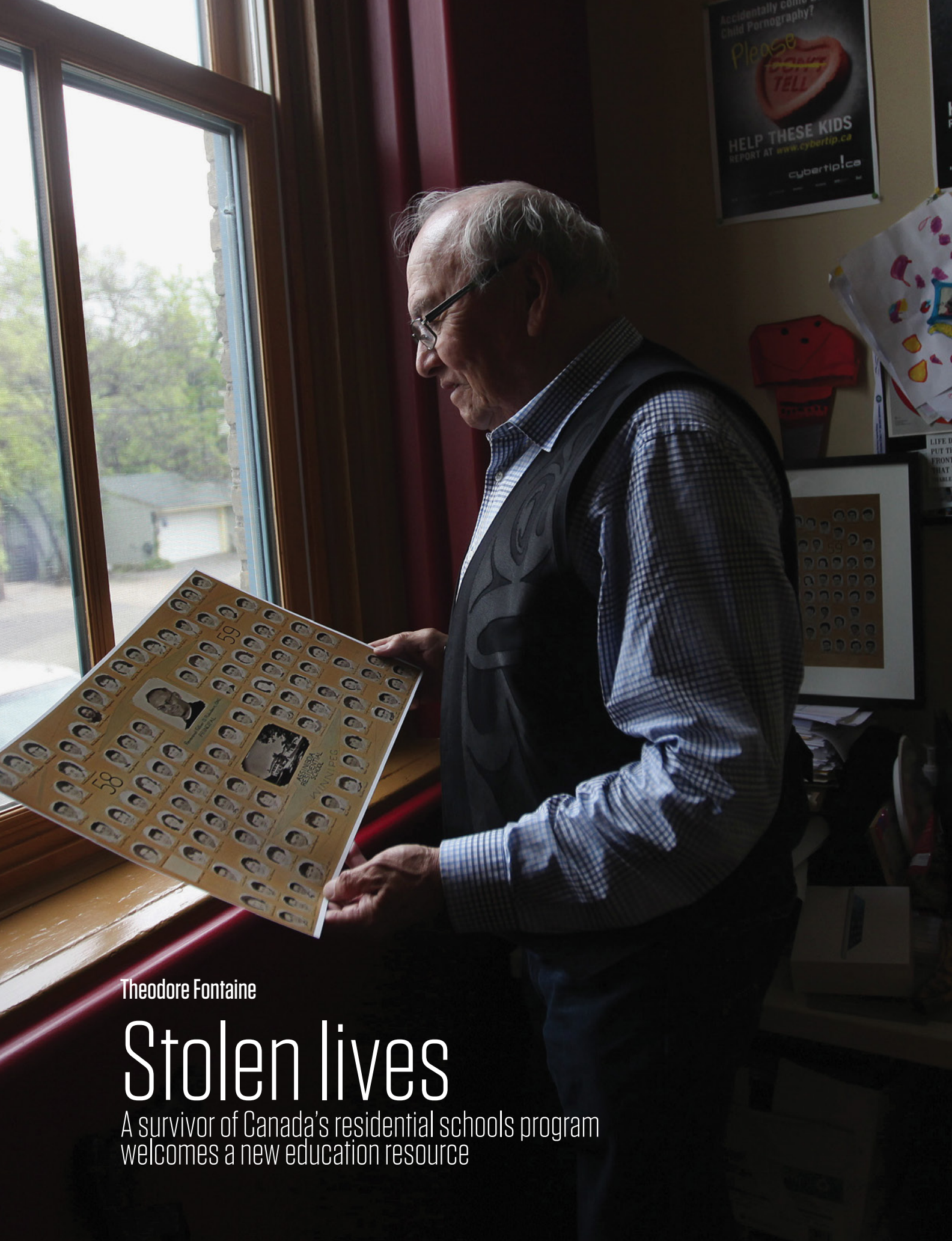
Do you know how many times Indigenous worlds have been “doomed”?

Relation by relation, we dream worlds back into existence.

Anishinaabe scholar Lawrence Gross writes about “Post Apocalypse Stress Syndrome,” acknowledging that Indigenous people have already lived through multiple attempts at our mass destruction. As Gross writes, “the Anishinaabe have seen the end of our world,” and we have lived through it, returning stronger than ever.

If duty or kindness alone aren’t enough to propel you to care about the necessity of reparations to Indigenous people, consider at the very least that you will need a friend who knows how to skin a porcupine, build a house, and navigate by the stars when the end of your world comes.

After the shooting in La Loche, Canadian flags are flown at half-mast as a sign of mourning for lives lost to the ongoing violence of colonialism. Perhaps a move to reconciliation, then, requires lowering the flag entirely. **M**



Theodore Fontaine

# Stolen lives

A survivor of Canada's residential schools program  
welcomes a new education resource

“WILL YOU EVER be happy?” A Grade 5 student asked me that question following a presentation of my Indian Residential School experiences in her classroom. Although I have told my story to more than 300 audiences across Canada and the United States—and responded to a wide range of questions—no one had ever asked me that, and I wasn’t sure I knew the answer.

For more than 100 years, First Nations and Inuit children were removed from their homes and communities to be locked up in residential schools, operated across Canada as a matter of federal policy decided in the Parliament of Canada. The Indian Residential Schools policy and era were not intended to support or educate our people, but to get us out of the way of settler development and access to the wealth of Canada’s natural resources. Implementation of the policy, primarily carried out by churches acting for the Canadian government, aimed to destroy our cultural and linguistic heritage, legal and religious freedoms, governmental and societal structures, and the very identities of Canada’s Indigenous peoples. Canada’s policy targeted children to ensure continuous destruction from one generation to the next. I was one of those children, incarcerated in Indian Residential Schools for 12 years, taken in just days after my seventh birthday.

People often ask what happened to me in those schools. Why did my parents leave me there? Did I tell someone about the abuses I endured? Adults ask why they didn’t already know about this. Did I try to run away? Do I forgive the abusers? Children ask why I couldn’t go home to sleep and what I got to eat.

Did I tell the principal? Did we have a TV? I tried to answer these questions and more when writing about my experiences in *Broken Circle: The*

*Dark Legacy of Indian Residential Schools, A Memoir.*

Before residential school, I lived a blissful and joyous life with my family, *mi-shoom* and *kookum* (grandfather and grandmother) and extended family of aunts, uncles, and cousins. I spoke only Ojibway and contributed to the well-being of our households by bringing water, wood, and the occasional snared little meal into our homes. For the next 12 years, I was locked up, punished for speaking Ojibway, shamed for being Indian. It was pounded into me that our people were no good, that Ojibway was a language of savages, that we were less than our keepers. I experienced every type of abuse: physical, sexual, mental, and spiritual. Through my many years of healing and reconciliation, I have confronted these damages and abuses to the best of my ability. In writing *Broken Circle*, some of these abuses were too difficult to include, but I attempted to reveal at least examples of each type. Those were mild in comparison to some of the worst I experienced.

The most insidious bombardment and teaching at residential schools instilled in our young minds hate for who we were, that we were not smart enough or good enough to do what the rest of Canadians can do or become. Those perceptions pervade our lives even today—insinuations that an Indian couldn’t be a qualified doctor, lawyer, teacher, nurse, author, or achieve other professional designations.

I am always apprehensive to speak about what happened to me at residential schools. Sometimes I get flashbacks, soul-crushing relivings of traumatic experiences from my young years. I have so often been told that these abuses could not be true, that I must be lying, that representatives of God could never have been perpetrators of child abuse. These denials fill me with guilt for what happened to me and that I have spoken about it and implicated perpetrators, though, ironically, I protect their identities.

Survivors of abuse are often hesitant to speak up. We know the truth of what happened to us, and that some will try to deny or minimize or refute our truth. For me, speaking

out is part of my reconciliation, but at times the guilt, blame, and shame that was pounded into me rises inside, a black tide of depression, frustration, and anger. Sometimes I just feel sorry for the perpetrators who abused me. More often, I think about the loss of so many young lives, those who didn’t survive and those who did but whose tremendous potential to contribute to our people and Canada was never nurtured or realized.

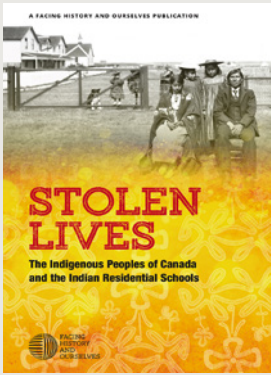
People don’t know about the healing and reconciliation survivors go through. We are plagued by the allegations of people who try to refute and belittle our true experiences. It is hard to listen to those voices who say, “Why can’t they just get over it?” My voice is fuelled by other residential school survivors who say, “Thank you for writing your book. Those things happened to me too. They really did happen.”

In June 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission issued its findings, including a summary of its final report and 94 recommendations described in its Calls to Action. It is important to understand that the work of the commission was not brought about by the good intentions of government, but by court order of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. This agreement was a negotiated settlement to legal action taken by residential school survivors to rectify the wrongs and damages done by the genocidal policy of forcing Indigenous children into residential schools. The Truth

I have so often been told that these abuses could not be true, that I must be lying, that representatives of God could never have been perpetrators of child abuse.

Theodore Fontaine visits the former Assiniboia Residential School in Winnipeg he attended in the late 1950s.

Ruth Bonneville/Winnipeg Free Press



## About Facing History and Ourselves

“Facing History and Ourselves was founded in 1976 by educators who believed that instilling intellectual vigour and curiosity goes hand-in-hand with teaching facts and figures. From the disturbing lessons of the Holocaust and other genocides to struggles for civil rights from Birmingham to South Africa, we trust students to wrestle with complex moments in human history, and work to help them understand the range of human behaviour. These students learn to connect the dots between the ethical choices they’ll face in life and the positive outcomes they can create in their community and the world. The Canadian offices of Facing History opened in 2008. *Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indian Residential Schools* is the first resource developed by the organization specifically for Canadian classrooms.”

For more information:  
[www.facinghistory.org/stolen-lives](http://www.facinghistory.org/stolen-lives)

and Reconciliation Commission was created as an element of this agreement, and its findings and recommendations emanated from thousands of survivor disclosures and testimonies brought to light by the work of the commission.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls Canadians in all walks of life to take action, with multiple recommendations specific to education of youth, newcomers to Canada, and both public and private sectors. I believe that educators are those who will make the most difference, helping generations of youth to build relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples based on our seven sacred teachings of knowledge, love, honour, courage, honesty, humility, and truth.

The words *facing history and ourselves* form a strong descriptor of the hard work of residential school survivors in talking about their experience of this Canadian history so long denied and concealed. Shining a bright light on it, *Stolen Lives* is a critical resource to guide teachers and students in finding their individual and collective opportunities to walk this road of reconciliation. The guide enables learning by exploring the truth of our lived residential school experiences, hearing our voices, understanding our context. After more than 100 years of this genocidal policy, educators now have access to information to teach our children about residential schools. Our children have the right to know and to create a better future for themselves and future generations.

Prior to the research and documentation initiatives of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, information about the Indian Residential Schools had been produced by governments and various non-Indigenous organizations and individuals, presenting their own perspectives as factual accounts. It is critical to understand the Indigenous traditions of oral history, by which the heritage of our people has been preserved and handed down through the centuries. The importance of capturing this oral history and hearing first-person testimony is critical to success in the classroom, particularly now as the number of survivors of residential schools is fast diminishing. Although our stories may be taken up by our children and grandchildren, the real effects and hidden memories known only to survivors realistically may be lost forever. Although it is most difficult to touch the innermost hurts and scars of our past, survivors have the right to speak about their own experiences. I hope

that educators using this guide will invite survivors into their classrooms for students to meet them, see their faces, and hear their voices, that their hearts may be touched so deeply as to never forget.

Canadians must embrace the reality and promise of its First Peoples as we rediscover the pride and resolve to revive and uphold our unique characteristics. I have relearned my Ojibway language and much of our culture, and nothing gives me such joy as to be able to sling my language through conversations with family and friends and to teach a few words here and there to non-Indigenous people who express interest in hearing this soaring, descriptive language. I imagine with horror, had the residential schools policy been successful, how many beautiful languages would have disappeared. We cannot retrieve what we have lost, or might lose, from anywhere else in the world. If we lose it here, it disappears forever.

In my visits to all parts of this great land to speak on what happened to us, I try to urge survivors and elders to delve into their memories and talk together about our shared history. We did survive and will never be the “vanishing Indian” or the conquered people. We will always proudly be Canada’s First Peoples, we the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island.

I write this with hope and humility as a participant in the tradition of our ancestors: the passing of our true knowledge to the future knowledge keepers and leaders of our wonderful homeland.

*Kitchi miigwetch*, a big thank you, to Facing History and Ourselves for helping to bring the true history of Canada’s Indian Residential Schools into the present and into the future, and to all the educators who use this guide to show children and youth what truth and reconciliation mean and what it will take to walk the miles to get there.

Will I ever be happy? Perhaps not in the sense that the young student meant it, but each day as I take another step toward reconciliation, I take a step toward finding my way back to the joyous, effervescent, mischievous Ojibway child that the Creator intended me to be. **M**

THEODORE (TED) FONTAINE IS A MEMBER OF THE SAGKEENG ANISHINAABE FIRST NATION IN CANADA AND THE AUTHOR OF A NATIONAL BESTSELLER, *BROKEN CIRCLE: THE DARK LEGACY OF INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS*, A MEMOIR. HE IS A REGULAR SPEAKER AND MEDIA COMMENTATOR ON INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS. HE HAS BEEN CALLED A SURVIVOR BUT SEES HIMSELF MORE AS A VICTOR. THE MONITOR THANKS FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES FOR ALLOWING US TO EXCERPT THIS INTRODUCTION FROM *STOLEN LIVES* (SEE SIDEBAR).



Drew Hayden Taylor

# Political by birth, not by choice

**WHEN RESIDENTIAL** schools are mentioned, the term “genocide” is used so often it risks becoming a buzzword. Some say what happened in those big, dark, brick buildings was genocide, others say technically it was not. Unfortunately, there are lots of examples to match it up against.

This is possibly a discussion for far more learned men than I. For a living, I make things up, tell funny stories, and I never actually attended a residential school as a student. Still, like practically all Aboriginal people, I have been adversely touched by what happened in those institutions.

Picture the Indian Residential School policy as a large and bitter pond. One by one, young children are brought to its edge and thrown in. They splash about or swim as desperately as they can, and eventually some make it back to shore. An estimated 4,000 do not. The rest of us, who were never forced into the pond, still get damp to varying degrees.

That is why I, and many of my fellow writers, write so often about this slice of Canadiana. But I digress—back to the topic at hand.

For those who are fond of procedural correctness, genocide is defined as the deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular ethnic group or nation. Charming.

We Canadians are familiar with some of its repercussions. This country, the settler part anyway, is constantly being refreshed by welcoming those fleeing genocide abroad, whether they be Jews, Rwandans, Cambodians, Armenians, and so on and so on... World history is long and lush with names, peoples and cultures deemed



unfit to survive. The list is longer than the time I am given here.

But there is also another definition of genocide, one slightly broader and more technical. It says the act need not imply the immediate physical destruction of a nation, but could take place where, through co-ordinated actions, one group has sought to destroy the foundations of life of another in an effort to annihilate what it means to be part of that group.

Genocide, in this case, occurs through the disintegration of political and social institutions, culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of a group, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity and even the lives of the individuals belonging to it. It is so complicated, yet so simple.

Does the experience of Canada's First Nations fit this definition? There are entire libraries and databases

**Children and a nun at Cross Lake Indian Residential School in Manitoba, 1940.**

Department of Indian and Northern Affairs/  
Library and Archives Canada

dedicated to each of the points listed above. Detailing the abuse forced upon Canada's Native people has almost become a cottage industry. (Thank God there's something out there to help feed the families of all those impoverished academics and lawyers.) Which is why, for me, this definition fundamentally describes what residential schools attempted to orchestrate.

It has been convincingly argued that the end result of this institution was cultural genocide aimed at destroying the Aboriginal population of Canada through one of the most insidious manners possible—the abuse and brainwashing of its children.

Now I am a fan of history. All history. History makes us ask questions. One of them—What makes some people feel the need to change other people into themselves?—has kept me up at night on a few occasions. We can ask it another way: What kind of person wipes aside thousands of years of social and cultural development with the sweep of a pen, and with scarcely a backward glance, so confident as they are in their own superiority?

It's puzzling, tragically puzzling. (I thought variety was the spice of life?) Maybe someday I, or we, will understand this contradiction. Maybe I should have gone to university, I'm sure there's a course on it somewhere.

If there was a memorial T-shirt for residential school survivors and those taking up the cause, I would suggest the once-endorsed, but now ironic, mantra of "In order to save the child, we must destroy the Indian." What a diabolically great phrase—right up there with "One Jew is too many," or "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." Rather pithy, these people. And hard-working: a lot of time and effort went into fulfilling these misguided mandates, with limited results.

What these people of god and government didn't understand was that what they were trying to do is just not possible. Destroying a people and its ways is supremely difficult. The Romans tried to crush Christianity with about just as much zeal... and effectiveness. I don't know about you, but whenever I travel I run into a few Christians the Romans must have missed. It's a pity they never learned from their history. That in this case (and others) the oppressed became the oppressor.

Metaphorically speaking, even in the most bombed-out environment, on the most scorched earth, in land that has been salted practically out of existence, you can and will frequently find at least one small plant clinging to the ground, unwilling to pass out of existence, refusing to be destroyed. Given time and the proper atmosphere, the plant will grow and make the earth lush again.

Like that plant, Native people have always taken strength from the land.

In Canada, many threatened Indigenous traditions and languages went underground—under the ground, that metaphor again, so frequent in Native cultures—until it was time to return and grow.

You see, for something as beautiful, as essential, as important as our culture and people, it would take more than 100 years of residential schools to kill these Indians. They—we—are a people of the ages. A people of time immemorial. And time immemorial doesn't recognize genocide, in whatever its form. It laughs at it.

So here we are in 2015. No more residential schools. Post-prime ministerial apology. Post-TRC. Now Canadian society is exploring the heart of a six-syllable word: reconciliation. Amidst the doom and gloom, a possible ray of hope.

But how do you accomplish that—reconciliation—whether it is one nation mistreating another, or a man abusing his wife? One side says they are sorry. That is good. That is a be-

Now Canadian society is exploring the heart of a six-syllable word: reconciliation. Amidst the doom and gloom, a possible ray of hope.

ginning. But it is not over. What happens now? A population of 150,000 abused people can't just move out of their homes into a Motel 6 and call the cops.

One side has apologized, but let's face it: Canadians are internationally known for saying "I'm sorry." So the question is asked: Will the abuse finally stop? Will the acknowledgement and apology begin the healing?

There is a quote in the introduction to Tomson Highway's play *The Rez Sisters*: "Before the healing can take place, the poison must be exposed." I believe that is what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was charged with—exposing the poison. It's a good beginning. Too many times, the immediate and intergenerational survivors of this genocide have heard the words (which I think should also be on a T-shirt), "Why can't you guys just get over it and move on?"

Oy vey! That question can never help anybody. It is a closed room barred by a locked door.

So here we are tonight at the Royal Ontario Museum, an institution (like many of its kind) famous for displaying dead Indians and their artifacts.\* I am going to presume all the Native people here in the audience are very much alive (feel free to argue with me). I think the irony still holds, as we are here to serve both the museum's mandate and commemorate the survival of Canada's Indigenous people.

We, as the next generation, have an obligation not to forget. We have an obligation to remember and pass on to the next generation all that has happened to our elders, both good and bad. Like going to the dentist, it may not be pleasant, but it is necessary.

That which does not destroy us makes us stronger.

Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

Native people are political by birth, not by choice. (That one's mine.)

Thank you all for coming tonight. Or, in the language of my people, a language they tried to stamp out, *miigwetch*. **M**

\* THIS ARTICLE IS ADAPTED FROM A SPEECH DREW HAYDEN TAYLOR GAVE IN TORONTO ON NOVEMBER 26, 2015 AT THE LAUNCH OF THE *STOLEN LIVES* PROJECT (SEE PAGE 22).

# Making reconciliation work

AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde talks to the *Monitor* about the political opportunities and priorities in the TRC's 94 calls to action

**N MID-DECEMBER, YOU participated in a meeting with the prime minister, several cabinet ministers and other Indigenous leaders to discuss how to implement the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Can you tell us how this process has unfolded since?**

**Perry Bellegarde:** At the meeting in December, we exchanged preliminary views on how to work together to renew the relationship between Canada and First Nations. The TRC rightly points to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a framework to guide our work on reconciliation. Both Canada and the Assembly of First Nations have agreed with that approach and that is a very good start. That means we must work together to ensure that First Nations lead the way on matters such as First Nations education, revitalization of Indigenous languages, and ending discrimination in the child welfare system.

Over the past month, the AFN executive and I met with Minister of Finance Bill Morneau about the opportunity for action in Budget 2016. I have also met with many of his cabinet colleagues. Budget 2016 is the first opportunity to remove the 2% cap on funding of essential services for First Nations, such as education, health, social services and infrastructure. Canada and First Nations have a great deal of lost time to make up for, and that means catch-up funding also is needed in First Nations education, languages, housing and infrastructure.

There is other action we can take together. I have emphasized the need for Canada and First Nations to establish, as soon as possible, a joint

review of key federal laws and policies. For example, federal "land claims" and "self-government" policies are not consistent with our rights as peoples. There are key aspects of environmental assessment and protection laws that do not respect our inherent and treaty rights. Implementation of the TRC's calls to action is a big job but these are some clear first steps to get started. We must act now to close the unacceptable gap in the quality of life between First Nations people and Canadians.

**You frequently refer to "real reconciliation." What does this mean for you?**

Real reconciliation is about First Nations people being accepted and having First Nations decisions respected in matters affecting our lives, our communities, our children and our future. It's about rebuilding a broken relationship by improving understanding and awareness of our shared history

and the benefits of a shared future. It's about restoring the nation-to-nation relationship with the Crown, to address our shared challenges head-on as true partners.

We must all do our part to educate ourselves about our shared history and our shared future. We are all in this together. It means the full participation of Indigenous peoples in resource and development decision-making, and in the design of climate change strategies and energy strategies. It means schools and homes for our children and families. And it means Canadians freeing their minds of stereotypes, and creating the space to see our people as

AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde (centre) with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Tapiriit Kanatami leader Natan Obed at a press conference on Parliament Hill in December.

Adrian Wyld / The Canadian Press



healthy, valuable people with much to contribute.

Real reconciliation will mean First Nations will walk proud. We will speak our languages and be healthy and thriving in our chosen professions, both on our lands or wherever we choose to reside.

**The 94 calls to action in the TRC cover a mind-boggling range of inequities in government–First Nations relations, and between First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and the rest of Canada. In your view, are there any priority areas that can or must be addressed first? For example, is it most important to establish the broad framework for ongoing conversations, to receive immediate new funding for neglected social services, or to legislate change (e.g., to the legal system, education, etc.), or can it all progress simultaneously?**

We are prioritizing the calls to action as directed by Chiefs-in-Assembly. But yes, we can make progress across all areas simultaneously and we must. There is a broad framework that will fulfil the meaning behind the TRC's work—and that is closing the socio-economic gap and bringing Canada's laws and policies in line with the UN-DRIP. We can only achieve true reconciliation when we close the gap in the quality of life between First Nations people and Canada. The gap holds all of us back from reaching the full potential of this country. Maintaining the gap costs all of us.

Our plan points the way to real change for all of us. It includes dedicated, strategic investments and concrete action in priority areas, including First Nations control of First Nations education, the development of a co-ordinated national action plan to address and end violence against Indigenous women and girls, investments in First Nations housing and child and family services, the implementation of rights, respect for the environment and revitalizing Indigenous languages.

**What is your hope that this time things will be different—that the goal of reconciling First Nations–**

**government relations, federal and provincial, will receive the attention it demands? Are there risks reconciliation will fade away as a national priority, as it did in Australia and many Latin American nations where TRCs were carried out?**

There is unprecedented attention on First Nations priorities, and these are Canada's priorities. Clearly, the time for action is now and the world is watching Canada. Every few months, there is a new report documenting the gap in well-being and the human rights crisis it represents. We must do more than measure the gap—we must act now to close it. We cannot let another generation of First Nations children down. The TRC's calls to action and the UN declaration are our road map. We will be relentless in our efforts and will not waste this opportunity for fundamental change.

**The Liberal government has said it will review recent cases of federal lawyers trying to pass the buck to avoid paying settlements in cases of abuse at Canada's residential schools. How confident are you that this legal tactic was a political directive from the last government and not simply standard operating procedure?**

The AFN fully supports all former students of residential schools and will continue to work to ensure they and their families achieve the justice and healing they deserve. I'm confident we have a new relationship with the federal government and we will achieve change. A joint review of Canada's approach to litigation in this and other areas affecting First Nations rights is a critically important task, one that we have identified as a pressing priority.

**In early February, you said one of the biggest reasons why there is such a gap between First Nations and other Canadians is the historic mismanagement of First Nations resources. This was in a statement of support for the Poundmaker Cree and Onion Lake First Nations' lawsuit claiming mismanagement of oil and gas revenues by the government agency Indian Oil and Gas Canada. Broadly speaking, what does reconciliation**

**look like when it comes to developing resources in Canada?**

Reconciliation will happen when a respectful relationship has been restored between First Nations and Canada. That requires working together to bring about the changes in law and policy that are needed to respect First Nations rights under the Constitution and UNDRIP. To achieve reconciliation in the area of lands and resources we need a joint law and policy review and a joint review of Canada's approach to litigation. We need to do this to realize the approach set out by the prime minister and by the speech from the throne—an approach based on respect, rights recognition and renewed nation-to-nation relationships.

Reconciliation will be achieved when First Nation communities are thriving and successful, reaping environmentally responsible and balanced benefits from our lands and resources. It will mean First Nations at the table sharing knowledge and decision-making at all stages of the development process. It will mean our rights and title are upheld and our participation will be a priority, not an afterthought. It will mean First Nations are no longer poor in our own homelands.

**How can Canada's settler peoples actively participate in the reconciliation process?**

Everyone has a role in reconciliation. It's difficult to script a to-do list, but Canadians can do all they can to open their hearts and minds to an accurate understanding and perception of First Nations people. We are leaders, doctors, mothers, sons, hunters, teachers. Our goals are very similar—to achieve the very best for our families and communities. Once we can all get behind the concept of embracing the traditions and contributions of everyone in this country, we will achieve real reconciliation. It starts with the heart and the mind. **M**

Andrea Auger

# The kids won—what now?

**JANUARY 26, 2016** was a heartfelt, emotional day as First Nations children won a much anticipated human rights tribunal ruling on culturally based equity in child welfare.

In 2007, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (the Caring Society) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) filed a complaint pursuant to the Canadian Human Rights Act. The groups alleged the federal government had improperly implemented Jordan's Principle, and that the inequitable provision of child welfare services to 163,000 First Nations children is discriminatory under section 5 of the act.

Named after Jordan River Anderson (1999–2005), who spent two unnecessary years in hospital while the federal and Manitoba governments argued over who should pay for his complex medical needs, Jordan's Principle states the government of first contact is responsible for child services and should seek compensation only after these services have been delivered. The human rights complaint was filed as a last resort after the federal government failed to implement reforms to correct inequities that had been documented as far back as 2000.

In September 2008, the Canadian Human Rights Commission referred the case to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal for a full hearing on the facts. The federal government brought a series of unsuccessful motions to dismiss the case, which delayed hearings until February 2013. The hearings went on for 72 days, concluding in October 2014. Then this January, nine years after the complaint was filed, the tribunal delivered its long awaited ruling. It found:

AANDC (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada) is involved in the provision of child and family services to First Nations on reserves and in the Yukon; that First Nations are adversely impacted by the provision of those services by AANDC, and, in some cases, denied those services as a result of AANDC's involvement, and; that race and/or national or ethnic origin are a factor in those adverse impacts or denial.

The federal government controls and funds First Nations child and family service agencies in the provinces and Yukon. With the exception of Ontario, which is funded according to the 1965 Indian Child Welfare Agreement, the provinces and territories receive

federal funding through Directive 20-1, the Enhanced Prevention Focused Approach (EPFA), and other agreements established to help deliver culturally relevant services to First Nations children and families.

Directive 20-1, first implemented in 1989, was examined in a 2000 report coming out of a national policy review, and then again in the 2005 *Wen:de* report. Both reports found the directive's approach to be inequitable (First Nations children received much poorer services than other children in Canada), particularly in terms of family support services. They also both outlined detailed solutions to improve the funding formulas and policies to better reflect the needs of First Nations.

Photo courtesy the Caring Society



As the tribunal pointed out in its ruling in January, the government failed to act on these warnings, which resulted in children continuing to be removed from their homes:

Despite being aware of these shortcomings in Directive 20-1 based on numerous reports, AANDC has not followed the recommendations in those reports and has perpetuated the main shortcoming of the [First Nations Child and Family Services] Program: the incentive to take children into care—to remove them from their families.

Although AANDC (now Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, or INAC) provided the rollout of the EPEA in 2007, with added funding for prevention services, agencies were still underfunded and had waited long enough to provide adequate services to children and their families. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal looked at inequities across the four formulas mentioned above and found the government was falling “far short of its objective” in making sure agencies were properly equipped to deliver culturally relevant services on reserve in line with provincial legislation.

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released its 94 “calls to action” along with a seven-volume final report documenting the lived experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples who attended Canada’s residential schools. The TRC’s very first recommendation deals with child welfare (e.g., reducing the number of children in care) and improving the system for Indigenous communities.

It seems serendipitous that the tribunal ruling was released on the heels of the TRC’s final report late last year. We have a unique opportunity in Canada to engage in reconciliation with Indigenous communities and create a country everyone can be proud of.

Reconciliation has many meanings. In child welfare, the Touchstones of Hope framework guides a movement to put reconciliation into practice so that we are moving forward together in a respectful way to achieve bet-

ter outcomes for Indigenous children and youth. Recognizing that Indigenous peoples are in the best position to make decisions about Indigenous children and youth, the framework outlines a process (truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating) and principles (culture and language, non-discrimination, self-determination, structural interventions to remove systemic barriers like poverty, and a holistic approach) for those involved in child welfare activities.

The Touchstones of Hope movement has existed for more than a decade in Canada and the United States, its principles established by those working in Indigenous child welfare in both countries. The framework was piloted in British Columbia between 2008 and 2012 for five First Nations child and family service agencies. Researchers at the University of Toronto subsequently found the movement shifted the worldviews of participants, changed policies and practice, and that it had great potential for creating change in child welfare.

In a recent editorial, several drafters of the original Touchstones framework argued it is still the best guide for Indigenous child welfare, but that its potential could be lost if we lose sight of this progress. “As relevant as the Touchstones were in 2005, they are even more relevant today given the building reconciliation movement,” it read. “Canadian child welfare must embed them quickly while the public spotlight remains because once it dissipates, and it will, it will be much more difficult to move the mainstream child welfare mountain.”

Although momentum for the Touchstones movement has been slow, reconciliation has come to the

forefront of media and public debate this past year, touching the minds, hearts and spirits of people in Canada who knew about the impacts of residential schools and of those who are learning about them for the first time. With the tribunal ruling in January, Canada is faced with a choice: we can continue to implement a system that has been detrimental to children, or we can take a chance on a proven alternative like the Touchstones of Hope.

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found that inequitable funding for child welfare on reserves amounts to discrimination. If we look hard enough, we can see prejudice deeply engrained within the veins of Canadian society. For generations, Indigenous peoples have been treated differentially because of their race. Many people in Canada have been tremendous allies, standing together with Indigenous communities and championing equity, fairness and self-determination. However, there will still be those who, in thinking or speaking about Indigenous issues, will resort to stereotypes—either because they lack knowledge or because prejudice lies within them.

Today, we have an opportunity to change Canada’s story of its relationship with Indigenous peoples. Let us become more interested in learning not only about the loss, heartache and suffering of Indigenous communities in Canada, but also about their strength, resilience and significant contributions to society. Let us respond to the TRC’s calls to action to improve the lives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. Let us support January’s tribunal ruling by holding the government accountable for its treatment of generations of children and putting an end to discrimination in the provision of all public services for First Nations children and families.

Let us become a Canada that celebrates and lives by reconciliation—a Canada where every child, no matter what their race or ethnic origin, has a fair and equal chance to achieve their dreams and be proud of who they are. **M**

**For generations,  
Indigenous peoples  
have been treated  
differentially because of  
their race.**

Jobb Arnold

# Three sovereignties and an election

**THE CONCEPT OF** nation-state sovereignty has a lot to do with what the public perceives to be the legitimate use of violent force (e.g., Canadian borders, army, police, etc.). The reality of sovereign violence in our society is that it impacts the lives of different groups of people in very different ways.

The potential for violence makes some people feel more secure because they think it will only be used to protect their rights and privileges. For others, sovereign violence is a threatening force that is central to the ongoing process of colonization through the forcible displacement of Indigenous people from ancestral lands, and the aggressive pursuit of destructive natural resource extraction.

Governments get scared when people resist the smooth functioning of profitable colonial processes, and this fear can be used as a propaganda tool to label people as extremists, enemies or even terrorists. In reality, this simply demonstrates that the balance of sovereign power is actually always in a state of constant flux: sovereign force can be redistributed, its violent impacts shifted away from vulnerable lands and people.

The Canadian federal election on October 19 was an opportunity to begin actively reformulating what sovereignty means in our day-to-day lives. Voting is not enough, though. Elections feature a lot of hype and propaganda, but in “stable” countries like Canada they largely reproduce the status quo in the form of a purely “nation-state” sovereignty. But politics does not end at the polls. Other less visible forms of politics are critically important in the struggle for social legitimacy and decision-making

power (a.k.a. the bread and butter of sovereign control).

Under Stephen Harper's reign, aspects of Canadian sovereignty continued to be handed over to large corporations. International free trade agreements like the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), completed in 2014, and the massive Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), signed this February but not yet ratified, shift the balance of Canadian sovereignty in favour of unelected corporate profiteers.

Corporations want greater access to valuable natural resources and fewer government regulations slowing down their money-making activities. These same corporations also want the state to use its sovereign force (the police, border guards and the army) to remove any barriers standing in the way of their extractive activities and their ability to get resource products to markets.

International trade deals have established corporate legal systems that trump Canadian sovereignty, specifically through what are called investor–state dispute settlement (ISDS) tribunals. These tribunals are made up of corporate lawyers given the power to decide what is a fair balance between the interests of countries and corporations.

For example, if Canadian environmental protection laws were to prevent a large-scale mining project from going ahead (because it would cause too much ecological damage), an ISDS tribunal could rule that these laws “unfairly” hurt the corporation's investment treaty right to make money. The mining company could then sue Canadian taxpayers for lost profits.

This is not an abstract example. The Canadian mining company

OceanaGold recently sued the nation of El Salvador for lost future profits because elected politicians revoked the firm's license due to the fact the mine was causing extreme harm to the natural environment and the local people. In Canada, U.S. firm Bilcon secured an ISDS victory last year when a NAFTA tribunal found a government environmental assessment process had violated the mining company's investment rights. Bilcon now wants Canada to pay US\$300 million in compensation.

International trade lawyer Luis Prado puts the situation this way: “The ultimate question in the case [of ISDS] is whether a foreign investor can force a government to change its laws to please the investor as opposed to the investor complying with the laws they find in the country.” Our generation will be increasingly confronted with the reality of corporate sovereignty using its force to bend national legal systems to suit greedy, destructive interests.

A lot of what corporations are willing to do to make profits is twisted. A new prime minister in Ottawa isn't going to fix this. We need to recognize the 500-year history of sovereign Indigenous struggle against the ways that state sovereignty creates and maintains colonial boundaries that serve the interests of selfish exploiters.

Indigenous sovereignty is unlike either Canadian sovereignty or corporate sovereignty. Even within the Eurocentric Canadian legal system, Indigenous connectedness to the land is recognized as a basis for sovereign claims and functional self-determination. Just this past year, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the Tsilhqot'in people's relationship with tradi-

tional lands constitutes a long-standing and legitimate legal system.

There are many Indigenous nations on Turtle Island, each with different laws, customs and perspectives. However, many of their shared priorities, such as honouring human interdependence with the natural world, are fundamentally opposed to the economic-bottom-line thinking that is both the force and structuring logic behind colonial-capitalism.

Everyone in Canada—not just eligible voters, but all people willing to put their values and beliefs into action—has the capacity to exert their influence in order to create the type of country we want to live in, not to mention the social and ecological conditions that we leave for coming generations. To do this, we must recognize the direction things are currently going.

There is a growing gulf between rich and poor. Climate change caused by industrial activities like the tar sands is destroying global ecosystems and causing extreme weather such as droughts, wildfires and hurricanes—crises that disproportionately impact the already marginalized. Refugees are forced to flee their homes because of food scarcity and wars over oil. Tens of thousands continue to be left to die at the borders of the very countries that have benefited from wealth stolen from the

lands of these same people. The status quo is not acceptable.

Sovereignty, whichever way you cut it, is still largely a matter of what “we the people” feel we are able to do, and our willingness and determination to do it. Together we have the collective strength to push for real transformation.

In Winnipeg, and all around Canada, an Indigenous-led resurgence is shaping local, national and international politics. Young leaders are breathing life into the fires of old teachings, realizing that the world we experience is and always has been our responsibility, our legacy, our inspiration. Legitimacy and power are an open game, as much as career politicians and big businesses hate to admit it. The balance of sovereign power can be altered in particular moments.

The October 2015 federal election was one chance to push for such a change. But the future realities that will prevail in Canada will depend on what we do now. By building relationships and communities based on values of respect for people and the land, we can resist the spread of corporate and colonial-state sovereignty.

If corporations and governments make it seem like their power is unshakable, they're faking it. We live in a time when economic markets are collapsing and the need for new ways of life is obvious. This period of chaotic

change and popular social unrest is bad news for colonial-capitalism and good news for the people who are being hurt by these old systems.

There are ever-increasing opportunities to intervene against exploitation and violence, to create new spaces that are healthy and life-giving. A degree of practical creativity is needed to identify the cracks that exist within the current exploitative systems, and then to begin creating healthy, sustainable communities.

By following the lead of Indigenous land-defenders and nurturing relationship-based alliances, those of us who refuse to let Turtle Island continue to be a corporate colony can begin to exert new sovereignties based on sustainable, inclusive and positive values. At the very least these efforts will facilitate diverse collective actions and help generate creative ways of jamming the gears of the destructive systems that threaten us all. **M**

THIS ARTICLE RAN IN *RED RISING* (REDRISINGMAGAZINE.CA), A NEW INDIGENOUS MAGAZINE FROM WINNIPEG, IN OCTOBER 2015.

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# The Good News Page

Compiled by  
Elaine Hughes

## Einstein was right about gravity

Scientists announced in early February they had heard and seen the collision of two black holes, proving the existence of gravity waves as predicted by Einstein a century ago. Professor Karsten Danzmann of the Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics and Leibniz University in Hannover, Germany, said the discovery—a product of the U.S.-based Ligo Collaboration, which spans several labs around the world—was on par with determining the structure of DNA. “It is the first ever direct detection of gravitational waves; it’s the first ever direct detection of black holes and it is a confirmation of General Relativity because the property of these black holes agrees exactly with what Einstein predicted almost exactly 100 years ago.” / [BBC](#)

## NASA goes seagazing

On January 17, the company SpaceX launched the US\$180-million (\$250-million) Jason-3 satellite—a joint effort of NASA, the *Centre national d’études spatiales* (France) and the European Organization

for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites—from a California air base. Using its radar altimeter 830 miles (1,336 km) above Earth, Jason-3 will monitor 95% of the world’s ice-free oceans every 10 days for the next five years. The satellite will measure sea level rise and ocean temperatures, track hurricanes, watch for harmful algal blooms or oil spills, and contribute data toward other scientific and commercial indicators. The project is one of two seagazing exercises at NASA this year—the other being the space agency’s Coral Reef Airborne Laboratory (CORAL), which will measure coral reef health in Florida, Hawaii, the Mariana Islands, Palau and Australia. / [Orlando Sentinel, National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service, Tech Times](#)

## New cancer therapies proving effective

Researchers in the U.S. and Canada are treating cancer with proton beams and viruses, with promising results. A Massachusetts General Hospital study found that firing highly charged particles (a proton beam) directly at malignant brain tumours in children will have success rates similar to conventional photon X-ray treatment, but with less damage to surrounding tissue and fewer side effects to the patient. In Canada, a research team at the University of Ottawa is looking at treating cancer by injecting a measles-Maraba virus hybrid directly into cancerous cells. The measles virus

has been found to both kill cancer cells and, in the process, trigger the immune system to help fight off tumours. “We have some evidence from our mice work that we can actually vaccinate against cancer,” said Dr. Guy Ungerechts, involved with the project, which recently received funding from the Terry Fox Research Institute, the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, and the Ottawa Hospital Foundation. / [BBC, Ottawa Community News](#)

## Mother Canada statue shelved

Parks Canada has killed a proposed 24-metre statue, called Mother Canada and slated for construction on the Atlantic coast in Cape Breton Highlands National Park, citing too many unknowns, including the eventual cost of the project. “Today’s decision sends an important signal from the federal government that our parks are to be protected, for the benefit of Canadians, now and for the future,” said Éric Hébert-Daly, executive director of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), which was part of a two-year campaign opposed to how Mother Canada would have privatized space inside the national park. / [CPAWS, Toronto Star](#)

## Agreement reached on Great Bear Rainforest

Following 20 years of conflict and then collaboration, agreement has been reached by all parties—including Indigenous

communities, government, environmentalists and forestry companies—on conservation measures that will preserve three million hectares of B.C.’s iconic Great Bear Rainforest. The deal will protect the forest against industrial logging, securing wildlife habitat for rare spirit bears, coastal wolves and salmon. It also gives First Nations greater control over their territory. The forestry industry retains the right to log on 550,000 hectares of forest under the deal. / [Greenpeace Canada, CBC](#)

## Campbell Soup will label GMOs

Agrochemical companies are spending millions to combat GMO labelling regimes proposed in several U.S. states. Bucking this trend, and in response to growing public pressure, Campbell Soup has announced it will voluntarily label all U.S. products derived from GMOs. The decision follows a July 2015 announcement from Campbell’s that it would stop adding monosodium glutamate (MSG), and use non-GMO ingredients in its soup for kids. The company also says it will remove artificial colours and flavours from “nearly all of its North American products by July 2018.” / [Reuters](#)

Amy Wood

# Will CETA trade away Canada's local food systems?

**P**RIME MINISTER JUSTIN Trudeau has his hands full when it comes to free trade. As his government scrambles to understand the implications of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Agreement (TPP), another deal, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union, raises many of the same, and some uniquely troubling, issues.

Both CETA and the TPP include a highly problematic investor-state dispute settlement process, for example, which will multiply the number of corporate lawsuits challenging public policy that Canada already faces under NAFTA. But only one of these new deals (CETA) encroaches worryingly on the ability of provinces, municipalities and other public institutions to favour domestic food and support national farmers in public procurement contracts.

Given widespread food insecurity in Canada, and the absence of a national food policy, municipal and provincial initiatives are essential for ensuring sustainable, local agricultural production. Public procurement of local food—food grown and consumed within a province, territory or other specified geographic area—is recognized as a key pillar of food security because it addresses both supply and demand-side issues.

On the supply side, procurement offers market access for small-scale producers and cushions them from market shocks. On the demand side, the availability of local food not only increases consumer choice, but generates local economic activity as well. There are also well-recognized environmental, social and health benefits associated with the production and consumption of fresh, in-season local food.

Support for local food in Canada has never been stronger, with provinces such as Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Nova Scotia leading the policy charge. The government of Ontario's Local Food Fund (LFF) has provided \$22 million to support 163 local food projects, for example. To date, the fund has leveraged \$102 million in investment to expand local food markets.

Cities and municipalities are also pioneering strategies to support the public procurement of local food. The City of Vancouver has a food strategy that promotes local procurement as a key driver of its sustainable food system. In 2011, the City of Toronto passed a local food procurement policy that inserts language into requests for proposals designed to increase the amount of food grown locally.

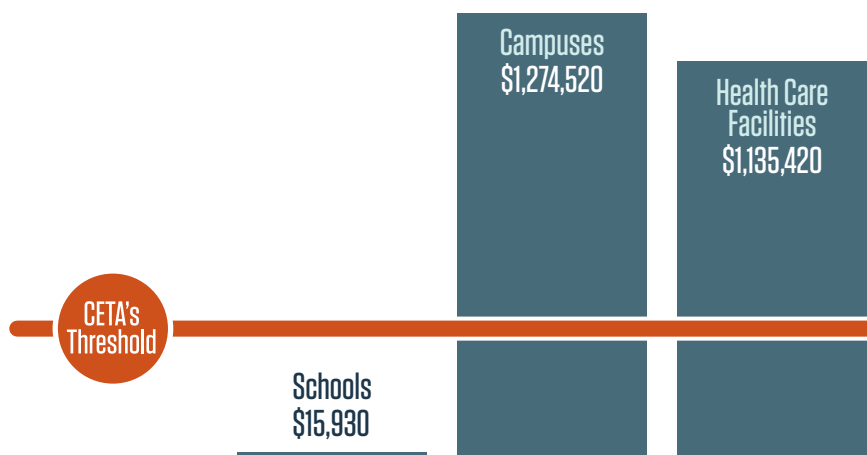
Elsewhere in Ontario, the cities of Thunder Bay and Markham allocate 10% and 25% of their respective food budgets to locally grown food. Dozens of other cities in Ontario have projects to support local food, large-

ly with the support of the LFF. Local food procurement is endorsed by the 60+ Food Policy Councils across Canada, as well as by an extensive network of non-government and business partners.

In addition to municipalities, academic institutions, school boards and hospitals (collectively referred to as the MASH sector) provide a significant market for local food producers. The broader public sector spends around \$745 million on food annually in Ontario. MASH institutions are increasingly developing new strategies to boost local food content in their procurement contracts. There are dozens of examples but leaders in Ontario include the University of Toronto, University of Guelph, and health care facilities including St. Mary's Hospital in Kitchener and St. Joseph's Health System.

The Canada-EU CETA could undermine such initiatives through its new restrictions on public procurement at the provincial, municipal and MASH sector levels—all previously excluded.

Average Spending on Local Food Annually by Sector in Canada



ed from international free trade and procurement agreements. The restrictions in CETA prohibit covered institutions from giving purchasing preference to goods or services from local companies or individuals if the contract exceeds 200,000 Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), which is about \$315,500 in approximate 2012–13 Canadian dollars. This “unconditional access” to Canada’s procurement markets is unparalleled and was seen by European trade negotiators as a significant win.

What does 200,000 SDRs in local food procurement look like? Take, for example, the average family in Canada, which spends \$7,980 on food per year, according to Statistics Canada. If an institution procured enough local food to feed 40 families for a year, it would put that spending above the CETA thresholds. While smaller procurement initiatives such as staff cafeterias, vending machines in public spaces, and child care services may have contracts under the 200,000 SDR threshold, local food preferences on larger contracts, which represent the vast majority, will be vulnerable to trade disputes from European and Canadian food suppliers.

Take Sunnyside Home, for example. The live-in care facility, owned by the Region of Waterloo, has a \$1-million annual contract with Sysco, a food preparation and marketing multinational, to provide local food for its residents. With CETA in place, Sysco could dispute local food quotas as a prohibited “offset,” described in the agreement as “any condition or undertaking that encourages local development...such as the use of domestic content.”

Many other institutions in the MASH sector have made recent commitments to increase their local food content requirements, which would become similarly vulnerable to challenge under CETA if, over the course of a year, a contract’s value exceeds the SDR threshold. The Harper government frequently claimed food purchases would be exempt, but the CETA text is far from clear on this. The exemption appears to apply only to “human feeding programs,” such as those related to food aid

and urgent relief, not day-to-day food contracts.

Although there is no national data on the food spending patterns of public institutions, a survey by Farm to Cafeteria Canada represents the most comprehensive attempt to do so. The graph on the opposite page shows average spending on local food by schools, campuses and health care facilities in Canada through existing Farm to Cafeteria activities. Any funding above the red line would be restricted by the CETA procurement rules.

The impacts will be felt most by hospitals and university and college campuses, which spend a significant portion of their large budgets on local food—3.5 to four times as much as the CETA threshold respectively. Although hospitals currently spend the most on local food, post-secondary institutions are a more promising growth sector for local food procurement.

Before CETA was concluded, over 50 communities had voiced their discontent about the agreement’s procurement provisions. Although the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) was consulted during the negotiations, CETA appears to violate principles the federation said it needed the government to meet before it would support the deal. The provinces and territories had the ability to negotiate their respective procurement commitments, but largely chose to trade away protection of

Before CETA was concluded, over 50 communities had voiced their discontent about the agreement’s procurement provisions.

local procurement for limited additional market access for goods and service exports to the EU.

If all goes according to plan, CETA could enter into force next year. However, the ratifying process in Europe may prove complicated. EU member states, including France and Germany, not to mention much of the European Parliament, have cold feet about the investor–state dispute settlement process, which offers multinational investors a means to settle disputes with government outside the regular court system, before a panel of trade lawyers with corporate interests at heart. Public opposition in Europe to investor “rights” in CETA and a similar transatlantic agreement with the U.S. continues to grow.

Even if CETA is ratified, loopholes exist to promote local food through labels that educate consumers about social or environmental criteria (like carbon emission labels) but do not refer to political boundaries. These technical specifications, however, represent relatively weak opportunities for the local food movement to navigate the constraints placed on it by CETA.

The Liberal government claims to have consulted hundreds of people on the TPP since the October election and promises a thorough public debate on whether Canada should ratify the agreement. At the same time, Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland says the government will ratify CETA as soon as possible. Yet, when it comes to public procurement and other areas, the Harper-era EU deal is even more problematic—and lopsided—than the TPP, and clearly in need of its own reassessment.

With respect to local food in Canada, CETA represents a significant barrier to the future of sustainable procurement policies. Municipalities and public sector institutions in the process of scaling up their commitments to local food purchasing will be most affected. CETA contradicts provincial commitments to increase local food provision and threatens the ability of municipalities, provinces and public institutions to prioritize local food, food services and farmers when tendering public contracts. ■

Kevin Hollett

## Fighting the disease

**ONE OF THE** great and yet staggeringly little-known medical achievements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the transformation of HIV to a treatable disease.

At the peak of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and early 1990s, a positive HIV diagnosis was akin to a death sentence. Without a known treatment to impede it, HIV rapidly progressed to AIDS. Physicians relate a common story from those days: telling patients to begin getting their affairs in order because their time was so short. Communities were devastated—an estimated 36 million lives have been lost to the epidemic.

Twenty years ago, however, Canadian researchers introduced highly active antiretroviral therapy, or HAART, a cocktail of medicines that suppresses the virus to undetectable levels, delaying the onset of symptoms and eventual progression of HIV to AIDS. HAART is now the standard of care and those living with HIV receiving the treatment have life expectancies approaching the general population. It is a modern medical miracle.

One of those researchers, Vancouver's Dr. Julio Montaner, has since developed and advocated for treatment as prevention (TasP), a strategy that calls for diagnosing HIV and delivering the treatment immediately. British Columbia has adopted the strategy provincially. Along with saving lives, the method is impressively cost-effective, more than covering the price of medicine through averted cases, since the chances of transmission are cut by nearly 96%.

In combination with other health interventions, the rate of HIV infection in the province has dropped below the Canadian average and continues to fall. Given this success, it's

hardly surprising that the United Nations modelled its strategy to fight HIV and AIDS on TasP. Canada, on the other hand, has yet to develop a national HIV/AIDS prevention strategy of its own.

We can speculate why this might be the case. Those most impacted by HIV also happen to be among the most stigmatized and discriminated against in our society: men who have sex with men, sex workers, people who use drugs, and Aboriginal people have HIV rates that are disproportionately higher than in other populations. This might also explain why so few people are aware of the huge medical achievement of developing anti-HIV treatment.

But access to this treatment and care remains limited. Rather than follow B.C.'s lead, the previous federal government legislated policies that eschew evidence and human rights in favour of ideology, thereby creating more barriers to treatment and other prevention interventions.

In 2013, for example, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down provisions in the country's sex-work laws, citing health and safety risks associated with the sex trade. The court was presented with evidence showing that criminalizing sex work exposed workers to violence and higher rates of infectious disease transmission. The Conservative government responded by enacting the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA), which introduced new criminal laws that continue to marginalize sex workers and expose them to harm.

The Conservatives also brought into law the Respect for Communities Act, which introduced stringent barriers to opening supervised con-

sultion sites for injecting drug users. The government did this despite the reams of evidence showing such facilities, like Vancouver's Insite, prevent deaths by overdose and disease transmission associated with injection drug use.

Compounding this harmful legislation, Canada has some of the most stringent HIV non-disclosure laws in the world, and we are second only to the U.S. in prosecutions of people who fail to disclose their status to partners. The non-disclosure law comes from a 1998 Supreme Court decision and only punishes those who knowingly put partners at risk. Many believe it encourages people to remain intentionally ignorant about their HIV status. This criminalization of HIV increases the stigma associated with the disease and creates a barrier to HIV testing.

Not all the blame should go to the Conservatives, as previous Liberal governments did no favours for people living with HIV or for those most at risk of infection. The new federal Liberal government, however, can do better by unwinding the laws and policies that promote the spread of the virus.

The government has started in this direction by approving the country's second supervised injection site (also in Vancouver). The Liberals voted against the PCEPA at the time and have promised to review those laws. The government can and should go further by repealing these laws entirely and enacting a national HIV strategy that expands access to life-saving HIV treatment and interventions. **M**

# Supporter Profile

Jim Stanford

I have been associated in a research capacity with the CCPA for a quarter-century, ever since I was a graduate student in economics. Believe it or not, one of my first CCPA publications (in 1991), “Going South: Cheap Labour as an Unfair Subsidy in North American Free Trade,” was based on a project I completed for my PhD econometrics course at the New School for Social Research in New York. It argued that U.S. anti-union laws (in the “right-to-work” states of the deep south) actively distorted relative costs in the economy, and hence should be considered an unfair trade practice.

Since then, I have written two dozen more reports, two books, and many commentaries and blogs for dissemination through the CCPA’s powerful and effective platforms. For me, the centre has been an incredibly important outlet for injecting progressive economic ideas into mainstream policy debates. The CCPA is recognized as a credible, relevant voice, and that allows a researcher to communicate their ideas and findings far beyond the typically small audience that follow academic or technical journals. That’s why I also became personally involved in the CCPA’s Members’ Council (including recently serving a term as Treasurer).

Through most of this period, I have been a financial supporter of the CCPA, as well as a researcher and writer. Of course, when I was a grad student, money was rather tight! So my donations in those early years were small. But after embarking on my paid career, I could step up my financial support of the centre. I am now a monthly donor to the national CCPA and also make annual donations to support the new Ontario office.

I recently joined the CCPA’s legacy donor program. I have amended my will to direct a significant portion of my estate to supporting the centre’s continuing work. Naturally I hope that won’t happen for many years! But it makes sense for me to express this commitment today, for several reasons. It concretely demonstrates my strong, long-running commitment to the centre. It makes clear my wishes in the event of unexpected illness or accident. And it provides the CCPA with the confidence of knowing that its donors are there, including through this most personal of contributions.



I have worked in all the major English-speaking countries of the world. I can personally attest that Canada is the only place with a think-tank like the CCPA. Of course, there are many committed progressives doing policy research in the U.S., U.K., Australia and New Zealand. But Canada is the only one of those countries where progressive activists are supported by an organization with the CCPA’s effectiveness, unity of purpose and reach.

That precious value is why I remain a very active CCPA supporter, even though I am currently living outside of Canada. My legacy commitment to the centre is one important part of that ongoing support. And I encourage all CCPA supporters to consider joining the legacy program as well!

*Jim Stanford is former economist for Unifor (and the Canadian Auto Workers before that), and currently lives in Sydney, Australia. He remains a member of the CCPA’s Members’ Council.*



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The CCPA is grateful to those who have arranged a legacy gift or are considering this in the future. We would appreciate the chance to thank you or provide information—please contact Katie Loftus, Development Officer, at 1-613-563-1341 ext. 318 or [katie@policyalternatives.ca](mailto:katie@policyalternatives.ca).

Asad Ismi

# Can the Paris climate agreement save Bangladesh?

**CONSIDERED THE GROUND** zero of climate change and the most vulnerable country to extreme weather, Bangladesh is literally sinking due to rapidly increasing sea levels. With 162 million people packed into an area the size of Iowa, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world and one of the poorest. According to a report released in October 2014 by global risk analytics company Maplecroft, on climate change and environmental risk Bangladesh tops the list of 32 countries identified as being at “extreme risk.”

Even without global warming, 20% of Bangladesh is flooded yearly due to its location in the centre of Asia’s biggest river delta, which also makes the country prone to deadly cyclones. The three largest rivers in the world flow through Bangladesh. Add to this rising sea levels caused by global warming and the Bangladeshi people are in grave danger. With a two degree Celsius rise in average global temperatures, half the country will be flooded, displacing an estimated 50 million people.

The luxurious lifestyle of the West is commonly blamed by Bangladeshis for the disaster facing their country due to global warming. Per capita carbon dioxide emissions in the U.S. are 16.8 tonnes and in Canada they are 14.1 tonnes, while those of Bangladesh are a miniscule 0.4 tonnes, according to UN stats.

Professor Anu Muhammad, who teaches economics at Jahangirnagar University in the Bangladeshi capital of Dhaka, is renowned for leading the protest movement against the corporate plundering of Bangladesh’s mineral resources in which U.S. and British mining companies play prominent roles. He spearheaded the successful

campaign to stop the opening of the Phulbari coal mine, which, as a result, has not been able to operate for the last 10 years.

“The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), backed by the U.S., are still financing projects harmful to Bangladesh’s ecology,” Muhammad told me. “The neoliberal development model has been showing high GDP growth at the cost of rivers, forests and peoples’ livelihoods. Western countries and their financial institutions should stop financing projects of mass destruction, especially coal-fired power plants, nuclear power plants, highly polluting industries and open-pit coal mining. Moreover, they should compensate my country so we can build an environmentally friendly economy.”

The United Nations climate change conference, held in Paris last December, saw 196 countries agree to limit carbon dioxide emissions so that global temperatures do not rise above two degrees Celsius, with an aspiration that this could be limited to 1.5 degrees. Funds were promised to poor nations to help them reduce emissions and deal with the impacts of extreme weather. Countries facing climate disasters are to get urgent aid, with Canada committing to \$2.65 billion over the next five years.

However, as Fiona Harvey cautioned in her column for *The Guardian* (U.K.), “the caps on emissions are still too loose, likely to lead to warming of 2.7 to 3C above pre-industrial levels, breaching the 2C threshold that scientists say is the limit of safety, beyond which the effects—droughts, floods, heatwaves and sea level rises—are likely to become catastrophic and irreversible. Poor countries are also concerned that the money provided to them will not be nearly enough to protect them.

Not all of the agreement is legally binding, so future governments of the signatory countries could yet renege on their commitments.”

As protesters outside the UN conference called for “system change,” Muhammad pointed out the capitalist and corporate development model got an easy ride in Paris. Without changing this paradigm, “these expensive conferences, goals and agreements will only result in failure.”

Saleemul Huq, director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) in Dhaka, essentially agrees with Muhammad. An expert on climate change and sustainable development, Huq was the lead author of the chapter on adaptation and sustainable development in the third assessment report of the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

“Unfortunately, the Paris agreement is totally inadequate in terms of what needs to be done to deal with global warming,” Huq told me. “This is also the view of the strong climate justice movement in Bangladesh. All countries made pledges—they are called INDCs (Intended Nationally Determined Contributions) of how much they can reduce their emissions, but if you add up all these pledges, it only reduces the temperature rise to 2.7 degrees centigrade.

“The countries that need to do the most to reduce emissions are the U.S., Canada and Australia because theirs are the highest,” he continued. “Bangladesh is in danger of drowning precisely because of this kind of attitude from rich countries.” In contrast, “Europe and Japan have high standards of living, but they don’t have such a polluting lifestyle. They have a lot of public transport and smaller houses.

Americans, Canadians and Australians need transport policies that emphasize public transportation and discourage car usage because they must get off fossil fuels. In Canada, there is the particularly abysmal investment in tar sands oil.”

In spite of its very low carbon emissions, Bangladesh is making efforts to do even more on climate change. Professor Ainun Nishat of the Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research at BRAC University in Dhaka told me the government has come up with both a national adaptation plan for climate change and a mitigation plan that should reduce its carbon footprint further. Among the adaptation policies implemented so far are foundational platforms for houses in flood-prone areas, raising land height by channelling sediment from rivers to fields, investing in solar irrigation, developing rice and wheat varieties resistant to salinity, drought, submergence and heat, and practising a new irrigation method that requires less water.

“Bangladesh...has put \$500 million of its own funds into its adaptation plans,” said Huq. “In terms of mitigation, Bangladesh has the fastest growing solar home systems in the world. We have more than four million solar homes all over the country.”

The Paris agreement stipulates that rich nations will provide \$100 billion a year for climate adaptation and mitigation starting in 2020. Some money is already flowing to Bangladesh, but it is not enough for the immediate term, according to Huq and Nishat, amounting to a few hundred million dollars.

“The rich countries first offered grants and then switched this to World Bank-type loans with new conditionalities, which are difficult for developing countries to fulfil,” explained Nishat. “The financial mechanism initially proposed by wealthy countries was simple: preference would be given to least developed countries [such as Bangladesh]. But this is not happening. The rich countries were supposed to give \$30 billion between 2011 and 2013, but did not do so. The funds are not moving as fast as needed.”

The Canadian government currently has no climate-related projects in Bangladesh, but this might change



with the new money announced after Paris. Alauddin Vuian, first secretary for political affairs at Bangladesh's embassy in Ottawa, has some ideas for what more targeted aid could look like.

“Canada definitely can support Bangladesh for capacity building and development of adaptive technologies,” he told me. “Adaptation and dealing with loss and damage are crucial for sustainable development and may include life-saving technologies, sufficient investment in research on resistant varieties for different crops, climate-proof cropping patterns, and insurance for agriculture and livestock to help climate-vulnerable people.”

Vuian added that infrastructure development is “critically important” for Bangladesh in order to fight climate change. He said Canada could support his country's efforts to dredge rivers, and construct, maintain and repair embankments, dykes, barrages, flood and cyclone shelters, and flood-proof housing.

Barbara Harvey, spokesperson for Canada's Department of Environment and Climate Change, told me “Canada recognizes the vulnerability of least developed countries like Bangladesh,” citing the federal government's \$2.65-billion contribution for countering climate change. This package includes \$300 million for the Green Climate Fund, which has approved \$40 million to help climate-proofing infrastructure, \$50 million to support climate risk insurance in developing countries, and \$30 mil-

**Cyclone Aila devastated Bangladesh in May 2009, a sign of how vulnerable the country is to climate change.**

Oxfam

lion to finance adaptation through the Least Developed Countries Fund. Responding to Vuian's comments, Harvey invited the Bangladeshi government to “initiate a dialogue with Canada to discuss how and where both countries could work together.”

The consequences of not doing more now to fight climate change are well known but perhaps distant for many people living in Canada. For Bangladeshis the crisis has already begun.

“Climate change is not a linear matter but a curvilinear one [a steepening curve],” said Nishat. “We are now at the flat part of the curve. Soon it is going to change and the temperature will increase very fast from now on. It will go up to more than three degrees centigrade, which will create havoc. There will be food shortages, large-scale migrations, new diseases, spreading of old ones, increasing floods, droughts, cyclones and conflicts between countries over water. This will happen all over the world and Bangladesh will be the worst victim of the policies of rich countries.” **M**

Evelyn Pinkerton, Kim Olsen, Joy Thorkelson, Henry Clifton and Art Davidson

# Who controls Canada's fisheries?

How the feds let fishing privileges be sucked up by big money

**W**ILD FISHERIES ARE humankind's greatest single source of protein. They are fully renewable, we don't have to till soil, plant seeds, apply fertilizer or pesticide, water them or feed them; we just have to manage the harvest. As global populations continue to grow, much is at stake as we determine who benefits from this important food resource.

In British Columbia you would think those who call the west coast home and who fish for a living are in the best position to prosper. You'd be wrong.

B.C.'s halibut fishery is run in such a perverse way that most fishermen have seen their rewards so whittled down that it barely makes financial sense to leave the wharf. New fishermen are scarcer than blue whales, and the bulk of the benefits flow to "investors," big processing companies, even foreign corporations. Now, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) wants to do the same harm to B.C.'s emblematic salmon fishery.

To understand how we got here, and what needs to change, requires a brief explanation of something called the individual transferable quota system. Stay with us. This won't take long.

## A crash course in ITQs

**A**n ITQ is a share or quota of fish. This quota is transferable: owners can either fish it themselves or make money by leasing or selling their quota to others. Over time, people find they can make more money by leasing out their quota. And in the long-term, it can make sense to sell quota to companies that can out-compete fishermen for the price of an ITQ. The

system was built on good intentions, but it ended up backfiring.

An ITQ is not a fishing licence that can be controlled by government, although the two are linked. And fishing licences can only be held by Canadian citizens or permanent residents. However, companies that own fishing licences may be partially owned or controlled by foreign entities. And ITQ owners can sell or lease their quota to anyone—without the government intervening or even knowing about it. The fishing licence issued by government gets temporarily transferred, sometimes through a holding company, to the ITQ lessee.

The economists who invented the ITQ system predicted that free transferability was the very thing that would make these fishing permits gravitate to the most efficient fishermen (who would then make the biggest profits). That's not what happened. Instead, many ITQs got into the hands of "investors," who then leased them to fishermen or the processing companies, who in turn leased to the people actually doing the fishing.

The economists anticipated that, with catch amounts almost guaranteed, fishermen would be able to lower fishing costs. They would not need the biggest boat to race to catch the fish first; they would increase profits by getting fish to market over a longer time period. However, the actual experience in ITQed fisheries was that the overall costs of fishing rose dramatically. Though some fisheries have seen market benefits, most working fishermen are not the beneficiaries. Escalating ITQ leasing costs siphon off most of any increase in market prices.

The ITQ system was introduced into B.C.'s halibut fishery in the early 1990s. By 2006, more than half of

B.C.'s halibut catch was being taken by fishermen who had to lease ITQs from the "armchair fishermen" and "investors" who now owned the transferable quota. That cut deeply into the profits of those doing the work. In fact, the cost of leasing ITQs rose from 0% in 1992 (when leasing was not allowed) to 78% of the landed price in 2008.

This put the leasing fishermen in a severe cost-price squeeze. By 2008, at least 30% of active fishing operations were leasing 70% or more of the quota they fished, which meant they were barely financially viable. In addition to paying high lease fees, they also had to deliver all their fish to lessor companies with which they had little bargaining power. They were therefore taking greater risks in fishing, such as postponing equipment maintenance, and fishing under more dangerous weather conditions, to fill markets when prices were higher.

In contrast, the owners of ITQs were doing so well—earning a 10% return on investment by 2010—that new investors kept entering the speculative market.

## Point of no returns

**U**nfortunately for active fishermen, these trends have continued. A 2011 report out of the DFO found that leasing costs averaged 72% of catch value. A 2013 report commissioned by worried fish processors found that "quota lease costs are killing payments to crew," and ITQ owners "are having extreme difficulty in filling deckhand [crew] positions.... Some owners are searching outside Canada for skilled fishermen."

In 2015, it got worse: halibut ITQs leased for \$7 to \$9 a pound when the



landed price was between \$8.25 and \$9.50 a pound. That meant quota owners took over 85% of the landed value, leaving fishermen razor-thin margins to pay crew, vessel operation and monitoring costs.

Foreign control of ITQs is also increasing. It became serious when U.S.-based Pacific Seafood, one of the largest seafood companies in North America, purchased much of JS McMillan's former groundfish trawl fleet and its ITQs. (Groundfish trawl includes species such as cod, flounder, red snapper, sole and other rockfish that swim along the bottom of the ocean and are taken by "dragging" or trawling; these species were ITQed as a group in 1997).

More recently, Chinese companies have begun acquiring groundfish vessels and their ITQs, and have a long-term lease on a plant in Bella Bella, for which they are seeking ITQs. Food security concerns in China suggest this trend will continue.

The Jim Pattison Group's Canadian Fishing Company just announced the pending closure of the last B.C. cannery, in Prince Rupert, meaning it will likely send the fish and these 500 jobs offshore where labour is cheaper. The company controls some 80% of the supply of salmon and herring taken from B.C. waters. That makes it very difficult for another fish processor to set up a viable operation on the North Coast.

## Sharecropping on the seas

**W**hy are we allowing ITQs to be leased, bought and sold freely in an unregulated, over-the-counter market? Why are we allowing our fishermen and rural coastal communities to lose their fishing access and way of life? And why is DFO now pushing for ITQs in major parts of the salmon fishery, over the opposition of 92% of active salmon fishermen in every area of the B.C. coast?

Part of the answer is that the economists who designed the ITQ system believed it was the ideal way to ensure halibut fleet stability, viability, safety, efficiency and greatest net benefits to society—all DFO policy goals. The system has proved extremely beneficial for those who were gifted quota near-

## Why are we allowing ITQs to be leased, bought and sold freely in an unregulated, over-the-counter market?

ly a quarter-century ago. To gain acceptance of the changeover, DFO gave away ITQs to the first generation that happened to own halibut commercial fishing licences in the three qualifying years when the system began.

The system has worked beautifully, as well, for investors with the capital to buy up ITQs and lease them out. As leasing became more widespread, even most of those who still fished their own quota began paying themselves a lease fee, then deducting it from the profits that were shared with the crew. Both lessee skippers and crew characterize their situation with this public resource as "sharecropper" or "feudal."

The same miseries have been visited upon fisheries in Iceland and New Zealand, which have had the longest-established ITQ systems. Researchers report how quota lease fees account for about 70% of the value of the catch, that small boats are being forced out of the fishery by monitoring costs (e.g., expensive on-board cameras that record every fish caught, and dockside monitors recording every fish unloaded). B.C. fishermen now have to bear those costs as well.

Why is DFO pushing ITQs on the province's salmon fishery now, instead of trying to fix the mess they are causing with halibut? Many analysts point to how Canada's federal government has slashed the DFO budget over the past two decades. Civil servants inevitably have been forced to look for ways to download costs onto fishermen. ITQs are the simplest way to lower the department's management costs, since the system treats ITQ fishing vessels as self-managing businesses requiring minimal oversight.

## Sinking a generation

**D**ownloading at the DFO is depriving a new generation of aspiring B.C. fishermen from achieving their dreams. That first generation of ITQ owners, who received their quotas for free, each inherited a public good that could usually be sold for \$1 million. With a windfall like that, they were more willing to agree that monitoring and other management costs could be taken on by active fishermen.

But no one is handing out ITQs for free anymore. And the cost of fishing for halibut is so high it's almost impossible for younger fishermen to get into the industry—except, in essence, as minimally paid day-labourers.

Why then, would we ever escalate a system that has worsened the stripping of B.C. coastal communities of the majority of their fishing licences, put many formerly self-supporting communities on welfare and transferred the costs to Canadian taxpayers?

It's time for the DFO to evaluate alternatives using a "triple bottom line" analysis that asks: What are the economic benefits of any policy? What are its social and ecological benefits? And does it really work for more than a few people? There are many documented alternatives to ITQs in salmon from other jurisdictions. Canadian researchers and fishermen's organizations can share this information with the DFO and collaborate to explore how they might work in B.C.

Fifteen years ago, DFO believed economists who mistakenly argued that B.C.'s halibut fishery would reap wonderful results by shifting to the ITQ system. There is now ample evidence to show that ITQs do not achieve the DFO goals of fleet stability, viability, safety, efficiency and greatest net benefits to society. Instead, this system maximizes profits for a small group of quota owners and facilitates the migration of benefits and control to foreign owners. **M**

EVELYN PINKERTON IS A PROFESSOR OF RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, KIM OLSEN IS A FISHERMAN AND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED FISHERMEN AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION, JOY THORKELSON IS NORTHERN REPRESENTATIVE FOR UFAWU, HENRY CLIFTON IS A FISHERMAN AND PRESIDENT OF THE NATIVE BROTHERHOOD OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, AND ART DAVIDSON IS A FISHERMAN AND PRESIDENT OF THE B.C. LONGLINE FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION. THIS ARTICLE RAN IN THE TYEE IN JANUARY.

Karen Lok Yi Wong

# Elder care in B.C.

## Shifting to a proactive home and community care approach

**THE POPULATION OF** British Columbia is rapidly aging. According to a 2013 CCPA-BC report, “[t]he number of seniors over age 75 increased by 28% between 2001 and 2010.” Longer life expectancy due to medical advancement is driving this trend, which coincides with the post-war baby boom generation entering old age. While the way we care for seniors is of most immediate concern to this group, elder care clearly affects everyone, since we will all eventually get old, take care of older family members, and pay taxes toward social services for seniors.

The need for better elder care in Canada cannot be avoided, and B.C. is currently debating three policy options. The first is the reactive acute hospital care approach—the status quo in the province. Under this policy, seniors receive acute care at the hospital at their worst or emergent stage of poor health. This crowds hospital beds at a significant cost to the public. According to Michael Kary of the B.C. Care Providers Association (BC-CPA), the average daily cost of a hospital bed is \$1,200. More importantly, reactive acute hospital care causes seniors unnecessary suffering and stress that could be avoided if care were provided earlier.

A second approach involves keeping seniors at home where possible, but with only limited public support and a reliance on family caregivers. This creates its own problems, with family members describing it, in academic and media interviews, as “emotionally demanding,” leaving “not enough time for selves or family,” or causing undue “stress” and “fatigue.” Stressed and burdened caregivers may not be able to provide quality care, in which cases seniors frequently end up admitting themselves to acute care at the hospital. According to a 2011 report by Dr. Martha Donnelly, Dr. Janet McElhaney and Marcia Carr of Fraser Health, this is especially true for seniors with dementia.

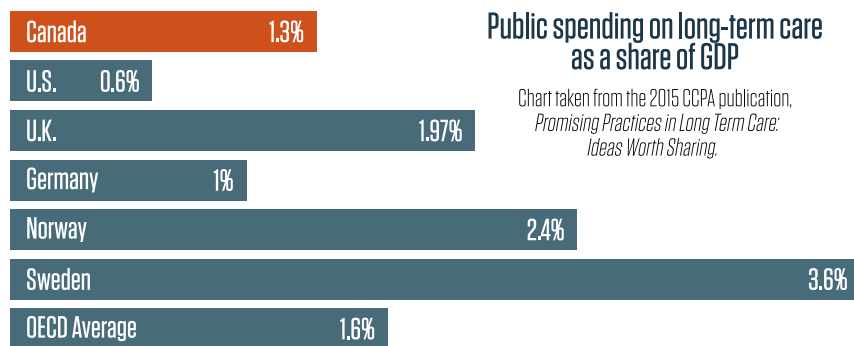
The third and I would argue preferred approach for B.C. is proactive home and community care with strong public support. This policy includes such things as home care visits by health care professionals, and residential care. It is proactive because its goal is to keep seniors as healthy as possible in their community and at home. It frees up hospital beds, relieves the stress of family caregivers, and improves quality of life, notably by giving seniors more self-determination than they experience in a hospital context, according to research

by the B.C. Integrated Care Advocacy Group and B.C. Health Coalition.

One argument against proactive home and community care is that it creates immediate new costs. However, public money is also saved by decreased demand for acute hospital care, which is far more expensive than elder care would be. According to Kary, for 1% of the amount B.C. now spends on acute hospital care you could purchase an estimated five years’ worth of home and community care. Also, a home- and community-based care model allows many family caregivers to return to the labour market, with the emotional and economic benefits this brings.

Should the B.C. government decide to implement the proactive home and community care approach to elder care, there are ways to further optimize results. First, support should be provided not only to seniors but also family members who look after them (e.g., respite care to family caregivers). Second, the policy reform process should involve participation beyond health professionals; seniors and their family should be invited to participate in committee deliberations, town halls, etc. Third, a shift to proactive care will require that new resources be devoted to training professionals so they can provide home and community care. Finally, hospital-community collaboration and communication should be strengthened.

The population of B.C., and Canada generally, is aging and there is a need of better elder care. A shift from the current reactive acute hospital care policy to a proactive home and community care approach would be cost-effective and improve the quality of life for seniors and their families. ■





Ed Finn

## Building a better country

The editor of the anthology *Canada After Harper* assesses our new federal government

**WHILE CLEANING OUT** my desk after retiring as editor of the *CCPA Monitor* a few years ago, I found a copy of a lecture Ralph Nader had delivered in April 2011 to the Canada–U.S. Institute at the University of Western in London, Ontario. The lecture described how uncontrolled corporate power had transformed the United States into the world’s most inequitable and socially backward country. Nader was concerned the Harper government’s relentless pursuit of closer integration with the United States was dragging Canada down the same calamitous slope.

In re-reading this speech, I was amazed to find it as relevant as ever. With a federal election looming, I wondered if I could persuade Ralph to update and expand it for publication in some form before the fall of 2015. Fortunately, as if Ralph had been read-

ing my mind, he phoned me a few months later to suggest we collaborate in undertaking this very same project. He envisioned it as a short book in which I would research and input the details needed to “Canadianize” his lecture and make it more politically forceful. He thought a compact 30,000-word tome would suffice.

But I had been thinking more ambitiously of using Ralph’s speech as an inspiration for progressive Canadian writers, researchers and analysts. I was confident many of them would be excited about contributing to an anthology of that sort, which could run to well over 100,000 words.

“How many Canadian writers do you think will want to participate?” Ralph asked.

“If our anthology is to cover the major social, economic, political and environmental issues, we’ll need at least a dozen, ideally more,” I told him.

I had underestimated the enthusiasm the anthology concept would generate. After I converted Ralph’s speech into an essay and circulated it to a wide range of prospective contributors, the response was overwhelming. They were inspired. They saw it as a literary springboard from which they could launch their own critiques and ideas.

We wound up with 20 co-authors in addition to Ralph and me, all well-known and knowledgeable in their respective fields. They were eager to get involved in a publishing venture that had been initiated by such a renowned U.S. author, consumer advocate, political activist and four-time candidate for the presidency.

All of us who contributed to the anthology, published in late summer of 2015 by James Lorimer & Company, are proud of our joint accomplishment. We had agreed at the outset that it

would not be a collective harangue against the Harper government or an attempt to persuade people how to vote. The 21 Canadians and one American who contributed were much more concerned about the country's future than its past.

Yes, we denounced the ruinous tactics of the Harper government, but we knew that Canada had been in decline as a nation—socially, politically and environmentally—for a long time, under a succession of both Liberal and Conservative governments. We were aware it would take more than turfing one government to halt this degradation—to break the neoliberal grip on our national ideology. Surely our more fundamental goal should be to permanently replace plutocracy, the rule of a wealthy elite, with some form of genuine democracy.

The prescient title of our anthology, *Canada After Harper*, was therefore reflective of a vision shared by all involved. Contributors were motivated by a deep concern that, should trends continue, their children, grandchildren and future generations would grow up in a kind of dystopian autocracy. And so to their critiques they added detailed and viable alternative policies that a new government—if it meant to be a truly progressive one—would gladly embrace and put into practice.

They wrote of strengthening our social programs, seriously tackling climate change, switching to a safe (and sane) economic system, eliminating poverty and reducing inequality—ideas that transcend last year's election campaign, but which clearly shaped its outcome. *Canada After Harper* is therefore more readable today and more applicable to current issues than it was before Justin Trudeau took office as prime minister.

The new government continues to enjoy strong public support, if only from the euphoria created by the termination of a decade of ultraconservative mis-government. But this "honeymoon" clearly cannot last. The challenge now is to reverse and repair a decade's worth of damage, and put Canada back on the path to true national well-being.

The new government cannot be expected to implement all the necessary reforms immediately. It's going to take the full length of the Liberals' four-year mandate, or longer—assuming they will be able to, and want to, stick to their word. I have been asked to assess the government's decisions and tendencies so far, and compare them to some of the priorities in *Canada After Harper*, which is what I will attempt to do here.

## Poverty and inequality

During the election campaign, the Liberals, like the Conservatives and the NDP, were fixated on helping the middle class, with lower-income families almost completely ignored. Trudeau and other Liberal candidates seemed unconcerned that four million Canadians are living in poverty, with close to a million so bereft they depend on food banks and other charities to avoid starvation. Since taking power, the Liberals have continued to disregard domestic poverty, though I am writing this before Trudeau's first budget has been tabled, and I am willing (and hoping) it will contradict me.

To his credit, Trudeau has welcomed many more immigrants from Syria, and provided them with sustenance and temporary housing. He should be just as concerned about the poverty-stricken citizens of this country. I'm not implying a zero-sum game or an either-or situation: we have the capacity to be both nationally and internationally generous.

Trudeau moved toward addressing Canada's appalling rate of inequality by raising taxes on the rich and lowering taxes on the middle class. "You'll see more money on your paycheques right away," he said in October, claiming it would amount to an estimated \$670 per person, per year, or \$1,340 per year for many two-income families.

It was only after the election, when the tax reform was implemented, that we learned "Trudeau's plan takes from the rich and gives to the almost-as-rich," as *Maclean's* columnist John Geddes put it. CCPA economist David Macdonald calculates that affluent families making between \$166,000 and \$211,000 will get a tax reduction of

\$813 while the roughly 1.6 million families making about \$48,000 to \$62,000 will have their taxes cut on average by a meager \$51.

As for the millions of families with even lower incomes, their taxes remain at the same level. So much for reducing inequality.

## Health care

On the health care front, it's far too early to rank the new Liberal government's approach. It can safely be predicted, I hope, that Trudeau will cancel the Harper government's new funding formula, which reduced the annual top-up on health transfers to the provinces from 6% to 3.9%. The new prime minister can also be expected to scrap Harper's switch from equalization payments to per capita transfers—a move that threatened equal access to health care across the country.

Healing these and other nasty cuts to medicare inflicted by the last government, though welcome, will not be enough to fix serious underfunding and operational problems in the system. They include a shortage of doctors and nurses, long waiting times, delays in treatment, rising user fees, the proliferation of private clinics, and the failure of some provinces to uphold and enforce the fundamental principles of the Canada Health Act.

By far the worst defect in our health care system is that, unlike in most other advanced countries, it does not cover pharmaceutical products, dental services and vision care. These large gaps in our health coverage impose intolerable financial burdens on millions of low-income families. Most provinces do provide basic coverage for children and seniors, but the lack of universal programs often results in many thousands going without medicines, eyeglasses and trips to the dentist.

Studies by the CCPA and other groups have debunked the claim that expanding medicare to cover additional health needs would be unaffordable. In fact, the investment in providing these extra services would eventually be more than offset by huge reductions in the cost of treating people

sickened by the failure of inadequate coverage to keep them well.

## The economy

Trudeau showed some signs of independence during the election campaign. He was not afraid, for example, to admit he would run deficits to invest in infrastructure and other public job-creating projects. When lambasted by the Conservatives, he even argued at one point that the deficit will pay for itself, a remark for which he was scorned by his opponents and media pundits, but which is basically correct. Stimulus spending that incurs deficits is usually recouped from the subsequent rise in tax revenue.

Since taking office, Trudeau has appeared less confident about incurring deficits, even dodging questions about amounts and duration. Again, here, I stand to be corrected by the March budget, which could announce more than the \$10 billion in deficit spending that was promised in the Liberal election platform. The fact is, we should be prepared to spend much more than this—five times as much if necessary—without fretting needlessly about Ottawa's finances.

During the Second World War, and through the 1950s and '60s, Canada sustained huge debts and deficits to fight the war and then build the Trans-Canada Highway, the St. Lawrence Seaway, airports, seaports and other public facilities. It was during this time the government also launched the Canada Pension Plan, medicare, Old Age Security and other major social programs. Despite all these high-cost expenditures, our national debt by 1960 was less than \$40 billion.

I was once challenged for my skepticism of economic growth by Jim Stanford, an economist with the CAW (now UNIFOR) and a CCPA board member. He readily admitted that, under capitalism, the hunger for growing profits drives a system that relies on constant growth, exploits natural resources, consumes more fossil fuels, emits more pollution and consequently increases global warming. But he contended that, even under capitalism, growth, if properly defined and managed, need not be environmen-

tally damaging and can even help the environment.

This kind of benign growth would include providing more child care, education, elder care and other human services; improving the quality rather than quantity of manufactured goods; improving and expanding public transport; investing in clean energy generation; cleaning up industrial waste sites; repairing roads, bridges, water and sewage pipes, and other crumbling infrastructure; and constructing new parks and other recreational facilities.

Investing in environmental protection is itself a form of economic growth that clearly benefits the environment, he argued, since trillions of dollars could be invested in this way, generating vast numbers of jobs and other gains for workers and their communities.

What Jim was describing was not much different from the methods for fighting climate change proposed by environmentalists. If an environmental catastrophe is to be prevented, it can only be achieved by converting greenhouse gas-emitting industrial activities to the kind of clean and constructive public activities that Jim listed. That also calls for a similar transformation of jobs, with workers moving from smokestack industries to take on the monumental task of expanding and enhancing public facilities and services.

Such a transformation in the way the economy now operates is bound to meet stiff corporate resistance. But since it would not constitute a frontal attack on capitalism, and since it would still allow for a sizeable amount of profit-making, a government determined to begin such a beneficial economic makeover should reasonably be able to fight off the naysayers.

## The environment

Under previous governments, to our great embarrassment internationally, Canada lagged far behind other comparable (and many developing) countries with respect to protecting the environment and tackling greenhouse gas emissions. It's not just our global image that's at stake, but ul-

timately our survival. We can't stop the ravages of climate change on our own, but we must do a far better job of helping the rest of the world mitigate them and adapt.

The task has been almost entirely disregarded by political and corporate leaders for the past quarter-century. Environmental activists have been doing their best to press governments to take remedial action, but apart from a series of ineffectual global summits the heat beat goes on.

There is some hope the accord reached at the most recent international climate gathering in Paris will have a much better outcome. Will it actually result in our collectively lowering greenhouse gases in the atmosphere enough to avert a catastrophic global temperature rise of two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels? The fate of humanity hinges on the answer.

In the meantime, we should focus on the role Canada can play in this momentous global struggle, which should supersede all other endeavours. I can't say I have been impressed by the Trudeau government's attitude so far. Yes, Trudeau has voiced his concern about Canada's backsliding on the environment and pledged to do better. We await the specifics. Recommitting to the Kyoto Accord? A national carbon tax? Strong curbs on emissions? Heavy fines for dumping chemicals and toxins into our waterways?

Early in the new Trudeau regime, one of his cabinet ministers, John McCallum, speaking on behalf of the prime minister, rebuked U.S. President Barack Obama for scuttling the planned Keystone XL pipeline that would move tar sands oil from Alberta to refineries in Texas. He implied the Trudeau government was in favour of building this pipeline, as well as the proposed Energy East pipeline. A few weeks later, Trudeau's environment and climate change minister, Catherine McKenna, gave Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre the go-ahead to dump five billion litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River.

Is favouring more dirty fossil fuel production the sign of an environmentally protective government? Is

approving the massive pollution of one of our largest rivers reflective of a government that is any more concerned about the environment than the Harper government was? (Harper's environment minister, Leona Aglukkaq, had actually put a ban on the proposed St. Lawrence dump—a ban McKenna promptly lifted after the election.)

It is perhaps unfair of me to judge Trudeau's environmental agenda on these two early decisions, but I did find them unsettling. I still have hope the new government's ongoing policies and actions in this vitally important field will more positively adhere to the Liberals' campaign promises. The environment and the economy are so closely interlinked. Perhaps in "greening" the economy, in some of the ways I just mentioned, Trudeau will achieve his goal of becoming Canada's "Mr. Clean."

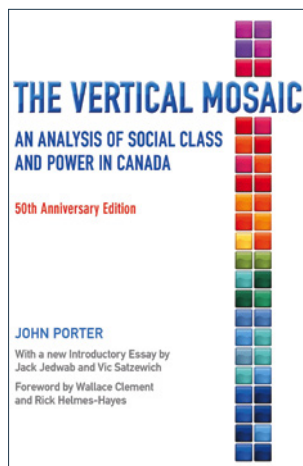
## Canada after Harper

During the year I spent compiling and editing *Canada After Harper* with Ralph Nader, whose superb introduction alone is worth the purchase price, I was privileged to work closely with 20 of Canada's most brilliant writers and researchers. Their names, in alphabetic order, are Maude Barlow, Duff Conacher, Murray Dobbin, Lynne Fernandez, Colleen Fuller, Trish Hennessy, Alex Himelfarb, Andrew Jackson, Larry Kuehn, Nora Loreto, Arthur Manuel, Kate McInturff, Linda McQuaig, Joyce Nelson, Kevin Page, Peter Robinson, Scott Sinclair, David Suzuki, Stuart Trew and James Turk. Their insightful critiques of Canada's checkered past and potentially brighter future comprise a veritable treasure trove of enlightenment.

In this essay, I could only scratch the surface of the collective wisdom they brought to the project. To fully appreciate the value of this anthology, it has to be read in its entirety. (Most new cabinet members have been sent complimentary copies, and I can only hope that at least a few of them will take the time to read it.) Fortunately, there is still ample time to do that. **M**

Reviewed by Clare Mian

# Multicultural but stratified: Canada's *Vertical Mosaic*, 50 years later



## THE VERTICAL MOSAIC

JOHN PORTER

Publisher (2015), 688 pages, \$39.95

THE CONVERSATION ABOUT class and equality in Canadian society has changed substantially since the 1965 publication of John Porter's seminal work, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*. The appearance of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of Porter's book coincided with the 2015 electoral campaign in which the Liberal party pledged to restore economic ease to the Canadian middle class.

In 1965, sociology was a relatively new social science, and Porter, a professor at Carleton University, was one of its stars. *The Vertical Mosaic* created an enormous buzz not only in academic circles, but also among the reading public. Combining exhaustive original research with rigorous analysis, Porter held a mirror up to Canadian society, disproving the prevailing image that it was egalitarian,

and championing education as the main vehicle through which the democratic goal of equality could be achieved. "I attach great importance to equality of opportunity on both ethical and practical grounds," he wrote in his preface to the original edition.

Porter addressed the theoretical construct of class, analyzed historical immigration and emigration patterns in Canada, and documented the place occupied by Canada's ethnic groups in its class structure. Influenced by sociologies from Europe (mainly Max Weber) and the United States (mainly Daniel Bell), he developed a theory of Canadian class structure he considered "post-capitalist." Porter believed Marx's two-class construct—capitalists who owned the "means of production" and workers who owned only their "labour power"—had been superseded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His view of classes or stratification, as sociologists sometimes called the phenomenon, was still based on "economic processes and economic differences," but involved a greater variety of professional, industrial and service occupations, with accompanying skills, education levels and "lifestyles."

Porter used five variables to define class: income and wealth (distinguishing between the two, as wealth can result from inheritance or investments unrelated to income), lifestyle, occupational stratification, educational attainment, and educational opportunity. Applying these variables to the Canadian population, he found that, of the two "charter groups," the proportion of British-heritage Canadians increased from the lowest to the highest class, while the reverse pattern held for those of French heritage.

The hierarchy was headed by those of British origin along with Jewish Canadians, followed by northern Europeans, eastern and southern Europeans, with Asians and Native Canadians at the bottom. He regretfully concluded that the proportional assimilation of all ethnic groups into all social strata had not taken place. A “reciprocal relationship” still existed between “ethnicity and social class,” and from this he derived the title of his book: Canada was indeed an ethnic mosaic, but placement within it was unequal, or vertical.

In each social class, Porter identified “elites” within “institutional subsystems,” which he labelled economic, political, bureaucratic/administrative and ideological. He defined elite power as “the recognized right to make effective decisions on behalf of a group of people.” While Porter considered the study of elites to be a critical component of his analysis of class, it does not seem to have endured, with the exception of studies of the Canadian corporate elite in global capitalism, an elite in which visible minority Canadians are significantly underrepresented.

While Porter’s book was generally recognized as an admirable contribution to Canadian scholarship, it also drew criticism from the right and left. Conservatives found his analysis did not take into account the historical depth and breadth of an evolving society. Marxists thought it lacked theoretical utility, reducing class identity to a “statistical aggregate” or “taxonomy,” with no explanatory power. There were also two major gaps for which Porter was faulted even in 1965: the exclusion of the Aboriginal population from his data, and the failure to separate categories by gender.

In 1995, on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the book, a group of prominent Canadian sociologists and Porter admirers, led by his biographer Rick Helmes-Hayes, held a conference at the University of Waterloo and subsequently published a series of papers that critically and respectfully connected Porter’s analysis to Canada on the eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The papers were unanimous in concluding that, while some of Porter’s find-

ings needed refining, especially with regard to gender differences, their essence was sound. Canada was still an unequal society and heading toward even wider inequalities.

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *The Vertical Mosaic* has an ambitious introductory essay by Jack Jedwab and Vic Satzewich, who commendably bring some of Porter’s notable conclusions up to date. Changes in collecting and reporting data partly account for the almost insurmountable difficulty of updating the entirety of Porter’s analysis.

Jedwab and Satzewich report that between the 1961 and 2011 censuses, the population of Canada almost doubled (from 18.5 million to 34 million); the Aboriginal population increased by 734% (from 220,000 to 1,836,000); the proportion of immigrants from Asia and the Middle East grew from 8.5% to 57% of foreign-born Canadians; the percentage of foreign-born Canadians was 20%; one in five Canadians self-identified as “visible minority”; and 42% of the population reported “multiple ethnic or racial origins.” European immigration shrank to 15% over this time, while Canadians of European descent moved up the class ladder, in part because, as

**The function of classes is no longer discussed in any theoretical framework, least of all in terms of justice and well-being. Twenty-first century global capitalism seems to have become an unquestioned and unquestionable dogma.**

new immigration has decreased, they are now in the second or third generation, which makes it correspondingly easier to negotiate Canadian society.

According to Jedwab and Satzewich, social inequality persists and, “while the old ethnic vertical mosaic might be disappearing, race is now a fundamental basis of income inequality in Canada.” Two 1984 royal commission reports, one on equality in employment and the other on the participation of visible minorities in Canadian society, when coupled with census data, indicate the pattern of second and third generation advancement is unlikely to be replicated by visible minority immigrants. Those least likely to hold managerial positions are Jamaican, Vietnamese and Filipino, whether native-born or immigrant. Aboriginal Canadians, for whom immigration is not an issue, are also hugely underrepresented in managerial positions. University graduates from Asia—especially Korea, Iran, Pakistan, West and Southeast Asia—are at the bottom of mean and median incomes for Canadians. However, patterns of racial inequality are now recognized to be different for men and women, with native-born visible minority women sometimes achieving higher occupational status and income than white or immigrant women.

As we move into 2016, the discussion about inequality and democracy has become less lofty. Neither the academic nor the political world seems willing or able to paint the “big picture.” Porter’s cluster of variables, with its rich explanatory scope, has been replaced by the minutiae of earnings and tax brackets, while class is euphemistically called “socio-economic status.” Connections to power, race and ethnicity, which were the heart of Porter’s analysis, are seldom attempted; when they are, it is on a small scale. The function of classes is no longer discussed in any theoretical framework, least of all in terms of justice and well-being. Twenty-first century global capitalism seems to have become an unquestioned and unquestionable dogma.

However, the term “middle class” made a major reappearance in the re-

cent electoral campaign as all parties, in one way or another, championed its reinstatement in terms almost reminiscent of what Porter called the “image” or “myth” of Canadian egalitarianism. This was especially true of the Liberal campaign. Without mentioning the obscene excesses of wealth and the tragic deepening of poverty, Justin Trudeau said “we” could and should all be “average.”

The Liberal promise to the middle class has materialized as a “tax bracket trade.” The middle class is simplistically defined as the 60% of the population between the 20% of high-income earners and the 20% of low-income earners. The plan essentially elevates the highest-earning 2% of the middle class into a higher tax bracket, with the ostensible intention of using these new tax revenues to reduce the load of those in the lower-earning sections of the middle class.

In his clear analysis, *Real Change for the Middle Class* (November 2015), the CCPA’s David Macdonald points out how much of this tax relief actually goes to the highest earners within that 60% earnings span. He suggests four alternatives to the Liberal plan that would ensure the new tax revenues would actually go to the lowest earners in the form of tax credits or higher rates of tax exemptions.

In March 2015, the University of Calgary’s School of Public Policy published a research paper by Philip Cross and Munir A. Sheikh titled *Caught in the Middle: Some in Canada’s Middle Class Are Doing Well; Others Have Good Reason to Worry*. The report confirms that those at the top of the middle class, with high levels of education and high-earning professional jobs, enjoy considerable job security with all the benefits this brings.

On the other hand, those with relatively low levels of education, who temporarily enjoyed high incomes in the now-dying manufacturing sector (and therefore numerical membership in the middle class), are now rapidly sliding toward what should more accurately be called the working class. For this group, the proposed tax bracket trade will do very little. They need support in the form of lower tax and higher exemption rates, tax cred-

its and education programs, none of which figure in the new Liberal plan. Until this is recognized, Cross and Sheikh write, “they (politicians) can only end up misdirecting resources by enriching those who are already doing reasonably well, rather than focusing on those working-class Canadians who truly are not.”

The current state of Canada’s “vertical mosaic” would probably sadden John Porter. In his writings leading up to an untimely death in 1979, his faith in educational reform as a vehicle for achieving equality had diminished somewhat. As Helmes-Hayes writes in the most complete analysis of Porter, the man and the scholar, “Unless a meaningful and successful attempt was made to reduce *inequality of condition*, any ‘tinkering’ with the educational system would be for naught” (italics added).

Porter belonged to the category of academics who see no contradiction between the obligation to conduct scholarly work of the highest standards and the possibility of contributing to the betterment of society. In fact, he believed the *raison d’être* of rigorous academic research was “maximizing human welfare.” He thought sociologists, whose area of study was the workings of contemporary human society, had a more immediate responsibility to point governments, academics and the public “in the direction of the social good.”

“I believe strongly too in the creative role of politics, and in the importance of political institutions as the means through which the major goals of society can be achieved,” he wrote in the 1965 preface to *The Vertical Mosaic*. Although he was not a Marxist, he would not have disagreed with Marx’s famous “thesis” that “Philosophers (scholars) have hitherto only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change it*” (italics in original).

REVIEWED BY FRANK BAYERL

## Assad, ally?



### DON'T PANIC: ISIS, TERROR AND TODAY'S MIDDLE EAST

GWYNNE DYER

Random House Canada, 2015, 233 pages, \$22.00

**CANADIAN JOURNALIST Gwynne** Dyer, once a frequent commentator on the CBC and now a London-based freelance writer, can usually be counted on for an insightful take on world events. Though the title of his latest book, *Don't Panic*, which appeared in the immediate aftermath of last November's terrorist attacks in Paris, might have been judged ill chosen at the time, it makes up for this in content.

Dyer sets three goals for himself: to explain why the Muslim world has become a kind of global capital for terrorism; to explain what objectives terrorism is meant to achieve; and to trace the evolution of terrorist strategies and organizations in the Arab world. At the end of it all, he offers some thoughts on how to deal with the phenomenon of terrorism, in particular in Syria.

To begin with, Dyer notes it is specifically Arab Muslims, and not those in Turkey, Indonesia or elsewhere, who usually engage in terrorist attacks. He attributes this, in part, to the long decline of Arab civilization—from its peak in the Middle Ages through the expulsion of Arabs from Spain, the



Crusades, the Mongol destruction of Baghdad in 1258, the conquest of the Levant by the Seljuk Turks and the absorption of Arabs into the Turkish-speaking Ottoman Empire.

This last event, coming at the end of the Second World War, did not lead to the self-government many Arabs had been led to expect, but to the creation, by the Sykes-Picot Agreement, of the states of Iraq, Jordan and Palestine, which were awarded to Great Britain, and of Syria and Lebanon, which went to France. To simplify the argument, grievances and humiliation from this partition led to a movement (the Muslim Brotherhood) that promised to restore the former glory of the Arab world and end foreign domination.

Dyer covers a lot of recent history, including the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, explaining, in the process, the myriad sectarian divisions in the Muslim world. He points out that the initial phase of the Afghanistan operation was a remarkable success: after just two months of bombing, with very few ground troops involved, the Taliban were in full retreat, and Kabul and Kandahar had been liberated.

But instead of installing an Afghan regime with a democratic veneer and organizing a Western withdrawal, George W. Bush announced, in his 2002 State of the Union address, that an “axis of evil” (Iraq, Iran and North Korea) existed, and that something should be done about it. That something would turn out to be the disastrous invasion of Iraq, which played right into Osama bin Laden’s hands, bogged down U.S. Forces for years and, thanks to some spectacularly bad U.S. decisions, led to the sectarian uprising pitting Shias and Sunnis against one another in a country where previously they had always managed to get along.

The author does a fine job of explaining the ins and outs of Sunni vs. Shia sectarianism in Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries, tracing the evolution of the resistance to the U.S. invasion. One of its many unintended consequences was the founding of al-Qaeda in Iraq and the radicalization of figures like Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who would go on to found Islamic State in Iraq (ISI).

Everyone has heard about the Abu Graib prison, but Dyer singles out Camp Bucca as a fateful breeding ground for terrorism—a meeting point for Iraqis outraged by the invasion. The upshot was the founding of ISI with its goal of establishing an Islamic caliphate, and its spread to Syria as ISIS upon the outbreak of civil war there.

It is Syria that is the real focus of this book, though Dyer takes his time getting there. Just as the heavy-handed, Shia-favouring sectarianism of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki led to Sunni resistance and an opening for al-Qaeda there, the Syrian civil war (now five years old) allowed ISIS to take advantage of the splintered opposition to President Bashar al-Assad and make territorial gains in that country. The unpalatable choices among the many factions in this war pose the central dilemma for western governments trying to devise a workable strategy to counter ISIS and account for President Obama’s apparent indecisiveness and hesitation in adopting one.

Dyer thinks Obama’s minimalist approach is probably the right one. ISIS would like nothing better than to see western countries bogged down in another ineffective, long-term campaign in the Middle East. This, after all, is one of the main goals of terrorist attacks against the West, the correct response to which, Dyer claims, is usually to do as little as possible.

“ISIS, over the past couple of years, has acquitted a vastly overblown reputation as the ultimate ‘terrorist’ juggernaut, sprung from nowhere and led by an evil genius,” he writes. “It is nothing of the sort.”

Dyer estimates that ISIS may have around 50,000 fighters, making it a serious army, but not an invincible force. It cannot, he says, be defeated by air power alone, but for the West to commit ground forces would be folly. Helping the Syrian regime to survive, as abhorrent as that might seem at first, is the least bad option in the author’s opinion.

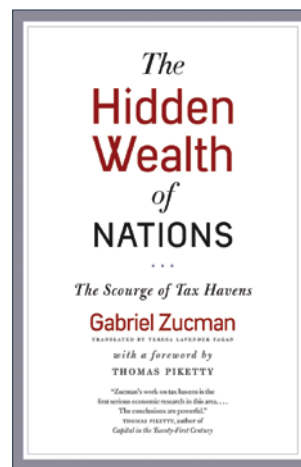
One strategy for achieving this would be to extend long-term, low-interest credit to buy arms, food and supplies, and to lift sanctions against the Assad regime. Another would be

to offer western air support and intelligence sharing to the Syrian army, though he worries this may be too much for western governments to bear.

There is much else worth reading in Dyer’s book, including his analysis of Saudi Arabia’s and Turkey’s roles in this complicated Syrian chess game. One thing that is missing is a reaction to Russia’s active entry into the conflict, since that occurred after *Don’t Panic* was written. But, in an appearance in Ottawa last fall, Dyer did express some degree of thankfulness for Russia’s presence as it strengthens Assad’s position, potentially holding off an Islamist victory.

REVIEWED BY DENNIS HOWLETT

## Underestimating the scourge of tax havens



### THE HIDDEN WEALTH OF NATIONS: THE SCOURGE OF TAX HAVENS

GABRIEL ZUCMAN

University of Chicago Press (2015), 200 pages, \$27.95

**G**ABRIEL ZUCMAN EXPLAINS the scourge of tax havens in a surprisingly accessible and lucid prose in his new book, *The Hidden Wealth of Nations*. However, he underestimates the scope of the problem by relying on

only one of several methods required to find how much wealth is hidden.

As Zucman reminds us, the tax haven came about following the Second World War, as European governments were forced to raise taxes on the wealthy to pay for debt and reconstruction. When marginal income tax rates rose from 4–5% to over 50%, Swiss bankers saw an opportunity to help the wealthy in Europe and the U.S. evade taxes. This process was aided by financial securities overtaking real estate as the main form of wealth: deposits increased more than tenfold between 1920 and 1938, the eve of the war.

The Swiss thwarted several post-war attempts by American and British governments to collect taxes owed by their wealthy citizens by falsifying ownership through use of trusts fronted by Swiss banks and shell companies registered in Panama. As a result of this prowess, Swiss banks enjoyed a very profitable virtual monopoly on the tax haven business until the end of the 1970s.

But in the 1980s, new centres of wealth management emerged in Hong Kong, Singapore, Jersey, Luxembourg and the Bahamas. Although Switzerland managed to hang on to the 6% or so of all global wealth deposited in its banks, almost all the growth (which has increased, today, to almost 10%) has been captured by the new tax havens, which offer secrecy as well as low taxes. While the Swiss have introduced some reforms (e.g., anonymous numbered accounts are no longer allowed) this has been undermined by their allowing trusts, shell companies and foundations registered in other tax havens to open accounts in Swiss banks.

Zucman, a student of Thomas Piketty (who provides a forward to this book), dissects the several failed attempts to reign in tax havens, including the G20/OECD on-demand exchange of information, the American Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FACTA) legislation, and the European Union's Savings Tax Directive. He estimates that globally about 8% of households' financial wealth is in tax havens. That works out to about \$7.6 trillion dollars, or about \$200 billion a year in lost revenue.

Zucman arrives at these numbers by comparing national balance sheets to identify the difference between the assets and liabilities between nations. It is an elegant and simple solution to estimating what is hidden in tax havens, but even Zucman admits his estimate "excludes a certain amount of wealth." According to James Henry, in a more detailed 2012 study for the Tax Justice Network, *The Price of Offshore Revisited*, the amount is more like US\$21–32 trillion.

Zucman vastly underestimates the role of developing countries and kleptocracy, Henry told me recently, and leaves out offshore currency hoards that account for \$1.8 trillion in hidden wealth. He also claimed Zucman ignores estimates of private bank assets under management (AUM)—as high as \$13 trillion—and entirely leaves out offshore nonfinancial assets like real estate, gold, precious metals, art, and ships, which are all worth at least \$10 trillion.

Zucman also acknowledges in his book that his figure does not include legal corporate tax avoidance made possible by taking advantage of loopholes and weak national tax laws. However, he estimates corporations are depriving governments of a third of corporate tax revenues by employing tax haven-based subsidiaries to shift profits and lower their tax bills.

Zucman's book does have a few surprises regarding Canada. He estimates Canada's offshore wealth to be \$300

billion (Statistics Canada says it is \$199 billion), and says the share of financial wealth held offshore by Canadians is 9% of total wealth. This is much higher than what it is in the U.S. (at 4%), but comparable with Europe (10%). Zucman estimates Canadian tax revenue losses at \$6 billion, which is a bit lower than my own estimate of \$7.8 billion, but his global estimate of hidden wealth is on the low side as well.

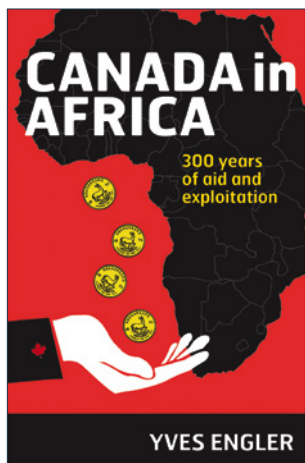
Zucman proposes three measures to deal with the problem of tax havens: impose financial and commercial sanctions (e.g., withholding taxes on interest and dividends, tariffs) against tax-haven countries that refuse to end their facilitation of tax evasion; establish a Global Financial Register that would record who owns all financial securities, including stocks, bonds and shares of mutual funds; and impose a tax on capital, levied at the source, that could count as credit toward any other taxes required to be paid, encouraging tax compliance.

To curb corporate tax avoidance, Zucman proposes taxing corporations on their global profits, disregarding their artificial structure of subsidiaries, and apportioning the funds to governments according to the portion of sales, staff and capital assets in each country where they operate. Canada and the U.S. already do this for provincial and state taxes. While I believe there are several other policy solutions that also need to be implemented, like a public register of beneficial owners and automatic tax information exchange, Zucman's proposals are complementary and appropriate.

In his forward to the book, Piketty notes how a Global Financial Register, in particular, would not only help to curb tax havens, it could facilitate taxing wealth, which could help to reverse the frightening worldwide growth in inequality he warned was undermining our global economy in *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. I agree. The growth of tax havens is a problem not just because of lost public revenues, but because it facilitates growing inequality, which undermines our economic health and threatens democracy as well. Zucman's book helps us understand the problem better, so that we can see how to fix it.

**Zucman acknowledges his figure does not include legal corporate tax avoidance made possible by taking advantage of loopholes and weak national tax laws.**

## The world might need less Canada



### CANADA IN AFRICA: 300 YEARS OF AID AND EXPLOITATION

YVES ENGLER

Red Publishing/Fernwood Publishing, 2015, 326 pages, \$24.95

**M**AINSTREAM ACADEMICS AND journalists like to portray Canada as a positive force on the international stage, but Yves Engler's new book, *Canada in Africa*, shows how frequently Canadian governments and corporations play a destructive role abroad.

In Africa, Canada's government and mining companies have together or separately aided genocide in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), been complicit in overthrowing and killing elected leaders, helped increase poverty, destroyed many communities and the environment, and spread corruption. Engler's well-researched text explains how the Canadian elite profited from the transatlantic trade in African slaves, and details Canada's significant support for British colonialism in Africa, before presenting a damning portrait of Canadian neocolonialism on the continent today. This historical perspective is useful for discovering important facts about Canada-Africa relations, as well as for learning more

about the true nature of the Canadian ruling class.

"Much of the capital used to establish the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce came from supplying the Caribbean slave colonies [during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries]," writes Engler. Since then, Canada has behaved as a sub-imperialist power in Africa, playing a junior but important role first in British then U.S. imperial policy toward the continent.

Part of the significance of Canada's role is its dominance in Africa's mining sector. According to Engler, Canada is the leading international resource investor in the continent. Half of all foreign mining companies in Africa are Canadian, operating 700 mineral projects, worth over \$31 billion, in 35 countries. Protection and expansion of these corporate investments is what primarily motivates Canadian policy toward Africa, says the author.

Contrary to Canadian government assurances, mineral development is not enriching those parts of Africa where it occurs. Dependence on selling raw minerals has deindustrialized parts of Africa, and low royalty rates and taxes ensure there is little capital returned to state finances, while corporate profits are returned to western banks. Ottawa has actually shaped the mining codes of eight African countries, resulting in lower royalties.

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund's (IMF) neoliberal structural adjustment programs (SAPs) imposed on African countries (with Canada's strong backing) also emphasized increasing raw material exports, privatization, and cutting health and education budgets in exchange for international loans. Canadian "aid" to African countries is frequently conditional on carrying out SAPs, and sometimes linked to working with Canadian mining companies.

To insure against changes in national policy down the road, Ottawa has ratified, signed or is negotiating more than a dozen Foreign Investment Protection Agreements (FIPAs) that grant mining firms the right to sue African countries for reduced profits. The space for democratic governance and non-resource-based forms of

development is severely constrained by these investment treaties.

The looting of a continent's resources requires not just economic muscle but military power as well, and here, too, Canada's role is extensive, if less well known. Canada's military has trained hundreds of African soldiers, its naval vessels patrol Africa's coast (as part of NATO), and Ottawa has spent hundreds of millions of dollars building the military capacity of the African Union (made up of 54 countries) and "developing a regional military structure to police the continent." Canada is also trying to get military bases in Kenya, Senegal and Tanzania.

Canadian military involvement last century proved useful for removing popular, progressive and nationalistic African leaders who wanted to use their country's resources for the benefit of their people. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first elected president, was overthrown in a U.S.-backed military coup in 1966. The Ghanaian military at the time was being trained by Canadian Forces, and Canada later lavished aid on the dictatorship. Nkrumah was hated by Washington for his independent streak and had called Canada "just another imperialist country." The coup ensured that Canadian mining companies would be given open access to Ghana's mineral wealth.

Similarly, Canada helped eliminate Patrice Lumumba, elected prime minister of the mineral-rich Congo (now known as the DRC) in 1960. Lumumba's killing was plotted by the U.S. and Belgium, which used the prime minister's Congolese rivals to execute him in 1961 with the connivance of the Canadian-dominated United Nations Mission (sent, ostensibly, to help Lumumba). Engler provides a chilling account of the critical role played by Colonel Jean Berthiaume (deceased), the top Canadian in the UN Mission, "in directly enabling" Lumumba's murder.

Engler concludes that through activism Canadians can be convinced to pay attention to their government's sordid role in Africa—as a first step toward changing things for the better. However, a few pages on how such activism could be organized or spread would have been very useful.

# What you really need to know about corporatization in our schools



## CLASS WAR

MEGAN ERICKSON

Verso Books (2015), 240 pages, \$17.95

**A FEW MONTHS BACK**, a story hit the news about a controversial deal between the University of Calgary and the Canadian oil company Enbridge, a high profile player in oil pipeline struggles. Various media outlets reported that administrators at the university had been attempting for at least two years to nail down an arrangement by which Enbridge would donate upwards of \$2.5 million over 10 years to help establish a new Enbridge Centre for Sustainability in the university's business school, with intimations of more money down the road.

The reports claimed Enbridge was using this deal to counter negative fallout from a 2010 break in the Michigan portion of one of its pipelines. By making a (relatively modest) donation toward this "sustainability project," not only would Enbridge enhance its public image, it would also be able to shape the work of the centre and encourage relationships with other institutions that would be fa-

vourable to its business. Critics argued the proposed deal would compromise the autonomy of the university and the academic freedom of its researchers.

The story came to the public's attention when the CBC responded to requests from a few faculty members at UCalgary claiming managers were ignoring their concerns about damage to the university's integrity and independence. Through freedom of information requests, the CBC secured access to emails between and among university managers and Enbridge executives, which supported the concerns raised by critics. Along with Global News, the CBC kept the story alive for several weeks in regular news reporting, in-depth interviews on such programs as *The Current* and *The 180*, and by posting copies of the available emails so the public could judge for themselves.

Partnerships like the one between the University of Calgary and Enbridge are not new. For at least three decades, similar partnerships have been negotiated at universities across the country. Nor are the concerns raised about the UCalgary-Enbridge partnership unique. Because the contracts are deemed to be proprietary, details of partnership arrangements are typically not made public, and they are rarely openly debated or decided upon within the university community. Instead, they are negotiated under the cloak of confidentiality by high-level university officials, corporate executives and a team of lawyers on each side.

Although faculty members and students may loudly criticize these kinds of partnerships (sometimes joined by concerned members of the public) as a threat to the public mission of the university, managers have often dismissed or ignored their arguments, their eyes locked on the prize of fi-

nancial support and opportunities to cultivate future client/donor relationships with other high-profile corporations. Only in relatively few cases has a mobilized opposition led to a deal being rejected or to arrangements associated with it being reconsidered. A well-publicized exception is the law faculty's rejection of a \$60-million funding partnership between York University's Osgoode Hall Law School and Jim Balsillie, the former co-CEO of Research In Motion (RIM) Technologies.

Media attention of the kind the UCalgary-Enbridge partnership received can be useful for educating the broader public about corporatization on Canadian campuses, but it has its downsides, too. For one thing, media stories generally disappear from public view after a short period of intense attention, leaving longer-term institutional conflicts (e.g., between faculty and management) intact. Media coverage tends to focus on particular cases, especially those characterized by internal struggle, and "newsworthy" details and drama as defined by reporters, editors and the at-the-scene witnesses they choose to interview. It is less likely to address underlying patterns related to corporate donations to public universities.

Equally important, these cases are often narrated as a pitched battle between a handful of concerned faculty members and/or students and an assertive university administration, or between a "whistleblower" and secretive, possibly corrupt, university officials. What typically surfaces as "bad" is the incompetence or failed integrity of university managers, or the lack of transparency in the decision-making process. The implicit, if not explicit, conclusion is that university-corporate partnerships would not be objectionable if the incompetent or corrupt

managers were removed, or the process of decision-making opened up.

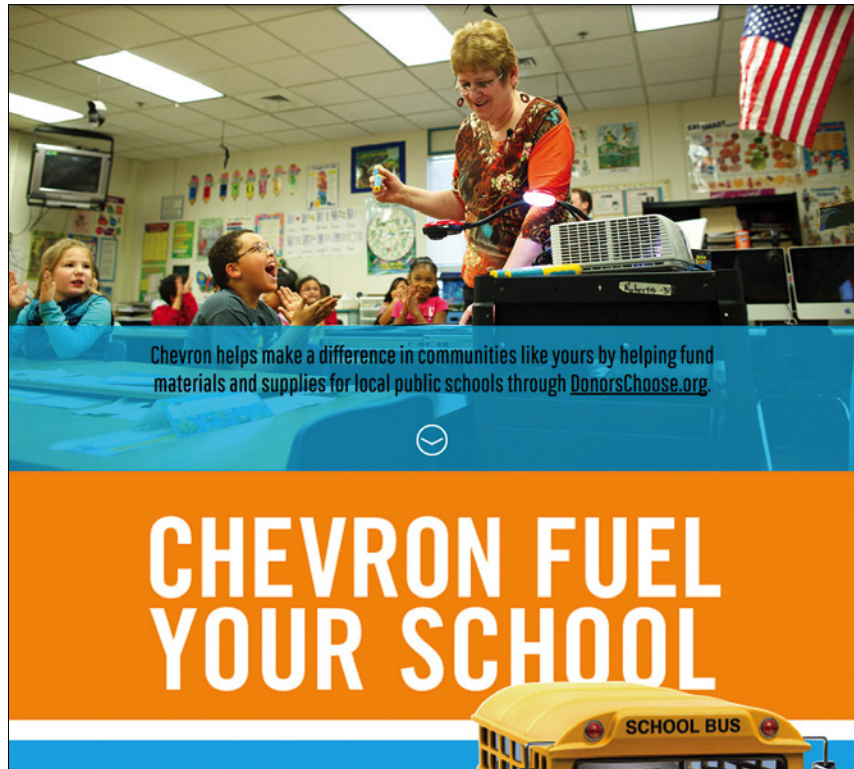
## Unequal partners

To my knowledge, no media coverage has unequivocally supported the view that the public interest would be best served and protected if universities did not enter into these partnerships *under any conditions*. Two recent books, however, make this case precisely based on the Canadian and U.S. experiences with corporatization in their respective education systems.

The first is my own book with Claire Polster, *A Penny for Your Thoughts: How Corporatization Undervalues Research, Teaching, and Public Service in Canada's Universities*, published by the CCPA last year. The second is Megan Erickson's *Class War: The Privatization of Childhood* (Verso Books), which focuses on kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) education in the U.S.

Both books situate corporate partnerships as but one aspect of corporatization, a multi-dimensional policy-driven process that has been reshaping public education since at least the early 1980s. Together they show how corporatization has distorted and displaced the public mission of universities, colleges and schools, and they urgently call on the wider public to become engaged in a concerted political struggle to reinstate the public-serving focus of public education. In the process, these books challenge misunderstandings and misperceptions of the issue that are often conveyed in media coverage.

*A Penny for Your Thoughts* confronts the perception that partnering with corporations is a one-off deviation from normal ways of functioning in contemporary Canadian universities. It shows instead that corporate partnering has become the standard operating procedure not only for university managers, who seek out and oversee such arrangements, but also for faculty members who are encouraged, if not pressured, to hitch up their curricular ideas and research interests with clients—primarily from the corporate sector—who will provide funds to support them.

A screenshot of a Chevron website advertisement. The top half shows a classroom with a teacher and students. Below the image is a blue banner with white text: "Chevron helps make a difference in communities like yours by helping fund materials and supplies for local public schools through [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org)." Below the banner is a large orange section with the text "CHEVRON FUEL YOUR SCHOOL" in white. At the bottom right of the orange section is a yellow school bus with "SCHOOL BUS" written on it.

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# CHEVRON FUEL YOUR SCHOOL

Moreover, partnering with corporations is not, as is often claimed, simply a pragmatic move for cash-strapped university administrators and researchers to make up for government underfunding. Rather, it is a funding methodology embedded in wide-ranging social relations that link governments to funding bodies to funding partners to universities to individual researchers. In other words, the partnership deals profiled in the media, and many others that go unnoticed, are manifestations of social relationships that are systematically tilted in the direction of promoting corporate innovation, ensuring corporate advantage and growing corporate profits.

Since the mid-1980s, university-corporate partnering has been the policy of choice of successive Conservative and Liberal federal governments for enrolling academic research and researchers in the service of economic growth and technological innovation. They have leveraged this policy direction through funding relationships with the three national research councils—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Natural Sciences and Engineering Council, and Canada

Screen capture from the Chevron website.

Institutes for Health Research (formerly the Medical Research Council)—as well as other bodies created to manage and distribute public research dollars.

Public monies distributed by these bodies are channeled through matched funding programs of various kinds that require researchers or their universities to obtain funds to match the public grant from partners who could benefit from the research. In exchange for their donations, these partners receive a range of benefits including exercising influence, if not control, over the research design and objectives, and, perhaps most importantly, retaining intellectual property rights to the findings.

Knowledge created by publicly funded researchers in public facilities is thus shaped to serve corporate objectives and the knowledge itself is transferred from public to private hands. The benefits to donors outweigh the size of their donations, and the latter by no means matches the full cost of the resources used to carry out the

research. Public resources, in other words, subsidize private benefits.

The partnership approach has been adopted by a multitude of new research funding programs at provincial and federal levels. These programs relate to universities as *knowledge businesses* competing with each other for limited resources, requiring them to invest energy and funds in an extensive legal and administrative infrastructure that cultivates and supports relationships with potential corporate donors.

To be sure, university managers, many of them appointed for their extensive connections with the corporate world, have been key players in pursuing and overseeing these relationships. However, constraining the actions of overreaching managers through conflict-of-interest guidelines and transparent decision-making requirements, or even removing them from office, will not automatically serve the public interest. Such interventions do not disassemble the edifice of social relationships that systematically tilts universities in an increasingly corporate direction.

### The illusion of parental choice

The consequences of these partnerships do not fall only on institutions of higher education, as Erickson makes abundantly clear in her recent book, *Class War*. She shows how, over the past three or four decades, corporate interests and corporate influence have deeply penetrated K-12 education in the U.S. Drawing on evidence from her extensive classroom experience and wide knowledge of research reports and policy debates, she describes how a revived corporate-directed education reform movement, guided by neoliberal thinking, has fundamentally reshaped schooling in America.

As a result, Erickson argues, the repeated claim that educational success provides the route to social equality is farther and farther from being realized, especially by children from poor and working class families. In fact, children and parents from these families face insurmountable obstacles and experience deepening ine-

quality at the hands of reform-oriented tinkers more interested in how to grade teachers, students and institutions than improving a broader range of services—lunch programmes, child care, affordable access to health care, and minimum wage standards for jobs typically held by parents of these children—that are necessary for achieving educational success, especially of children from disadvantaged families.

Erickson's damning assessment of the accomplishments of the reform movement is not simply a rhetorical exaggeration designed to spur public outrage and reaction. Rather, she aims to enlighten a wide swathe of the American public that is confused and concerned about the state of public education and anxious to make decisions that will serve the best interests of their children.

To do this, she has brilliantly crafted a wide-ranging, detailed analysis of educational reforms promoted as "solutions" to the public schooling "problem." Many of these reforms began under Reagan's presidency in the 1980s and were picked up by subsequent administrations. They include hybrid (public-private) institutions such as charter schools, student testing regimes aimed at improving student performance, school and teacher ratings systems, Reagan's "Nation at Risk" and the Obama administration's "Race to the Top" campaigns, and many others.

Erickson argues media coverage has too often accepted the reformers' point of view on both the necessity and the promise of these proposed reforms. In fact, depending on whether they have a more conservative or more liberal take, media reports typically construct parental choice and students' natural ability as the keys to educational success, evaluating reform proposals in terms of how well they address these factors.

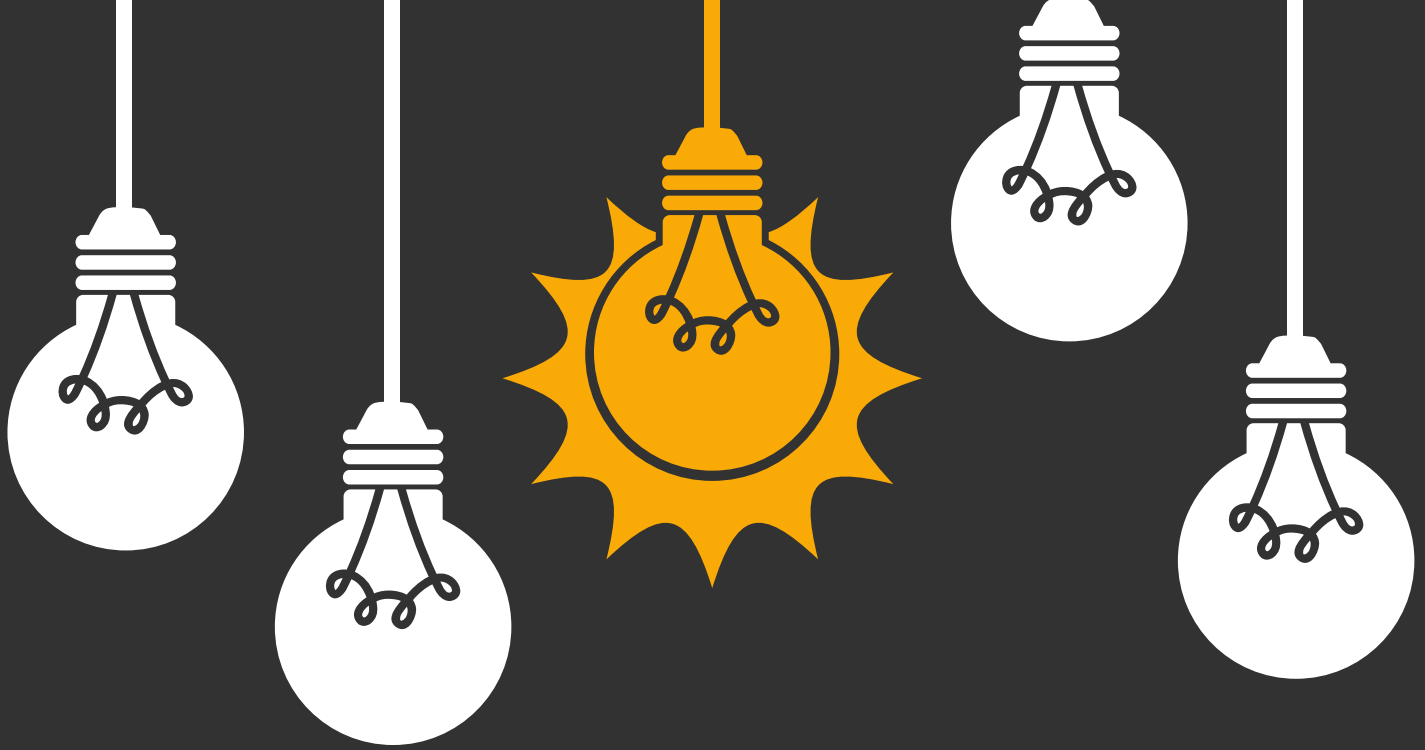
Erickson deconstructs and challenges this viewpoint. Parental choice and student abilities need to be analyzed in the much wider context of how schools are differentially resourced and how social services necessary for educational success are distributed unequally to American fami-

lies. Reformers have not only failed to address the factors that systematically widen or narrow parental choices, they have worsened inequalities and placed even more limitations on the ability of low-income parents to support their children's success.

Two chapters, one on the policy landscape of public education and the other on reformers' efforts to fix public education, resonate with themes discussed in *A Penny for Your Thoughts*. They show how donations from philanthropic organizations such as the Bill Gates Foundation are being used to apply simplified solutions to much more complex problems and enable corporate leaders to insert business-think into the redesign and reconceptualization of what it means to educate. Much in these chapters reminds me of David Noble's *America By Design*, about a similar period in U.S. history—the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century—when business magnates, through philanthropic foundations, were able to set higher education in a corporate-serving direction.

Erickson concludes with an opposing vision for public education that places children and their experience of childhood at the centre. We need to imagine schools "as places where children and adults play and learn together," she writes. If you are able to read nothing else in this book, read the short chapter called "A Caring Society."

*A Penny for your Thoughts* and *Class Wars* offer many good reasons for wresting education from its increasingly narrow focus on promoting corporate growth and fitting students into their allotted places in the economic order. A British civil servant of the post-war era, Richard Titmus, makes an important addition to the list. Titmus's work, as described by British writer Stefan Collini, was governed for 30 years or more by a preoccupation with "the need for societies to give effective institutional expression to non-economic values in the face of the tirelessly corrosive power of the profit motive." Public education is an important place for such expression. **M**



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We call upon the Government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, to jointly develop with Aboriginal peoples a Royal Proclamation of Reconciliation to be issued by the Crown. The proclamation would build on the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Treaty of Niagara of 1764, and reaffirm the nation-to-nation relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown. The proclamation would include, but not be limited to, the following commitments:

i. Repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nulls*.

ii. Adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

iii. Renew or establish Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.

iv. Reconcile Aboriginal and Crown constitutional and legal orders to ensure that Aboriginal peoples are full partners in Confederation, including the recognition and integration of Indigenous laws and legal traditions in negotiation and implementation processes involving Treaties, land claims, and other constructive agreements.

***From the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, "in order to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation."***