

(Photo by Adam Scott)

Maheer Arar – Ten Years Later

Still waiting for proper oversight of security and intelligence activities

By Gar Pardy

Former ambassador and long-serving diplomat Gar Pardy delivered the following speech to a conference in Ottawa on October 29 called **Arar+10: National Security and Human Rights, A Decade Later**. The day-long event, co-organized by Amnesty International, the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group, the Human Rights Research and Education Centre, and the Centre for International Policy Studies, brought together judges, lawyers, journalists and rights defenders to discuss the personal dimension of national security-related human rights violations, challenges for the legal profession, and ongoing concerns related to oversight of national security activities. Pardy, a self-described son of the Rock, was the head of consular affairs at the Department of Foreign Affairs at the time of Canadian citizen Maheer Arar's rendition from the United States to Syria where he was detained and tortured for a year. In 2005, Pardy testified before the Commission of Inquiry into the Actions of Canadian Officials in Relation to Maheer Arar (the O'Connor Commission below). Since leaving the public service, Pardy has been critical of the federal government's response, or lack thereof, to Justice O'Connor's recommendations with respect to improving the oversight of Canada's security activities and the need to properly screen personal information on Canadians before sharing it with other countries.

It has been a long day. It has been an even a longer week in the affairs of our country. The events, last week, leading to the murder of two members of the Canadian Armed Forces, have provoked commentaries ranging from the ridiculous to the profound. Each in its own way provides a tragic backdrop to the substance of this conference.

It is important we dismiss the idea that something called Canadian "innocence" has been lost in the midst of these tragic events. Unfortunately, a Canada "innocent" from the troubles of the world is one of our national conceits that do not withstand close examination.

A more telling observation may have come from an ad in last Thursday's *Globe and Mail*. Following several pages of detailed and often inaccurate reporting of the events of the previous day on Parliament Hill, we come across an ad for TD Canada Trust's new Visa card program. In a full page, and in large print, the ad suggested we should "Get out of town." To help us, the bank would provide 25,000 Aeroplan Miles.

I do not believe the editors of the *Globe and Mail* meant the apparent irony—but it is one that the ancient Greeks would

(Continued on page 26)

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Surplus expectations

Twenty years ago this month, the *Monitor's* front page featured a teaser article on what to expect from the first Alternative Federal Budget, out February 1995. The project, a joint venture by the CCPA and Winnipeg-based social justice coalition CHOICES, was born of frustration with the 1994 Liberal budget, which cut \$13.3 billion in expenditures and transfer payments to the provinces, and signaled the elimination of more than 50,000 federal public sector jobs, so that Paul Martin could slay the deficit “come hell or high water.” The late Conservative finance minister Jim Flaherty reportedly studied these cuts a year before his government announced, in 2011, it would be pursuing a similar war on the federal deficit.

Then, as now, the cuts were not just a money-saving exercise. There was no alternative, we were told, in a globalized world with hyper-mobile finance. Government needed to be lean and mean. Let the private sector deliver more services. Cut back transfers to the provinces for health care, education and other social programs. Spend less time thinking about where we want the Canadian economy to be 10 or 20 years from now—what sectors or technologies we should be championing—and more on attracting foreign direct investment, even if it was mostly mergers and acquisitions.


The cuts worked, if you believe that balanced budgets are the Holy Grail of government financing. Within a few years Canada was back in the black and running healthy surpluses. But did the effort put us on a course for sustained, equitable prosperity? Based on so many indicators, from income inequality to child poverty to the value-added content of Canadian exports (and many others), the answer is clearly negative. Canada's poor performance cannot be blamed entirely on federal budgetary policy. But the ideological precedent set two decades ago, notably the obsession with fiscal deficits, has deprived us for too long of choices we could be making to address this country's social, employment and environmental deficits.

Martin's magical 25% debt-to-GDP target was mostly a communications exercise, not necessarily a recipe for a healthy national economy. In fact, as the CCPA noted in its 2014 AFB, Canada's persistently low federal debt-to-GDP ratio is being paid for by growing provincial debt and, more disturbingly, new

household debt. Starting around the year 2000, household debt as a percentage of GDP climbed steadily, from about 60% to over 90% in 2010. Between 2013 and 2014 this number grew faster than the economy as a whole. In other words, the strived-for 2015 surplus was partly financed by personal debt. And the rest of it has come, as in the 1990s, on the back of significant cuts to public services, both federal and provincial.

The Conservative government claims its cuts are not affecting frontline services. But this is not true. As David Macdonald and Kayle Hatt explain in their November 2014 AFB technical paper, *At What Cost: The Impacts of Rushing to Balance the Budget*, the recent federal cuts are not only undermining Canada's economic recovery, they were “made in areas where Canadians most heavily rely on their federal government,” including Veterans Affairs, the Employment Insurance helpline and food inspection. The cumulative effect of Conservative cuts by 2015-2016 will be \$14.5 billion a year. That number is (not surprisingly) close to the \$13.1 billion surplus the federal government expects by 2019-2020, as announced in the recent fall economic update.

It is a lot of money, and it is over and above the \$5 billion this government will be *spending* annually on new tax measures like income splitting for families with children, and the boost to the Universal Child Care Benefit. End-of-year news programs have started to ask what we should be doing with the surplus. Everything is on the table, from faster debt repayment—the CEO's preference—to infrastructure, new universal services (child care, pharmacare), cancelling the post-2011 cuts to old age security and health and social transfers to the provinces, or introducing more boutique tax cuts, etc. With an election less than a year away, opposition parties are trying to carve out unique and competing visions for the kind of country we want to live in, recognizing that the status quo—chronic stagnation, resource dependence, high real unemployment, democratic malaise—is not an option.

What better moment to be releasing our 20th anniversary AFB, which has always seen beyond deficits and surpluses, to the role we can collectively play, through our federal government, to reduce inequality, end poverty, create good jobs and generally improve lives?  (Stuart Trew)

CONTENTS

ON THE COVER: Gar Parfy has faith in the courts, not government, to check security over-reach **26**

Editorial **2**

Letters to the Monitor **4**

New from the CCPA **5**

Good News Page **25**

BEHIND THE NUMBERS

Does Big Oil create jobs? **6**

Another climate warning from the IPCC **7**

Women's rights, policy wrongs **8**

Public sector wages close the gap **10**

Women are talking. Is anyone listening? **13**

A second look at assisted suicide **14**

COMMENT

All business in the Arctic **17**

Public interest legal cases to watch **18**

CETA and energy deregulation **20**

Breaking Big Three's hold on the CRTC **22**

A minimum wage for the CHL **23**

Stifling science: a timeline **24**

FEATURES

Children's welfare: The Nordic model
Christopher Walmsley and Lise Tessier **30**

TransCanada's dirty pipeline tactics
Joyce Nelson **35**

Latin American Revolution continues in Brazil, Bolivia
Asad Ismi **37**

ARTS

Books: Reviewers tackle Harperism, Feminism and Fair Trade **39**

Film: Cronenberg's *Maps to the Stars*; Poitras' *Citizenfour*; after 75 years, is NFB history? **42**

PERSPECTIVES

Canada's forgotten WWI legacy
Richard Sanders **48**

The FINNish Line: This Christmas, "feed the world" should include Canadian children
Ed Finn **50**

HENNESSY'S INDEX

Minimum Wage

4 – Number of decades that the average of provincial minimum wages in Canada has remained unchanged in real terms.

\$10.14 – The average of all provincial minimum wage rates in Canada in 2013, which is about the same value as the 1975 average of minimum wage rates (\$10.13 expressed in 2013 dollars).

1¢ – Hourly minimum wage gain for Canada's lowest-paid workers over the past four decades: a single red penny. You know, that currency we thought was so useless it's no longer issued?

6.7 – Percentage of all paid employees in Canada earning the minimum wage in 2013. That's a 5% increase in the portion of minimum wage earners since 1997. Ontario and Prince Edward Island are the provinces with the highest proportion of minimum wage earners.

\$18,109 – Annual average before-tax earnings for a minimum-wage worker in Alberta who works 35 hours a week year-round. That's less than the Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO). Alberta has one of the lowest minimum wages in Canada.

2014 – The first year that every province in Canada has decided to set its minimum wage at \$10 dollars an hour or more.

1996 – The year that Canada's federal government stopped raising the federal minimum wage. It's been dormant for nearly two decades. As a result, it's been up to provincial governments to set the bar for the minimum wage.

\$15 – The hourly rate that the New Democratic Party says should be Canada's federal minimum wage. The NDP suggests raising it in increments over five years.

\$14.49 – The hourly rate that the federal minimum wage would be today if it was set at 60% of the average national industrial wage, which in Canada was \$24.15 an hour in 2013.

150 – The number of American cities where fast food service workers recently walked off the job in non-violent civil disobedience as part of a grassroots effort to get their sector to pay a minimum of \$15 an hour.

\$15 – The minimum wage set by Seattle's new mayor for workers in that city. The minimum wage will rise incrementally, reaching \$15 an hour for 'schedule A' workers in 2017. Neat fact: the implementation scheme grew out of an advisory committee consisting of labour, business and non-profit representatives.

90 – Percentage of cases in which two economists found no statistically significant relationship between a higher minimum wage and a negative labour market outcome in Canada between 1983 and 2012—dispelling long-standing minimum wage mythology.

Hennessy's Index is a monthly listing of numbers, compiled by the CCPA's Trish Hennessy, about Canada and its place in the world. For previous months, and for source information for this month's index, visit www.policyalternatives.ca/index.

Keep it coming!

I am writing to ask that you keep sending me the paper version of the *CCPA Monitor* when you move to the online delivery model. I would be very sad to miss out on the excellent writing and analysis that I have come to expect from the *Monitor*, but I am simply not willing to sit in front of a computer screen for several hours in order to read it.

Greg DePaco, New Westminster, B.C.

Editor's note: Dear Greg, we received many letters like yours and can happily assure you and all Monitor readers that we are not nor would we ever cancel the paper version of the magazine. We have introduced three changes we hope will only expand the Monitor's reach. First, since the CCPA has gone from being a membership-based to a donation-based organization, we can now give charitable rebates for 100% of all donations. It used to be that CCPA supporters could request to receive the Monitor if they agreed to put \$35 of their donation or membership toward a Monitor subscription. For example, if someone made a \$100 donation but wanted to subscribe to the Monitor, they would receive a tax rebate for \$65. A second, related change to how we do things is that now all CCPA supporters will receive the Monitor if they want to (and why wouldn't they?), and they will have the option of receiving it by mail or electronically. There is no additional cost to readers who want to receive the magazine by mail. Finally, to draw in new readers (and new CCPA supporters), we are making the electronic version of the Monitor available for free (as a PDF) on the CCPA website.

Congratulations to Bombardier workers

Regarding the article, "Four Major Battles for the Canadian Labour Movement" (October 2014), and specifically the Unifor Local 1075 vs. Bombardier strike over pensions: the workers won. Congratulations to Local 1075 President Dominic Pasqualino, Local 1075 leadership and membership.

Bombardier's negotiating position was firm: new hires would no longer have a defined benefit plan, and would be enrolled in a defined contribution plan. Also, those hired since 2010 would not have early retirement benefits. There were other items but these were the major ones. Most of the 1,000-plus membership had little union experience; many had not been employees at the time of the previous negotiation. This is, of course, positive in that there are many—a majority—young people, but it also meant that the employer could try to split the membership along generational lines. As it turned out, the membership was solid behind their union leadership, and became more so during the nine weeks of strike.

Under Ontario legislation, the employer can force a government-supervised vote on its last offer, which took place into the second month of the strike. The production workers rejected the offer by 81% and skilled trades by 94%.

In the end, there were some small concessions by the union. For example, new hires will have the same pension plan as current employees but will have to contribute twenty-five cents per hour (current employees do not contribute), and there were other items. Members voted 94% in favour of the new agreement.

The outcome of this battle is certainly a victory for workers. But it draws attention to the overwhelming need for genuine pension coverage for all workers in Canada. Workers should not have to go through months of strike to have retirement security.

Paul Pugh, Past President, Local 1075, Thunder Bay, Ont.

EI needs reform

Your article about EI ("Monitored: Cutting EI won't create jobs," October 2014) reminds me that when I was a student I contributed to unemployment insurance when the circumstances were such that I would never be in a situation to collect. The situation for a student now is similar. During a 12-month period you study for eight months and work for four months, paying into EI. At the end of your degree you are unable to find work but during the previous 12 months you have only worked for four months, not enough to meet the 910-hour barrier. The rule is unconscionable. It should be changed so that the time spent as a full-time student is excluded from the 12 months.

David Huntley, Burnaby, B.C.

Terrorism and talking points

Letter-writers Sandra Head and Fenja Brodo objected to the article "Collective punishment in Gaza requires a collective response" by trotting out the tired " Hamas-wants-to-destroy-Israel" talking point ("Conflicted in Gaza," November 2014).

More than 30 years ago in Montreal, retired Israeli general Matti Peled was asked how he could possibly advocate negotiations with a "terrorist" Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) whose charter called for Israel's destruction. "I used to belong to an organization the British also called terrorists (Palmach)," he replied, "but today Israel refuses to deal with the PLO not because they are terrorists but because Israel would then have to seriously negotiate the return of the ('67) occupied territories."

Change "PLO" to "Hamas" and this applies today. During its latest onslaught on Gaza, the mightiest military machine in the Middle East slaughtered—from the air, land and sea—over 2,000 souls, including more than 500 innocent, defenceless and trapped children. Let's skip the "Hamas-hides-among-civilians" talking point: Second World War resistance fighters also attacked from civilian centres and the Germans likewise blamed them when they vented their rage on the populations that sheltered them.

John Dirlik, Pointe Claire, QC



“Missing in action” on women’s rights

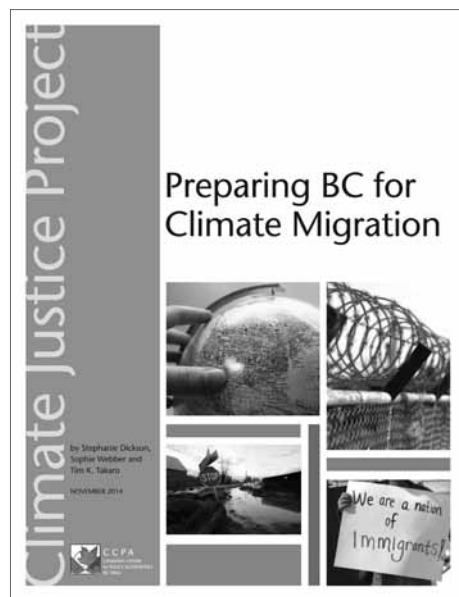
Women’s rights issues were front and centre in 2014, increasingly so as the year came to a close. There were growing calls for an inquiry into Canada’s missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, high-profile sexual assault allegations in Parliament, professional sport, the videogame blogosphere and at the CBC, an absurdly light sentence for a young man charged with distributing photos of a sexual assault (that resulted in the victim taking her own life), and reports, several of them from the CCPA, of a persistent pay gap between men and women in Canada. If the news seemed shocking, on November 4 the CCPA released a report, co-authored by a network of NGOs, trade unions and independent experts, that reminds us why it shouldn’t be.

The report, *Progress on Women’s Rights: Missing in Action*, reviews Canada’s implementation of the 1994 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which articulated a vision of a world in which women and men—regardless of race, class, sexual orientation and ability—could live full and equal lives together. It finds that while progress has been made in Canada on access to education, there are many areas where inequality has persisted and worsened, particularly in terms of violence against women, political representation, economic security, access to social services, and the additional barriers to equality faced by Aboriginal women and girls, racialized women, women with disabilities and women from sexual minorities. You can find an excerpt from that report, on the plight of the girl-child in Canada, on page 8.

Trouble brewing at Timmy’s

No matter how you feel about their coffee, it’s hard to argue the Tim Hortons merger with Burger King, announced August 26, will be a good deal for Canadians. A new CCPA study by **Natasha Luckhardt**, *Trouble Brewing*, analyzes the proposal, which will put Burger King’s Brazilian private equity owner, 3G Capital, in control of the merged company and install 3G partners as board chair and

CEO. 3G Capital “has a well-established takeover playbook of cost-cutting and mass layoffs, and the billions in new debt will create enormous pressure for changes at Tim Hortons,” says the report, which estimates mass layoffs, a squeeze on Tim Hortons franchise owners, corporate tax losses to Canada, and possibly lower quality food.



Climate migration in B.C.

A new report from the CCPA-BC’s **Climate Justice Project**, written by **Stephanie Dickson**, **Sophie Webber** and **Tim K. Takaro**, examines an often-ignored question of climate justice: Given Canada’s historical and ongoing contribution to global warming, what is our collective obligation to people fleeing regions most affected by climate change, and how prepared are we to meet these obligations? The report, *Preparing B.C. for Climate Migration*, explains that Canada has disproportionately benefited from the burning of fossil fuels compared to its relatively small population. Countries in the Global South, on the other hand, will be impacted much more severely by climate change and have fewer resources to mitigate these impacts. As such, the federal and B.C. governments should consider how and under what conditions Canada accepts climate migrants, but also how we might substantially increase support


to developing countries “shouldering the burden of climate displacement,” since most climate migrants will remain in the Global South.

CCPA at Childcare2020

The CCPA was well represented at the Childcare2020 conference, which took place November 13-15 in Winnipeg. CCPA-ON Director Trish Hennessy, Senior Economist David Macdonald, Kate McInturff, director of the Making Women Count project, and Education Director Erika Shaker participated on panels and in workshops and research discussions throughout the event. Public attendance and media coverage was impressive, likely a result of growing awareness in Canada of the importance of child care and early childhood education as a mechanism to reduce inequality, provide children with better and more flexible opportunities to learn, support families, and meet our international commitments.

Vienna discusses CETA

The CCPA was invited to Vienna, Austria on November 13 to participate in a panel discussion on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), a forthcoming free trade agreement between the United States and the European Union. **Hadrian Mertins-Kirkwood**, co-editor of the recent CCPA publication *Making Sense of the CETA*, represented the centre on the panel, which included trade experts from Austria, the U.S. and Germany. Among other topics, he provided the Canadian perspective on investor–state arbitration under NAFTA, and discussed the implications of the recently concluded Canada–EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. The event was hosted by the Austrian Association of Public Services and Public Enterprises (VÖWG).

For blogs, reports, commentary and infographics from the CCPA’s national and provincial offices, visit www.policyalternatives.ca. You can also join the conversation on Facebook (search for Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives), and on Twitter by following @ccpa. 

Is Big Oil a big job creator?

By Hadrian Mertins-Kirkwood

Job creation is high on the oil industry's list of go-to arguments for increased investment in the oil sands. Energy extraction is a key driver of employment growth, they tell us, and the benefits extend well beyond Alberta. "Almost every community in Canada has been touched by oil sands development through the stimulating impact it has on job creation," according to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP).

The industry's favourite number? 905,000. That's the projected increase in oil sands jobs in the next two decades, up from 75,000 today, according to an oft-quoted report by the industry-funded Canadian Energy Research Institute (CERI).

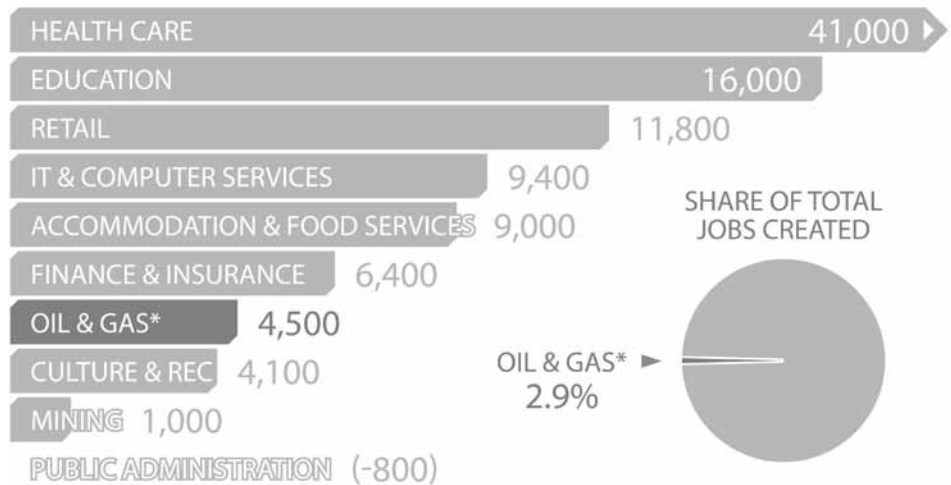
But what does that number mean? And is it as impressive as it sounds?

According to the report, 905,000 is the total number of new oil sands-related jobs that will be created in Canada by 2035. That means it includes not only direct employment in the Alberta oil sands, but also indirect employment in associated industries (e.g. truck manufacturing), and any "induced" employment that may be created throughout Canada due to increased economic activity in the oil sands.

Even if we take that 905,000 figure at face value—CERI makes a wide variety of optimistic assumptions, and an accurate 25-year employment forecast is pretty farfetched—it works out to just 36,000 new jobs per year. If we cut out indirect and induced employment, the report says the oil sands will create only 12,000 new jobs per year.

AN OIL SANDS ECONOMY? Just how well does the oil industry stack up against Canada's other job creators?

JOBS CREATED PER YEAR (SELECT INDUSTRIES)



Projected average annual job creation in select industries, 2012 to 2022 (Canadian Occupational Projection System, 2013)
*Includes both "Oil and Gas Extraction" and "Support Activities for Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction" behindthenumbers.ca

To make matters worse, the 905,000 lump sum hides huge regional disparities. According to CERI, 86% of new oil sands-related job creation will be in Alberta, including 100% of direct job creation. That's hardly a recipe for widely shared economic prosperity.

The oil industry is trying to cherry-pick cumulative data rather than presenting the annual and regional numbers that we are used to. The "905,000 new jobs in Canada" is meant to sound more impressive than "12,000 new jobs in Alberta." But at the end of the day, the job creation reality doesn't live up to the hype, even by CERI's

optimistic calculations.

And those calculations are really optimistic. According to the non-partisan Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS), the oil and gas industry will add only 4,500 new jobs per year in the coming decade, not 12,000 like the CERI report claims. The COPS estimate even includes oil and gas industry jobs outside the Alberta oil sands.

To put that number in perspective, the health care industry in Canada will create more than 40,000 new jobs per year for the next 10 years. In fact, COPS predicts that almost a dozen different industries will create more jobs for Canadians in the coming decade than the energy sector will, including the education, retail and computer services sectors.

By manipulating the numbers, the oil industry is trying to put a positive spin on a non-story. If there's a benefit to the Canadian economy from the oil sands, you won't find it in the job market.

Worth Quoting

"The National Energy Board is not fulfilling its obligation to review the Trans Mountain Expansion Project objectively. Accordingly it is not only British Columbians, but all Canadians that cannot look to the Board's conclusions as relevant as to whether or not this project deserves a social license. Continued involvement in the process endorses this sham and is not in the public interest."

— Former BC Hydro CEO Marc Eliesen in an October 30 letter to the National Energy Board withdrawing his participation in federal hearings on the proposed Kinder Morgan tar sands pipeline project. In December 2013, the company applied to triple the capacity of its Trans Mountain pipeline, which runs from just outside Edmonton, Alta. to Burnaby, B.C.

Hadrian Mertins-Kirkwood is the CCPA's 2014 Andrew Jackson Progressive Economics Intern. Follow Hadrian on Twitter @hadrianmk.

IPCC doom, gloom and an LED light at the end of the tunnel

By Marc Lee

The latest from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a super-synthesis of the state of agreed knowledge about climate change, adaptation and mitigation. Imagine thousands of research papers summarized in three major volumes (released over the past year), with this new report, out in October, being a grand summary, impressively condensed into 40 pages.

Now I will humbly boil that down to a few key observations: climate change is happening and costs are piling up; it is caused by human activity, primarily the combustion of coal, oil and gas; staying on our current pathway risks an ever-greater danger of irreversible adverse impacts around the world, and, perhaps most importantly; we still have time for a soft landing if we act quickly.

To me, the most important concept advocated by the IPCC report is that of a carbon budget. There is a finite amount of carbon we can combust before we push into the really dangerous territory of 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. How big that global carbon budget is depends on your appetite for risk, but the IPCC says about 30 years' worth of emissions at current levels would give us a two-thirds chance of staying below 2 degrees.

I'm not crazy about those odds. It's like someone telling you there is a one in three chance your house will burn down, and you would henceforth be homeless forever.

The key point is we need to establish a global carbon budget, and figure out how to divvy that up fairly so we can use our remaining fossil fuels to transition to a clean energy economy. This is a classic economic problem: how to allocate resources subject to a budgetary constraint, as the vast majority of fossil fuel reserves (66% to 80% globally) represent "unburnable carbon" that needs to stay underground.

It goes without saying that to pull this off we have to pull together. This is a cross-planetary collective-action problem that requires government regulation, taxation and public infrastructure spending. The IPCC concludes the economics of this transition are favourable; there may be a minor dent in our GDP several decades out, but there would also be substantial co-benefits from action, such as better health outcomes.

The timing of this IPCC report matters like no other before it, coming out a year before the crucial 2015 Paris

meetings of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change, at which our leaders are to sign off on a new global treaty to constrain carbon emissions.

Or not. So far our leaders have been good at making grand promises about emission reduction targets (way in the future) while not taking action consistent with meeting those targets. And the last time we got our hopes up from a new deal on climate, in Copenhagen in 2009, it was met with bitter disappointment, as governments could not find the political will to address the issue.

That said, there are glimmers of hope. This past September, we saw the largest march for climate action in history with 400,000 in New York City and thousands more in satellite marches around the world. Resistance to new fossil fuel infrastructure (e.g. pipelines, LNG terminals and coal ports) is making life difficult for fossil corporations. Divestment campaigns have popped up around the world. And the cost of renewable energy is now economical, even with the huge subsidies we provide to fossil fuel production and consumption.

To get on the right path, we need to overcome two things: the power and influence of fossil fuel companies, who have done a masterful job confusing the issue through denial campaigns (and getting their political allies into power), and; the belief that collective (government) action on climate change is detrimental to the economy.

November's historic accord between the U.S. and China to reduce emissions is another good sign; they join the European Union in pledging game-changing commitments ahead of Paris. Together, the three largest economies in the world create more than half of global emissions.

For Canada, this also means we must stop relying on what's easy—like digging up ever-more fossil fuel resources for export—and start rethinking "responsible resource development" as the strategic management of fossil fuel reserves in order to maximize shared prosperity within the context of a carbon budget. The next federal election would be a great time to have this conversation.

So 2015 is shaping up to be a pivotal year, in Canada with a federal election, and for the world as a whole. People increasingly realize that climate change is not a distant possibility that might happen to polar bears in 100 years, but something that is happening now. Amid the gloom of the science on climate change lies the possibility for a tectonic shift in our economy and the politics of carbon. A bright green future is possible but we are going to have to work for it, together.


The timing of this IPCC report matters like no other before it, coming out a year before the crucial 2015 Paris meetings of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change.

Worth Quoting

"It is technically feasible to transition to a low-carbon economy. But what is lacking are appropriate policies and institutions. The longer we wait to take action, the more it will cost to adapt and mitigate climate change."

—**Youba Sokona**

Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group III
November 2, 2014

Marc Lee is a senior economist with the CCPA-BC and co-director of the Climate Justice Project, a five-year research partnership with the University of British Columbia, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, examining the links between climate change policies and social justice. 

Shadow report finds Canada “missing in action” on women’s rights

The following introduction and chapter on the girl-child is excerpted from a recent report on Canada’s implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which was prepared by a network of NGOs, trade unions and independent experts. The full report is available for free download at www.policyalternatives.ca.

* * *

Twenty years ago, thousands of activists, diplomats and world leaders, hundreds of Canadians among them, travelled to Beijing to articulate their vision of a world in which women and men—regardless of race, class, sexual orientation and ability—could live full and equal lives together. The result was a declaration that outlined some of the greatest barriers to gender equality and a platform for action that provided the tools for overcoming them.

In Canada, as in most high-income countries, women had already achieved high levels of health and education by the mid 1990s. Women in Canada continue to have some of the highest healthy life expectancies in the world and their life expectancies are consistently on par with those of men. The last 20 years have also seen a 6% increase in the number of women completing some form of tertiary education, with 31% of women (and men) in Canada now holding a post-secondary certificate or diploma. However, these high levels are not shared equally among women in Canada, nor have they translated to economic equality or equal representation in leadership roles.

In spite of their gains in education, women continue to make up only one in four senior managers. In the political arena, the numbers are much the same. The last federal election saw the first significant increase in the percentage of female members of parliament in twenty years, rising from 22% to 25%. Again, the little gains made here are not shared equally among women.

Progress in health and education has not produced an equally steady level of progress in women’s economic security. The percentage of women living in poverty has actually increased over the past 20 years to over 13% today and has remained consistently higher than men’s levels of poverty—with Aboriginal and racialized women and women with disabilities further over-represented. Women’s employment levels increased in the first few years following 1995, but have been stagnant over the past decade and remained consistently below the level of men’s employment.

In the same period, there has been little change in the levels of violence women in Canada experience. Over a million women in Canada report having experienced either sexual assault or intimate partner violence in the past five years. Rates of intimate partner violence have fallen by a mere 1% over the past two decades, with 6.2% of the population reporting having experienced intimate partner violence today compared to 7.4% in 1999. Rates of sexual assault have increased slightly, from 2.1% in 1999 to 2.4% today. Aboriginal

women and girls experience three times the rates of violent victimization as do non-Aboriginal women. The violence experienced by Aboriginal women and girls has been so persistent and so disproportionate that it has spurred visits from several multilateral bodies.

Worryingly, the pace of progress towards gender equality slowed over the past decade. Twenty years ago Canada ranked first amongst nations in international measures of gender equality. In 2013, Canada had fallen to 20th place in the Global Gender Gap rankings, and 23rd place in the UN Gender Inequality Index. Nor can the slowdown in progress be ascribed to the global economic crisis. Canada’s economy was among the least affected among developed economies. Yet as Canada’s gender equality rank fell, some of the countries hardest hit by the global economic crisis demonstrated progress. Iceland, for example, experienced massive economic shocks following the global crisis, yet it has consistently achieved a higher score than Canada in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap report and its score climbed at a faster pace than did Canada’s score in the period following 2008.

What follows (in the full report) is a detailed view of Canada’s progress towards equality over the past five years. The report addresses the priority areas of concern identified in 1995, but provides additional information about areas of concern. While each section examines the unique factors that contribute to inequality, these factors intersect and impact each other. Across the factors there also include some striking commonalities. Common themes across the following sections include a marked slowdown in the rate of progress towards closing the gap between the well-being of women and men. The research also finds important and persistent differences between different groups of women, with Aboriginal, racialized, and immigrant women, as well as women with disabilities, all suffering a disproportionate burden of inequality. Finally, there has been a notable shrinking of the federal government’s role in addressing the barriers to gender equality both at home and as part of our international commitments.

With miles to go before we meet the goals set out in Beijing in 1995, this report, in itself, is a testament to the resilience of our contributors and the communities in which they work. It is a testament to an unbowed commitment to achieving gender equality in Canada.

The Girl-Child

Canada’s nearly 3.6 million girls contribute to the quality of life of their families, schools and communities. Canada played a leadership role in encouraging the United Nations to establish the International Day of the Girl, celebrated annually since October 11, 2012. In the same year, Status of Women Canada released their first call for proposals to fund girl-focused projects.

Girls Action Foundation's 2013 report on the status of girls in Canada found that while girls are advancing their educational and economic participation, they continue to face barriers related to violence and mental and emotional well-being. Girls that experience marginalization, including girls with disabilities and those from racialized, Indigenous, rural and newcomer communities, are often at greater risk of personal and economic insecurity; they also possess strengths that they can transform into resilience and leadership qualities.

Violence against girls

Girls in Canada experience a multitude of both subtle and overt forms of violence. Nearly 27,000 female youth aged 12 to 17 were victims of violent crimes in 2011, almost twice as high as the rate for adult women. Girls were eight times more likely as boys to be victim of a sexual offence (649 victims per 100,000). Aboriginal girls face more frequent incidents of violence than non-Indigenous girls, and the Native Women's Association of Canada found that 17% of missing and murdered Aboriginal women are actually girls under 18.

Girls experience forms of violence that are so common they often go unquestioned, such as sexual harassment. Nearly half (46%) of high school girls in Ontario are victims of sexual harassment, while one in 10 teen girls in Quebec reported being forced into sex. Other forms of victimization by peers include bullying. For example, 13% of all Grade 10 girls across Canada experience bullying with racial overtones, and 22% of Grade 9 girls in Ontario experience homophobic verbal abuse.

Several provinces are introducing anti-bullying legislation. For instance, when Quebec and Ontario restructured their Education Act in 2012, gender-based violence was taken into account, and British Columbia announced a new strategy that mentions specific forms of violence such as racism, homophobia and sexism. A number of "healthy relationship" programs are also being introduced to schools, but their application is highly inconsistent across jurisdictions.

Sexual health education is another policy element that can contribute to reducing violence against girls. The revised 2008 Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health Education attempted to create common guidelines nationally. However, no national policy has yet been implemented. Therefore, although some provinces such as Manitoba and British Columbia display promising practices, Quebec has gone 10 years without a mandatory sexual education curriculum while Ontario continues to use an outdated curriculum from 1998.

Health and well-being

The Health Behaviours of School Aged Children survey found "a clear pattern of increasing pressure" in the lives of Canadian youths that has increased over the last 10 years. Girls feel pressure from all sides—to succeed in school and extracurricular activities, be attractive, please parents, teachers and peers, and conform to society's images of girls. Consequently, stress rates are high. Girls tend to internalize their difficulties, which can contribute to mental health challenges and self-harming behaviours including the following:

- **Mood and anxiety disorders:** Female youth aged 12 to 24 are more likely to have mood disorders (4.6% of girls versus 2.5% of boys) and anxiety disorders (6.1% versus 3.5%).
- **Physical self-harm:** Of all gender and age groups, hospitalization rates for self-injury are highest among girls aged 15-19, more than twice the rate for boys.
- **Alcohol use:** Binge drinking is on the rise and 54% of Grade 10 girls reported binge drinking.
- **Risky sexual behaviour:** 21% of sexually active Grade 9-10 girls rely on the withdrawal method, and 8% do not use any form of contraception.

Despite the clear influence of gender on youth health, few policies or programs explicitly take gender into account. The Mental Health Commission of Canada's 2012 Mental Health Strategy includes a brief mention of gender and sexual orientation but does not apply a gender analysis throughout. Some of Canada's Centers of Excellence for Women's Health have notably done research on

girls' health. However, federal funding for these research institutions was eliminated in 2012.


Education

The vast majority of girls now complete high school, and racialized and immigrant girls are more likely than non-racialized and Canadian-born girls, respectively, to be in school. Girls have also been participating in post-secondary education in record numbers: by 2009, 8% more women than men held university degrees. Some have also helped to advance education policies, such as The Miss G Project, in which a self-organized group of young women advocated for the implementation of a gender studies course in the Ontario secondary curriculum.

Despite these successes, gender inequalities in employment and salary persist. When girls drop out of school, the impacts can be severe. Women with less than a Grade 9 education earn about \$20,000, only half of what men with the same education earn. In post-secondary education, girls continue to be over-represented in traditionally female fields such as education and nursing.

The parliamentary standing committee on the status of women completed its first study related to girls in 2012. The committee sought input from many stakeholders on improving girls' economic prosperity and made recommendations, including:

- Support programs that create safe spaces for girls, particularly to prevent and address violence in schools and the workplace;
- Encourage the development of the capacity of Aboriginal girls, and improve their access to education and training programs;
- Support financial literacy initiatives; and
- Encourage the development of mentorship.

Many advances have been made to improve the status of girls in Canada, yet significant challenges remain—especially for girls who are marginalized. Girls need to be taken into account in the development of programs and policies that affect their lives, and be given opportunities to learn and lead. 

Public sector wages make a big difference in narrowing the pay gap

By Kate McInturff and Paul Tulloch

The size of the paycheck you take home at the end of the month is a reflection of a number of variables: education level, experience, hours worked, specialization, and performance among them. All of these are reasonable elements for employers to consider when determining the wages that they pay. The size of your paycheck should not be determined by your gender or your race. Yet employment incomes continue to vary for these reasons, and the gaps are greatest in the private sector.

The concerns expressed over public sector wages stem from the position that no one should be paid more simply because they are in the public sector. But are they? No. Salaries are higher in the public sector precisely for those groups of people who experience the greatest discrimination in the private sector—because the public sector goes further in correcting those discriminatory practices.

Salaries are lower in the public sector for the groups least likely to experience discrimination on the basis of race and sex.

Using data from the 2011 National Household Survey to compare the wages of full-time public- and private-sector workers, this study finds significant gaps in the wages of women, Aboriginal workers and visible minority workers. Those gaps are bigger in the private sector in every instance.

The biggest wage gap exists for Aboriginal workers. In the private sector, Aboriginal workers earn between 30% and 44% less than non-Aboriginal workers with the same level of

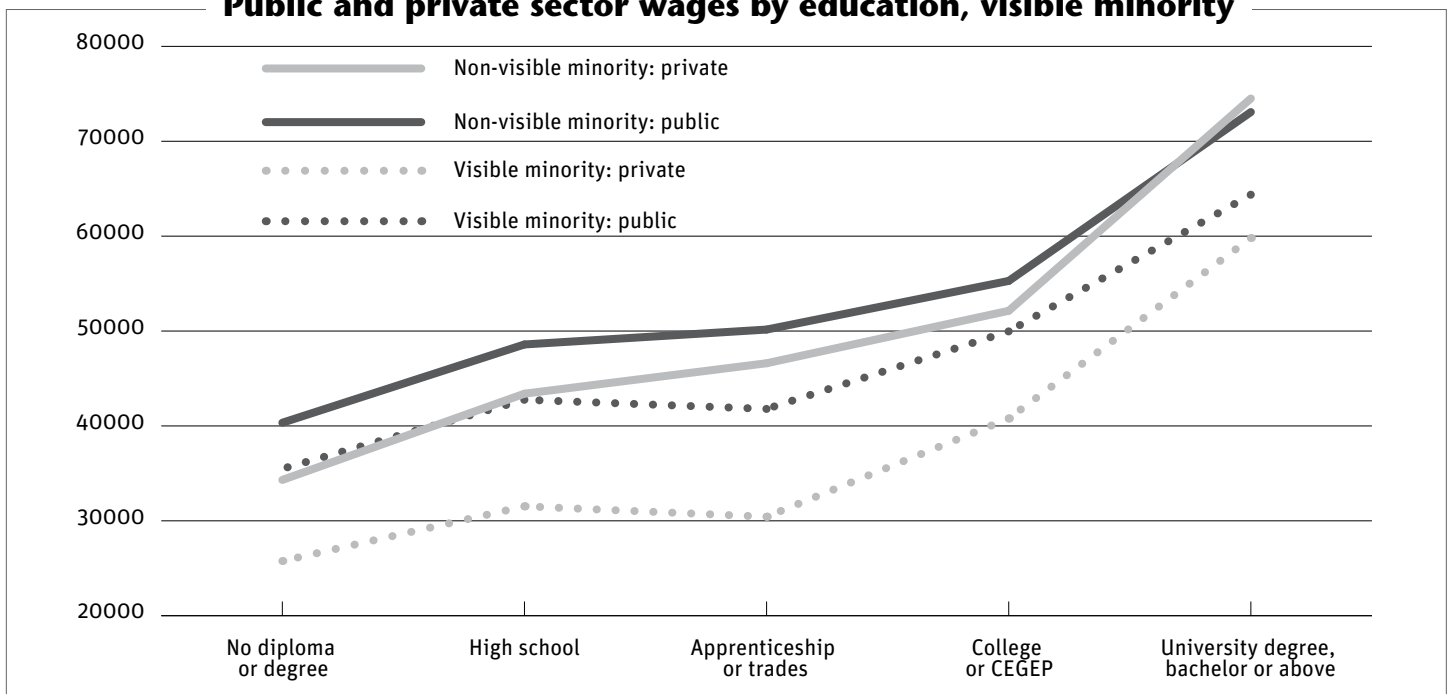
education. The same is true for visible minority workers and women. Education makes only a minor difference in the wage gaps in the private sector, with university-educated Aboriginal workers still making 44% less than their non-Aboriginal peers, university-educated women making 27% less than men, and university-educated visible minority workers making 20% less than their non-visible minority counterparts.

Although parity has yet to be reached for any of these groups in either sector, the public sector sees most of these wage gaps cut in half. For example, in the public sector those same university-educated workers see their wage gaps shrink to 14% for Aboriginal workers, 12% for visible minority workers, and 18% for women. These are still significant gaps. However, the public sector provides important insights into the measures that are most likely to see workers earning a paycheck that reflects their experience and ability and not their sex or race.

There are several factors that appear to contribute to the lower levels of wage discrimination in the public sector. Unionization and access to collective bargaining is strongly correlated with a reduction in wage inequality. Access to benefits such as paid parental leave, family leave and sick leave also reduce the gender wage gap by addressing the double burden of unpaid care work borne by female workers. Finally, pay equity legislation has an evident impact on

Salaries are higher in the public sector precisely for those groups of people who experience the greatest discrimination in the private sector—because the public sector goes further in correcting those discriminatory practices.

Public and private sector wages by education, visible minority



reducing discrimination and inequality.

None of these elements are found exclusively in the public sector. However, the public sector has a higher concentration of all three factors—with higher rates of unionization, family leave benefits, and the legislated monitoring and regulation of pay equity. The result is not higher wages but rather a more equal system of pay.

The bottom line

On average, when you compare occupations that exist in both the public and private sectors, full-time wages in the public sector are 2.3% higher than in the private sector. Given that the highest-earning workers are generally paid less in the public sector, why does the premium still exist when wages are averaged together? For example, the fact that the most educated workers see a \$7,000 penalty in the public sector would seem to cancel out the \$6,000 public sector premium for the least-educated workers. Likewise, the public sector premium for women seems to be offset in a number of occupations by a public sector penalty for male workers.

The reason the bottom line still comes out higher for the public sector is that workers who face less discrimination in the public sector are seeking out those jobs in greater numbers. Thus, across a number of occupations more women than men are choosing to work in the public sector because this means less wage discrimination for them. More workers with low education levels are choosing to work in the public sector because they have a better chance of earning enough to lift them out of poverty there. Likewise, workers who earn bigger paychecks in the private sector are more likely to choose to work there. For example, men with a university degree are more than twice as likely to work in the private sector and men are three times as likely to work in the private sector during their peak earning years.

All of these workers are making reasonable choices about where they will get paid more. However, the reason that such a choice exists for women, for Aboriginal and visible minority workers, and for less educated workers is because the public sector does not leave salaries to the magic of the marketplace. Pay



equity legislation, higher union density, and policies that help workers balance family needs with work make pay more equitable in the public sector

In spite of the positive impact of these measures on the fair treatment of workers, the past five years have seen the federal government cut public sector jobs, repeal pay equity measures, and attempt to reduce access to paid leave. Federal austerity measures will result in the loss of an estimated 28,600 jobs in the public service by 2016.

Federal public servants have also seen their access to pay equity guarantees reduced by the 2009 Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act, which redefined sex-based pay inequality as a matter to be decided with respect to market forces, rather than a right to non-discrimination on the basis of sex. Finally, unions have been the subject of legislative attacks at both the federal and provincial levels.

Dismantling the mechanisms that contribute to fair pay and shifting jobs from the public sector to the private sec-

tor will not benefit the majority of Canadians. It will benefit those who already earn the highest incomes of any group of workers—highly educated, older, male professionals. The shift to the private sector will come at a high cost to the workers most likely to experience discrimination and those with the lowest wages: high school graduates, women, visible minorities, and Aboriginal workers. This is not only a loss for those workers and a loss to the economy, it is a step towards a less equitable society.

Kate McInturff is a senior researcher at the CCPA and the director of its initiative on gender equality and public policy, Making Women Count. Paul Tulloch is a former data scientist at Statistics Canada and served as a lead developer of the Workplace and Employee Survey, which was cancelled as part of the federal government's recent cuts to the department. He recently finished work for a certificate from Stanford University on machine learning and statistics, and aims to apply such algorithms to labour-related data. View his blog at www.livingwork.ca.

This is about more than keeping you organized – each month identifies and describes key dates in Canada's social justice history. Each day readers have an opportunity to explore how debates about equality, gender, environment, First Nations, labour, trade, and social programs shape our development and identity.

It's an accessible way to learn about the creation of key programs such as health care, paid maternity leave, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Readers will also learn the history behind the underfunding and dismantling of other initiatives such as the Court Challenges Program, Status of Women, and the Kyoto Accord.

This is an innovative and original resource that provides an opportunity to remember our achievements (and where we need to keep working) on a daily basis while still being a functional – and beautifully illustrated – way to stay organized (and aware!).

The calendar – 48 pages packed with interesting historical facts and accessible story lines for each key date – will be available this fall for \$25 (plus shipping and GST) from the CCPA. Pick up one for yourself and another for a friend: it's guaranteed to change the way you look at our history and the debates and decisions that continue to shape it.



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Women are talking. Who's listening?

By Kate McInturff

"The question is not, are we sorry? The question is, what lesson have we learned? The question is, what are we going to do now that we are sorry?"

—J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace*. Penguin Books, 1999.

Women in Canada are speaking. They are speaking about the violence that one in four women will experience in her lifetime. What is most remarkable to me about this moment in particular is not the fact of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. Not the prevalence of these forms of violence. Not even that women are telling these stories (although I stand in awe of their courage). What is remarkable to me about this moment is that the survivors of these forms of violence are being given increasingly wide venues in which to be heard.

It's been a long time since the issue of violence against women has been debated so openly and the voices of survivors featured so prominently. Never have I heard public conversations in which the culpability of the perpetrators received so much attention. Nor have I witnessed such a frank discussion of the role of men in preventing violence.

The signs that women are being heard are also on the rise. I cannot think of anything that has given me greater cause for optimism than listening to someone like the comedian Louis CK recognize the fear with which so many women live, or the unexpected insights of a senior (male) journalist into the ubiquitous sexism and harassment faced by his female colleagues, or the Facebook post from a male friend that says simply "I believe."

As media outlets and political parties, institutions and individuals with the power to diminish levels of violence against women, rush to issue public apologies, one question remains.

What are we going to do now that we are sorry?

Because there are solutions. There is something to do. We can end violence against women.

Policies that are blind to the specific nature of violence against women are not working. All forms of violence are abhorrent, but that doesn't mean that one program fits all. Consider, for example, all the very specific reasons why so many women don't report their experiences of sexual assault, so clearly highlighted by the global response to #beenrapedneverreported (see picture).

There are policies and programs that work. In Ottawa, the Hollaback! campaign is working to make public transit safer for women. In Vancouver, police report that the 'Don't Be That Guy' campaign has lowered levels of sexual assault dramatically by empowering bystanders to intervene.

On social media young Aboriginal women are transforming the #amInext of missing and murdered Aboriginal women into an affirmative #Imnotnext and calling for a national inquiry. Organizations across Canada are joining the call for a national action plan to address violence against women. They are asking for a public debate on gender equality. They are documenting the status of women in Canada.

In cities and communities across Canada, service providers, labour organizations, researchers and activists are finding new ways to decrease levels of sexual assault and intimate partner violence, and better ways to meet the needs of survivors.

Yet, there are increasingly few venues for organizations to share their success stories, to learn from each other or to speak to their political representatives. Service providers find themselves barely able to meet the needs

of their clients, let alone record their analysis of what is working for those survivors and what isn't.

Advocacy is a dirty word. Research is disappearing. Nobody knows when violence goes up or down because of a policy or program that is implemented at the municipal or provincial level, because Canada doesn't track levels of self-reported violence against women at the sub-national level.

Recently I was lucky enough to participate in one of the increasingly rare venues in which women had the opportunity to speak and be heard by decision-makers. What I witnessed was something quite remarkable: a gathering of women from organizations large and small, students and activists, policy-makers, researchers and social workers. These women had gathered to speak to a group of legislators. They spoke movingly. They spoke concisely. They spoke with passion and intellect. Each made her pitch in three minutes or less.

As I struggled to define the particular magic of that moment a woman standing next to me said, simply, "it's democracy. This is democracy."

This is democracy when it works for women. This is democracy that moves the concerns of women to the front of the line. These are the lessons we need to learn.

This is what we need to do, now that we are sorry.

Kate McInturff is the director of the CCPA's initiative on gender equality and public policy, *Making Women Count*. You can follow Kate on Twitter @katemcinturff.



Physician-assisted suicide: It's time to reform the law

By Arthur Schafer

The last time the Supreme Court of Canada considered the constitutional status of Canada's ban on assisted suicide (in *Rodriguez*, 1993), it voted narrowly to uphold the law. Now, in *Lee Carter*, it is revisiting the issues after a gap of 21 years.

When courts rule on issues of fundamental human rights they don't pay attention to public opinion. At least that's what we teach Canadian law students. But in *Rodriguez*, speaking for the majority, the late Justice John Sopinka seemed to think it significant that there was "no public consensus" in favour of physician-assisted suicide (PAS). Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin, writing on behalf of the four dissenting judges, took issue with Sopinka. She perceived that "the pulse of the nation" favoured decriminalizing PAS.

So, while no one advocates that issues of constitutional rights should be settled by opinion poll, it seems undeniable that in a democratic society public opinion has an important role to play in judicial decision-making.

For the past 15 years or so, opinion polls have consistently shown that at least two-thirds of Canadians favour legalizing PAS. Moreover, in the second week of September, just days before the Supreme Court was due to hear arguments in *Lee Carter*, a comprehensive new poll was published on the issue. Using double the sample size of previous public opinion surveys, the Ipsos-Reid poll found that 84% of Canadians now favour legalization of PAS with careful safeguards. Even more remarkable was that 85% of those who identified as disabled were in favour, as were 80% of all Christians, including 83% of Catholics.

It turns out that in contemporary Canadian society this most controversial of moral issues isn't really controversial at all. Public opinion now decisively favours decriminalizing PAS.

Two decades of experience

There have been other important social changes since the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 against Sue Rodriguez.

In 1993, no jurisdiction in the world had yet legalized either PAS or mercy killing, and lawyers and judges could only speculate on possible negative consequences. Over the course of the past 21 years, however, five U.S. states (including Oregon and Washington State) and several European countries (including the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland) have opted to regulate assisted dying instead of imposing a total ban. Their experiences have been closely studied and there is now a substantial body of empirical data relevant to the issue of whether legalization poses a danger to vulnerable individuals or groups, such as elderly and disabled persons. I'll consider this evidence in a moment.

Keep in mind that prior to 1972 if someone attempted suicide but failed s/he could have faced criminal charges and a prison sentence. Suicide was decriminalized in Canada 42 years ago. This means if you are a competent adult you already have the right to end your own life. But if you are a dying cancer

patient, or have ALS (as Sue Rodriguez did), and you have reached the point where you wish to take your own life, you may no longer be physically able to do so without assistance.

After the B.C. Supreme Court heard all the expert arguments and considered all the empirical evidence in *Lee Carter*, Madam Justice C. Lynn Smith ruled that the Criminal Code prohibition against assisted suicide wrongfully discriminates against people who are unable to take their own lives. If we truly value life then then we should not force patients to choose between a life of prolonged suffering or the option of killing themselves prematurely (i.e. while they are still capable of suicide, before their illness makes suicide impossible without assistance).

Gloria Taylor, one of the plaintiffs in *Lee Carter*, put the central point eloquently:

What I want is to be able to die in a manner that is consistent with the way that I lived my life. I want to be able to exercise control and die with dignity and with my sense of self and personal integrity intact. I want to be able to experience my death as part of my life... I do not want the manner of my death to undermine the values that I lived my life in accordance with.

In other words, autonomous individuals should be free to decide their own fate. When an important life choice concerns a private matter, and when the individual making that choice is near death and suffering without relief, then the state should not interfere unless it can prove that interference is necessary to protect vulnerable third parties.

If you are dependent upon technology to stay alive—a breathing machine, say, or dialysis—you already have the legal right to say "enough is enough; pull the plug." No one can force life-prolonging treatment upon a competent adult patient. Today, most Canadians in this situation die as a result of their voluntary refusal (or that of their family or substitute decision-maker) to accept life-prolonging treatment. This used to be called "passive euthanasia." Now it's called "appropriate care." Both our legal system and society at large accept that competent adults (or their surrogates) have the right to say "no" to any treatment whatsoever—even when the result of that decision is certain to be a quick death.

Our society's respect for the right of patients and their families to refuse life support, or to insist upon its discontinuation, has given many the option of a hastened death. Of course, it falls to physicians to "pull the plug." But far from desensitizing or even "brutalizing" doctors, as some predicted, our hospitals and hospices have become kinder, gentler places, and physicians have become much more respectful of the value of patient autonomy. Not all slopes are slippery.

However, if your life is not technology-dependent then a doctor cannot legally assist you in dying. Gloria Taylor sees this as illogical and unfair. Most Canadians, as we've seen, agree with her.

Even the most skilful palliative care cannot always provide needed relief from severe and intractable suffering.

Of course, when your life becomes intolerable you can always choose to stop eating and drinking. But dying slowly by starvation and dehydration is not everyone's idea of a good death. You can also opt for continuous palliative sedation, in which case you will be sedated to unconsciousness; food and fluids will be discontinued, and you will never regain consciousness.

It is not surprising that many terminally ill patients find these ways of dying unattractive. Some reject continuous palliative sedation because they do not want to linger for days in a state of drug-induced stupefaction. In particular, they may not wish to be remembered this way. They may also wish to spare their family and friends the emotional burden of a prolonged dying.

Many dying patients opt for palliative care, sometimes delivered at home, sometimes in a hospital's palliative care ward or a standalone hospice. Unfortunately, these options have their limits. Even the most skilful palliative care cannot always provide needed relief from severe and intractable suffering. Moreover, unrelievable suffering can result not only from acute pain but also when the dying patient experiences discomfort from nausea, vomiting, giddiness, a struggle to breathe... all of which are frequent side-effects of both pain-relief medicines and of severe illness.

Aside from pain and discomfort, some dying patients also suffer greatly from feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and fear. In short, palliative care is an important option but it is not always sufficient to prevent implacable suffering for patients at or near the end of their lives.

Regulation better than prohibition

The B.C. Supreme Court acknowledged in *Rodriguez* that the prohibition against assisted death violated the constitutional liberty of the patient. But, as they correctly observed, autonomy rights are not absolute. The Court ruled against *Rodriguez* because a majority of justices feared that even careful safeguards would not adequately protect the most vulnerable members of society against error, coercion or other forms of abuse and exploitation.

In *Lee Carter*, the case made by lawyers for the government was based precisely on this fear:

[T]here is a reasonable apprehension that allowing assisted suicide or euthanasia will result in serious harms to individuals and society [and] will result in wrongful deaths. A serious illness or traumatic injury can make any individual vulnerable. Some individuals may also be particularly vulnerable because of other personal circumstances, such as physical and mental disabilities, age-related illnesses or social indifference and isolation.

The government goes on to argue that decriminalizing assisted suicide would result in other harms, including sending a negative message about the value of life, weakening palliative care and negatively impacting physicians.

Justice Smith, who first heard the *Lee Carter* case, considered all the empirical evidence introduced by both the government and the plaintiffs, including *Carter* and *Taylor*. She found in favour of the plaintiffs because

the empirical evidence from those jurisdictions that have already legalized PAS and euthanasia decisively disproved the claims made by the government.

Linda Ganzini, an Oregon psychiatrist who has done many studies of PAS in Oregon and in the Netherlands, testified that the experience refutes predictions that legalization of PAS leads to a slippery slope:

We found that rates of assisted dying in Oregon and in the Netherlands showed no evidence of heightened risk for the elderly, women, the uninsured, people with low educational status, the poor, the physically disabled or chronically ill, minors, people with psychiatric illnesses, including depression, or racial or ethnic minorities, compared with background population.

Significantly, patients receiving PAS in Oregon and the Netherlands are disproportionately among those people who "enjoy comparative social, economic, education, professional and other privileges."

If anything, the empirical evidence offered in that trial establishes that vulnerable patients are better protected, respect for life is increased, and the bond of trust between doctors and patients is enhanced in Oregon and the Netherlands compared to Canada and U.S. states that have totally banned PAS.

In Oregon, only a tiny fraction—on average, about 1 in 500—of overall deaths takes place with physician assistance. Of these, most have metastatic cancer, are very close to death, and are suffering without hope of relief, despite excellent hospice care. (Among U.S. states, Oregon's palliative care comes out very near the top.)

The empirical evidence establishes that vulnerable patients are better protected, respect for life is increased, and the bond of trust between doctors and patients is enhanced in Oregon and the Netherlands compared to Canada and other U.S. states that have totally banned PAS.

The rate of physician-hastened deaths in the Netherlands has remained reasonably constant over the years, ranging between 3% and 4% of total deaths. For example, in 2010 the number of patients who died from euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide was 4,050. According to research published in the medical journal *The Lancet*, this number is virtually unchanged since 2002, when voluntary euthanasia and PAS were first legalized.

But what if, contrary to fact, the rate of deaths from PAS in Oregon or the Netherlands (or in some other jurisdiction that opted for regulation rather than total prohibition) were to increase over time? Would such an increase demonstrate that we were sliding down a dangerously slippery slope? Not necessarily.

An increase in PAS cases might be due to abuse of vulnerable patients, but it could just as easily be the result of an increased number of patients coming to understand that PAS is an option worth considering. We need to be cautious when drawing inferences from the data. Despite

(Continued on page 47)

And the first-ever CCPA Social Justice Award goes to...

Fearless. Devoted. Unswerving. Kind. Reliable. Modest. Moral. No matter who I asked, the same words came up to describe Mike McBane, the recently retired director of the Canadian Health Coalition and first recipient—at a ceremony in Ottawa on November 27—of a new annual CCPA Social Justice Award. Probably he would describe himself simply (and modestly) as a coalition builder. At least we spent a lot of time talking about coalitions over lunch in early November. That and Mike's faith, his devotion to social justice, the integrity of Canadian health care, and the technicalities of ruining a good prime ministerial photo opportunity. For a longer version of this interview: www.policyalternatives.ca/monitor.

Stuart Trew: How did it feel to receive this award?

Mike McBane: I was quite surprised and humbled by it. I certainly wasn't expecting it! And it's a great honour to be associated with an award from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. I have a great respect for the organization, its work, and so I feel very humbled to be quite honest, to be singled out by them.

ST: What motivated your work at the Canadian Health Coalition?

MM: I started [at the coalition] in 1995 and the first campaign was responding to Paul Martin's budget cuts of '95—cuts to the social transfers. That was a good coalition issue to get in on because it was not just fighting for health transfers but fighting for social transfers, so it let us make the connections with social policy, poverty and welfare programs, and the role of the federal government in social policy... I really work to bring out the best in organizations so that they overcome narrow sectarian interests, infighting and back-fighting, and take on their social responsibilities for people who really need them to weigh in on their side, people who don't have a voice, people who...are relying on organizations that have resources, that do have the ability to make things better. So that's what motivated me. The health coalition really gave me the space and the support to do that.

ST: Friends describe you as a moral person. How important was faith to your work?

MM: I remember a course that shaped my intellectual development at Carleton University (in Ottawa), around 1975. It was a course called "Liberation Theology," [which was] a methodology in which you basically took sides, which was counterintuitive to a lot of academia where you stand in the middle or sit on the fence. This was a methodology where you stand with the people on the bottom and take a side—the side of justice.

A number of Canadians were inspired by that and committed to apply that to Canadian politics and Canadian social challenges. For example, I had the opportunity of working with the social affairs office of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops in the early 1980s... We were able to look at disputes and conflict in the Canadian context. One of them I remember was the Eaton's strike and [the bishops] waded in



Star-spangled manners: Mike McBane, then with the Action Canada Network, respectfully raises the winning flag at Canada's NAFTA signing ceremony.

with a pro-workers message that Labour Day.


Of course, all hell broke loose in terms of Timothy Eaton calling up Conrad Black who then leaned on the bishops and said 'What the hell are you doing?' It was a really clear sociological study of power, and how religion is used to reinforce and legitimate power. That's really what the story of liberation theology is about. Religion doesn't have to oppress. Religion can liberate. It depends on what people are doing with it.

ST: The NAFTA signing ceremony. The U.S. flag. Was that planned?

MM: We (free trade opponents) said we can't let this happen without some kind of symbolic interaction or event to mark the occasion... So the Action Canada Network got together with all of its component member groups and planned a series of actions, and generally the strategy was to get as many people as possible into the signing in Parliament...

We all went in—there was about 50 of us that ended up in the room—and after it started the plan was that one at a time each sector would get up. The labour movement would get up, Maude Barlow was there, Greenpeace was there, etc. I'd been in the room early [and] I saw that there were three flags lined up at the table (Canadian, U.S. and Mexican) where the prime minister was going to sign the NAFTA...

It was spur of the moment. It was not planned. But I had enough time sitting there before it started to realize this would work, this should be done. They wouldn't even know I was there. So they were smiling to the cameras but the cameras were all filming me (laughs). It took about ten seconds. I respectfully held up the flag—I didn't want to desecrate the American flag—then let it down, then waited to be escorted out very quietly...

Even though it was a symbolic gesture, we couldn't let it happen in silence or as routine. Mulroney wanted a photo op so we gave him one. 

Canada taking care of business (exclusively) in the Arctic

By John Crump

The timing was interesting. The announcement of the creation of the Arctic Economic Council (AEC) came as oil prices started falling. Other commodity prices, like gold and iron ore, have also dropped this year, casting a shadow on the immediate-term development prospects of the North.

At its first (closed-door) meeting in Iqaluit this September, Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq hailed the AEC as way for northerners to become “the decision makers... By working side-by-side with the industry and businesses in the region, we are developing the North for northerners.” In itself, though, the council is unlikely to make a fundamental difference to the North’s structural problems. The reality, in Canada as in most parts of the circumpolar world, is that northern economies rely on resource extraction to create jobs and wealth. The companies that do the extracting are, for the most part, owned in the south.

Any discussion of who owns the capital that develops the North has been notably absent from meetings of the Arctic Council, a political forum created in 1996 that rotates its chair every two years. In its 2013 Kiruna Declaration, the Swedish-chaired council attempted to address this issue, stating, “to promote dynamic and sustainable Arctic economies and best practices [it must] establish a Task Force to facilitate the creation of a circumpolar business forum.”

When Canada took over the chairmanship from Sweden, it made improving the connection with northern business the cornerstone of its program. The “circumpolar business forum” was transformed into the AEC. In that process, the multilateral focus on “development for the people of the north” was blended with (or swallowed by) the federal government’s domestic position that “the North is open for business.” Canada’s priorities, in that respect, include reducing environmental protection, “harmonizing” regulations and other actions designed to facilitate development, and speeding up the project approval processes.

In April, the Arctic Athabaskan Council, one of six circumpolar Indigenous peoples organizations with “permanent participant” status at the Arctic Council, wrote to Patrick Borbey, then chair of the Senior Arctic Officials group. While the organization was a “firm supporter” of the commitment to “increase co-operation and interaction with the business community,” what emerged under Canada’s leadership went too far.

The AEC, continued the letter, “promises to be far more than a ‘business forum’ and may in the long term compete with the Arctic Council itself. At the very least the public will be confused between the mandate and activities of the similarly named Arctic Council and Arctic Economic Council.” In response, the Arctic Athabaskan Council received a letter from the environment minister requesting that they pick representatives for the business council.

Another change, in what some observers see as Canada’s bumpy road to the end of its tenure as head of the Arctic Council, saw Borbey (who was also president of the Canadian Northern Development Agency, CANNOR) suddenly moved to another department, replaced by Vincent Rigby, a diplomat with no Arctic experience. The switch raised eyebrows, seen in some quarters as evidence that the Canadian government’s focus was always on the domestic Arctic, not the circumpolar environmental mandate that has always underpinned the Arctic Council.

There is a link between these new politics and the old interests of Old Europe in Canada’s North. Throughout the so-called Age of Exploration, enormous effort and money was spent on trying to find the fabled Northwest Passage that would provide Europe with a shorter trading route to Asia. The most famous failed voyage was, of course, the loss of Sir John Franklin and the crews of *Erebus* and *Terror*. The lost Franklin ships fuelled multiple search missions, the most recent being the Government of Canada’s multi-year, multimillion-dollar effort, which led to the Prime

Minister’s announcement from the deck of a Canadian Coast Guard vessel this summer that a Franklin ship had been found (exactly, we should add, where the Inuit said it would be).

Nonetheless, finding the ship required an enormous amount of private investment and support, and a variety of partners including Jim Balssilie, founder of RIM and a driving force behind the search, the Canadian Geographic Society, Shell Canada and the W. Garfield Weston Foundation. It also involved a Russian ship, the *Akademik Sergey Vavilov*, something not mentioned anywhere in official communications.

The Franklin discovery fits the narrative cultivated by the Harper Government—that history is formed of Big Events and Big Men. This might also include Big Development, which countless government pronouncements indicate will be the salvation of the North. The historic find also fits the government’s Arctic climate change narrative, which focuses on opportunity: offshore oil and gas development, to be precise, and a new trading route as the Northwest Passage becomes free of ice for much of the year.

Left out, of course, is the other side of the story. In the words of the 2014 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, “Arctic ecosystems are already experiencing irreversible regime shifts.” In careful language, the IPCC is really talking about a circumpolar threat to human health, food supplies, culture and, yes, prospects for “development for the people of the Arctic.” On a global scale, the IPCC report outlines the implications of a warming Arctic for the planetary climatic system.

It is messier than talking about great discoveries and great opportunities, but it is the conversation the Harper government needs to engage in if it wants to show real Arctic vision.

John Crump is a CCPA research associate and an expert on Arctic and global environmental issues. 

Public interest law and the commons: three cases to watch

By Steven Shrybman

I practise public interest law. My files often involve basic questions affecting fundamental legal and economic arrangements in our society. The issues are often daunting. Fortunately I have lots of help from talented colleagues at Sack Goldblatt Mitchell. While we do our part, the following cases reflect the determination of civil society groups and progressive trade unions to defend our commons—the institutions and economic arrangements that were built to serve the collective or public interest.

Stealing from the Canadian Wheat Board

In 1943, the Canadian Wheat Board was established in its modern incarnation as a monopoly to sell wheat and barley produced in the western provinces and intended for export or for human consumption in Canada. A half-century later, farmers were given the right to appoint a majority of directors on the board.

With the benefit of the market power the monopoly afforded, that smart farmer-controlled board built an international brand for Canadian wheat that allowed it to claim a very substantial premium in the market, producing \$600-800 million in excess profit each year. The monopoly also provided the leverage to negotiate favourable supply chain arrangements with rail companies and international grain conglomerates to move grain efficiently to markets.

For reasons that can only be described as perverse, in late 2011 the Harper government introduced legislation destroying the board's monopoly and firing the farmer-elected directors. Our firm, with Winnipeg-based lawyer Anders Bruun, was subsequently retained to bring a class action for damages arising from the government's actions.

That class action claims \$17 billion in damages, an astronomical sum that actually represents a realistic estimate of the value of Canadian Wheat Board assets—its goodwill and tangible assets—that were taken from grain producers and then destroyed by the government.

While the Wheat Board still exists, it has been run into the ground by Harper appointees since taking over in December 2011, and it has no marketing power. Last summer alone, the absence of supply chain arrangements to move a bumper wheat crop to market cost farmers an estimated \$4 billion. In response to the producers' legal claim, the federal government brought motions to strike the class action.

At the center of the case was this question: Can the government simply take the assets, which include the board's enormously valuable good will, from the farmers who paid for and built those assets, and do so without paying for them? The Court said yes. Why? Because according to the Court the farmers weren't "shareholders" and had no proprietary interest in those assets.

The reasoning behind this decision was that unless grain farmers can prevent others from taking advantage of an institution they built, or can sell that interest to others, there is no property interest in the institution or the assets

farmers built and paid for. As the Court found, the law simply won't protect co-operative forms of ownership or the generous impulse of those who invest and create to benefit the community.

There is much that is egregiously unjust about the Harper government's decision to destroy the Wheat Board, including its failure to hold a vote among grain producers before fundamentally changing the board's mandate—something that is required by the Wheat Board Act. Two years ago, the Federal Court of Appeal found that parliamentary sovereignty trumped that statutory requirement. Now the court has found that farmers have no right to be compensated for the assets the government has taken from them.

I should note that one aspect of the class action, a claim for approximately \$100 million arising from the mismanagement of revenues for the sale of grain by the government-appointed board, survived the court challenge. More importantly, the producers will be seeking leave to appeal the Court's decision to the Supreme Court of Canada.

The history of the Canadian Wheat Board, and the agrarian socialist movement from which it sprung, is rich and should be better known and celebrated. The same roots sprouted the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), and many of the fundamental social reforms that define this country and that are still with us.

Whether or not there is a future for the Canadian Wheat Board hangs on how the Supreme Court of Canada deals with the fundamental question of collective property rights at the centre of this case.

An attempt to destroy medicare

With my Sack Goldblatt Mitchell colleagues Steven Barrett and Ethan Poskanzer, and together with co-counsel Joe Arvay, I represent the BC Health Coalition, Canadian Doctors for Medicare and others who are interveners in a constitutional challenge to the basic framework of medicare brought by Dr. Brian Day.

As some may know, Dr. Day is the country's most outspoken advocate of privatized health care and is not shy about using hyperbole to make his point. He has compared medicare to North Korean Airlines, and claimed that Canada has a multi-tiered system that provides privileged access for prison inmates while leaving the rest of us to languish on wait lists.

Day operates a private hospital in Vancouver, which provides services mostly to workers compensation claimants. But increasingly, he and his colleagues are using that private health care infrastructure to serve patients who are willing to pay to jump the queue for health care services provided in the public system.

The Day litigation seeks to build on the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Chaoulli vs. Quebec* (2005), which opened the door to private insurance and limited private hospital care in Quebec. But this new attack goes much further,

taking direct aim not only at B.C.'s ban on private insurance but any restriction on the ability of physicians to provide, and patients to purchase, health care services covered by medicare.

If Day succeeds, physicians will be entitled to troll the public health care system for patients willing to pay for insured services, while billing both the patient and the public system. Not only would this result destroy the "need, not ability to pay" paradigm; it would add insult to injury by requiring all taxpayers to subsidize the cost of care that only a wealthy few will be able to afford. Robin Hood, Dr. Day is not.

Moreover, the provisions of B.C. health care law that Day is targeting are similar to those all provinces and territories must establish. These rules essentially ban private payment for necessary physician and hospital services, and they give effect to the five principles of the Canada Health Act: public administration, comprehensiveness, universality, portability and accessibility.

Because of the constitutional nature of Day's attack, if he succeeds, the result will undermine if not destroy the cornerstone of medicare—care according to need, not the ability to pay.

In response, the B.C. government has gathered an impressive group of expert witnesses to refute Day's claims. On behalf of the interveners we have added the expert evidence of Dr. David Himmelstein, a leading proponent of the single-payer (medicare) model who practises and teaches in the U.S., and Marie-Claude Premont, a law professor from Quebec who describes the impact of the *Chaoulli* decision.

The evidence gathered to date, which includes cross examinations of Day and his colleagues, reveals they have been involved in extensive unlawful billing practices, including charging patients thousands of dollars for services covered by the public health insurance plan and then often billing the public plan for related services. In fact, Day's constitutional claim is a defensive move; he only brought the case forward after the province was (finally) moved to take steps to stop Day's unlawful clinic operations.

Faced with mounting evidence against him, and on the eve of the 24-

week trial that was scheduled to begin this past September, Day asked for an adjournment so he could discuss settling the case (see "The ethics of for-profit health care in B.C.," October 2014).

Our clients have no desire for the case to proceed, but they are adamant that any settlement should include an unreserved and unqualified commitment by Dr. Day to respect the law, and to reimburse those, including the B.C. Medical Services Plan, from which he has unlawfully taken millions of dollars.

Pipelines, the environment and jobs

Everyone will have heard of at least one of the pitched battles surrounding pipeline projects—Keystone XL, Energy East and Northern Gateway—that would export bitumen and synthetic crude oil from Alberta. Most will know about the battles as conflicts between large pipeline proponents and First Nations, environmental groups and landowners (see "Hardball tactics" on Page 35).

Fewer will know that Unifor (formerly as the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada—CEP) has been an intervener in each of these proceedings, or that the union representing oil sands workers has opposed all of these projects.

The union is committed to ensuring that Canadian oil and gas resources are developed and utilized in a manner that fosters economic development in Canada, allows Canada to meet its obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and provides secure energy supplies for Canadians in the future. Because the pipelines fundamentally undermine those goals, the CEP, and now Unifor, has been steadfast in opposing them.

Earlier this fall the Federal Court of Appeal agreed to hear applications challenging the federal government's decision to approve the Northern Gateway project. The Court will hear from several First Nations about the failure of the government and the pipeline company to properly consult with them. It will hear from environmental groups about the impact of the pipeline on the physical environment in B.C. It will hear from Unifor about the failure of the

government to consider the enabling effect of the pipeline on oil sands development that will put greenhouse gas reduction goals out of reach.


But another central concern for the union is the adverse impact this bitumen export pipeline will have on value-added oil production. There are only a handful of jobs necessary to operate a pipeline. There are literally tens of thousands in upgrading and refining raw bitumen. But the Gateway project would see raw bitumen exported to the U.S. and China. The upgraders and refineries would be located there.

In fact, in the case of Northern Gateway, Unifor adduced un-refuted expert evidence from Informetrica (Mike McCracken) that Canada will 'lose' 26,000 full-time, largely industrial jobs if the project is used, as intended, to export unrefined bitumen.

Such an outcome confounds the industrial policies of the past century, which have required adding value in Canada as the condition of access to natural resources (e.g. raw log export bans) as well as access to our markets (e.g. the Canada-U.S. Auto Pact). In contrast, the development of the oil sands is taking place in a deregulated environment that requires no value-added processing.

To reboot an old saying, we are now only to be hewers of wood, drawers of water, and shippers of bitumen.

Because Unifor will be among those challenging the pipeline project, the Court will not only hear about adverse affects on First Nations and the environment, crucial in their own right, but also the adverse impact these export pipelines will have on our prospects for developing a diversified and job-intensive oil economy, one that would substantially reduce the pace and scale of oil sands development while enhancing economic benefits for Canadians. The case is expected to be argued sometime in mid-2015.

Steven Shrybman is a lawyer with Sack, Goldblatt, Mitchell LLP. His practice focuses on international trade and public interest litigation, including issues concerning the environment, health care, human and labour rights, the protection of public services, natural resources policy and intellectual property rights. 

Why the new Euro–Canada treaty is a gift to oil firms

By Murray Dobbin

The media was filled recently with stories that reflect the parallel universes we seem to be living in.

In September, while environmental activists were demonstrating outside the international climate summit in New York, and some 100 world leaders were pledging to finally get serious about climate change, many of those same leaders had already put their names to an international investment treaty that would contradict any such effort. Parts of this treaty seem to have been virtually written by the same oil companies targeted for criticism on the streets because of their war against greater regulation of greenhouse gas emissions.

That treaty is called the Canada–European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

While some attention has been paid to CETA's key provisions on investor-state dispute settlement, the impact its intellectual property rights chapter will have on Canadian drug pricing, and curbs in the treaty on government's ability to buy local, there has been almost nothing in the media about CETA's chapter on domestic regulation. A recent Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives report on the EU treaty, *Making Sense of the CETA*, suggests there should be, because the articles of that chapter seem designed to kill efforts to regulate the resource industry.

CETA's domestic regulation chapter would be more aptly called "Gifts for the Oil and Gas Industry." These CETA provisions are so biased in favour of corporations it is easy to picture industry execs sitting elbow-to-elbow with negotiators, guiding their pens as they draft the agreement. It doesn't ban regulation outright, but it gives these executives almost everything they have been asking for.

Of course, these anti-regulation gifts are available to other sectors, including the mining industry. But given the special place in this government's universe for Alberta's oil patch it's not hard to see where the impetus came from.

Tying hands

Most trade and investment agreements are full of obscure legalese, but the domestic regulation chapter in CETA is actually relatively simple to understand. You can check it out (Chapter 14) on the website of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development. You'll see that CETA provides so many grounds for regulations to be challenged that conceivably almost any government measure could be ruled in contravention of the agreement.

For example, CETA demands that the parties to the agreement (Canada and its provinces/territories, the EU and its member states) ensure "that licensing and qualification procedures are as simple as possible and do not unduly complicate or delay the supply of a service or the pursuit of any other economic activity" (Article 2, Section 7).

Requiring that oil and gas companies do environmental assessments or archeological studies, or that they get approvals from different levels of government are clearly

requirements it would be much simpler (for the companies) to do away with altogether. Obligations to consult with the public and First Nations certainly complicate the regulatory process and cause delays.

Whether or not governments have simplified their licensing processes to the absolute maximum extent possible and are not causing "undue" delays or complications would be up to a panel of trade lawyers to decide in the event of a dispute. They could look at examples from the most deregulated jurisdictions to determine what is "as simple as possible."

China, for example, allows corporations to ignore requirements for environmental impact assessments (EIA) and just pay a small fine after the fact. An article in *Businessweek* reveals the results of the "simple" Chinese process:

In November 2013 an oil pipeline burst in Qingdao, killing or injuring more than 100 people; a faulty EIA process was partly to blame for the deaths. As Chinese environmental journalist Liu Jianqiang commented in reference to the Qingdao disaster, "It is common in China for EIAs to be faked and planning assessments to simply not exist—and so our country is littered with such ticking time bombs."

CETA's Chapter 14 further requires that all regulations that governments have not expressly excluded from the agreement must be "objective" and "established in advance" (Article 2, Section 2). Given that these terms are not defined they can mean anything that a trade tribunal decides they mean. While the word "objective" might not seem threatening in most contexts, here it is loaded with danger for public interest regulation.

If a tribunal interprets "objective" to mean "not subjective," existing regulations could be challenged. Why? Because they are based on a government regulator's effort to balance competing interests—a necessarily subjective exercise. If licensing approvals are based to some extent on public opinion of a project, this too could mean licensing decisions are not objective.

And what does it mean to say that regulations have to be "established in advance?" Does that mean that new regulations cannot be introduced? Even if this provision is interpreted to mean that regulations cannot be changed once an application has been approved, there are very good reasons why a government might need to impose new regulations on operations that are already licensed.

The Mount Polley mine spill in B.C. (see "Poor regulations, enforcement will lead to more Mt. Polleys," October 2014) provides a perfect example of where a government had to impose new requirements on established mines after a catastrophic regulatory failure. CETA could make that impossible or very difficult in the future.

Disputes arising out of so-called trade agreements like CETA are decided by tribunals made up of corporate trade lawyers. These dispute panels are nothing at all like any public court of law. The model is taken right out of the international commercial dispute resolution process, which

is designed to settle narrow disputes between commercial entities. This is square-peg-in-a-round-hole territory.

Canada left defenceless

But at least in other trade and investment agreements governments are allowed to defend their regulations as necessary to protect human health and the environment. Either by intent or sheer carelessness, this defence is not applied to the domestic regulation chapter of CETA.


For example, if an environmental assessment process were challenged as “unduly” delaying oil and gas

development, a government would not be able to defend these assessments as necessary to protect the environment. EU governments could go to bat for oil giants like Total and BP—and force Canadian governments to gut licensing regulations for the whole industry.

Just as the world is trying to come to grips with the growing climate crisis, and Canadians are increasingly skeptical about a national economic strategy relying on expansion of the tar sands, CETA threatens to make action on those concerns even more difficult.

Environmentalists point out that

the faster you develop the tar sands, the worse it is for climate change. CETA could make it extremely difficult to slow down their expansion. There are many good reasons to hope this EU treaty never comes into effect, but the need to preserve the right to regulate Canada’s oil and gas sector is surely one of the most important.

Murray Dobbin is a journalist, the author of five books, and a former columnist with the Financial Post and Winnipeg Free Press. A version of this article ran in The Tyee and rabble.ca in early October. 

Canada ratifies FIPA with China; First Nation fights on

More than two years after signing the Canada–China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA), Minister for International Trade Ed Fast announced late on Friday, September 12 that Canada had finally ratified the deal.

With China’s earlier ratification, the FIPA entered into force on October 1, and under the terms of the agreement will be binding on both countries for a minimum of 31 years.

Unlike most of Canada’s investment agreements—there are 28 FIPAs in force, 14 signed or concluded, and 11 under negotiation—the treaty with China met widespread opposition from across the political spectrum, with reports of dissent even around the federal cabinet table.

The agreement was roundly criticized for its lack of balance in favour of China. *Financial Post* columnist Diane Francis said the Conservatives, “have demonstrated the worst negotiating skills since Neville Chamberlin. Ottawa capitulated to China on everything.”

Analysts specifically raised concerns about the agreement’s sweeping investment protection and investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) provisions, which Osgoode Hall law professor Gus Van Harten warned, “may preclude any changes to legislation that affect negatively a Chinese investor, without taxpayer compensation.”

Perhaps most critically, there were serious questions raised about the constitutionality of the agreement, especially as it relates to the rights of First Nations under Section 35 of the Constitution. It was this concern, and the government’s failure to consult, that led the small Hupacasath First Nation of Port Alberni, B.C., to launch a legal challenge in February 2013 to stop the ratification of the FIPA.

“We realized there was no provision for the protection of Aboriginal rights and title, and considering the power that China has to purchase natural resource–based companies, many of which are based on First Nations land, we decided to challenge it in court,” explains Brenda Sayers, the portfolio holder on the FIPA case for Hupacasath First Nation.

“We wanted to protect our traditional territories for future generations, and we could see that the extraction of natural resources would be expedited if this treaty was ratified.”

Opposition to FIPA coalesced around the Hupacasath

legal challenge, and Sayers says that almost \$500,000 in donations came in from across Canada to support their legal costs. A Federal Court sided with the government in an August 2013 decision, saying that the impacts on Hupacasath were “speculative, remote and nonappreciable.” The Hupacasath appealed the decisions, and arguments were heard by the Federal Court of Appeal on June 10, 2014.

Despite comments by Minister Fast just months earlier that the FIPA had not been finalized because “there is litigation ongoing with respect to that agreement,” the ratification in September undercut the impending court decision, which was expected in the fall.

“It was totally unexpected given that Canada had been acting in good faith right up to that point in time,” says Sayers. “We had no reason to consider that they would do that. It was quite a shock.”

While the ratification and entry into force throws the Court’s next steps into uncertainty, Hupacasath legal counsel has since asked for leave to make a submission on the implications of the ratification of FIPA. Experts say the FIPA ratification cannot be reversed, but Sayers says it’s still important to make the arguments.

“It could have to do with future deals. And if other First Nations want to challenge any kind of natural resource extraction by Chinese state-owned corporations on their traditional territories, this would be on the record,” she says.

That is also the reason why on October 8 Hupacasath sent a formal letter to the Chinese government, putting it on notice that the community “will not consent to any development in our territory that negatively impacts or abrogates our title and rights.” Other First Nations in B.C. have since followed this lead, and Sayers says she expects more to come.

“There have been so many challenges that we’ve been faced with, that it amazes me the resiliency to push forward and actually make it to the Court of Appeal,” Sayers says. “I believe that we have to keep resisting, in whatever form that might be. We have to continue to stand up and say ‘No.’ We will continue to do everything in our power to resist any development on our lands without our authority.”

—Scott Harris, trade campaigner, *The Council of Canadians*

The CRTC and the future of high-speed Internet access

By Steve Anderson and Josh Tabish

Last December, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) began a yearlong public consultation on the future of Canada's Internet services. At its core, the Review of Wholesale Services and Associated Policies is about how Canadians are served by the current structure of our telecommunications system and the policies that govern it.

The consultation will determine whether and how Canadians are able to access affordable and reliable Internet services that are independent of Canada's large telecom conglomerates. Despite recent improvements, crucial steps remain in reforming our telecommunications sector to ensure it provides a wide range of cost-effective services that allow artists, entrepreneurs, and everyday Internet users to participate in Canada's growing digital economy.

Sadly, the current state of Canada's telecom marketplace is often characterized as dysfunctional, driven by oligopolistic forces that impede our ability to fully benefit from the possibilities of broadband Internet. For example, in 2013, large incumbent carriers such as Bell, Rogers, Telus, and Shaw held 92% of the Canadian residential market. The result, in broad strokes, is that Canadians pay some of the highest prices in the industrialized world for Internet services—a finding confirmed by several independent reports, including the CRTC-commissioned Wall Report, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Communications Outlook.

The current CRTC review of wholesale services could potentially improve our telecommunications system in two critical ways. First, it could overhaul open access rules to put independent Internet service providers (ISPs), such as Teksavvy and Distributel, on an equal playing field to Canada's big three by ensuring all providers, large and small, have cost-based access to broadband networks. Second, the CRTC could extend this cost-based regime to next-generation ultra-fast fibre Internet networks, to ensure that independent providers can keep up with growing bandwidth demands.

Presently, Canada's incumbent providers not only control access to crucial wholesale broadband Internet services—the network that non-incumbent competitors rely on to provide their own retail offerings—they also offer their own retail services against which these smaller providers compete. For example, incumbent provider Rogers sells wholesale services to TekSavvy, an independent ISP, while also operating against them in the retail arena.

The resultant situation is ripe for abuse by powerful incumbent providers, which have taken advantage of their market power with a well-documented history of discriminatory practices against smaller, independent operators.

This CRTC consultation will determine whether these practices continue, or whether we will finally move toward a more level playing field for independent services. OpenMedia has been an intervener in the process since the beginning, notably by facilitating nearly 25,000 independently written submissions to the regulator from everyday Internet users.

CRTC Chair Jean-Pierre Blais acknowledged the impact that these contributions can have in a recent speech to the Vancouver Board of Trade: "the very small lanterns of thousands of individual Canadians often create a powerful beam of light. It's only when the stage is fully illuminated, by all those lanterns, that the full story becomes clear. It is only then that the full public interest comes to light."

Open access rules for independent ISPs would not only lower prices and improve choice; they are also critical to enabling innovation that would otherwise not occur. As just one example, the acclaimed Canadian TV show *Sanctuary*, filmed in B.C., began as an online-only program before getting picked up by Syfy (formerly the Sci Fi channel). Creators are just one of the many groups who rely on affordable, accessible Internet access and innovative services to deliver their content to users.

Thankfully, the CRTC has a number of reasons to side with the public interest. For starters, its mandate is drawn quite clearly from Section 7 of the Telecommunications Act, which emphasizes how the wider social and economic needs of Canadians must guide CRTC decision-making.


Past CRTC decisions have recognized this. For example, the regulator recently rejected Bell's effort to increase payphone prices because it would have disproportionately impacted low-income Canadians. Similarly, several courts have acknowledged this mandate, including an influential Supreme Court ruling that pushed the CRTC to extend its public engagement beyond industry concerns.

While incumbent providers want Canadians to believe that fair, open access policies will hurt investment in our telecommunication infrastructure, this does not bear scrutiny. Interveners such as the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and Primus have thoroughly dismantled such claims by using the incumbents' own executive statements, annual reports, shareholder messaging and financial data.

Where open access rules presently exist (albeit as a "cost plus" instead of cost-based regime), incumbents have continued to invest in our networks and new offerings have flourished.

While mandating cost-based access is an important solution in the near term, it is important that the regulator consider a more effective long-term solution by moving toward opening the networks through structural separation. That is, the CRTC should put an end to telecom companies controlling both service delivery and the infrastructure through which services are delivered.

This is the most effective long-term solution to a distorted telecommunications market. Doing so would put us in good international company, as this longer-term strategy already enjoys support from the OECD, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Sweden.

Steve Anderson is the executive director of OpenMedia.ca, a community-based organization that safeguards the possibilities of the open Internet. Josh Tabish is the campaigns coordinator with OpenMedia.ca. 

Canadian Hockey League and players face off over workers' rights

By Ryan Lum for Rankandfile.ca

In late October, it was announced that a class action lawsuit had been launched by current and former Canadian Hockey League (CHL) players, alleging that the league owes them over \$180 million in compensation for failing to pay the minimum wage.

By making players sign contracts agreeing to compensation less than the minimum wage, the suit alleges that the league and franchise owners knowingly engaged in unlawful conduct.

CHL players, the suit alleges, make between \$35-\$120/week, incommensurable with the five to nine hours they put into practising, training, traveling and playing every day. At that rate of compensation, players are making \$1/hour or less.

The CHL, which serves as the umbrella organization for 60 teams in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, the Ontario Hockey League (OHL) and the Western Hockey League, is rejecting the suit's claims. It says its players are "amateur student athletes" and "independent contractors" who are able to access scholarships, billeting and insurance through their teams.

Likewise, denying a worker's status as an "employee" is a common tactic used by employers to reject a worker's right to collectively bargain. Yet, longstanding issues in the league surrounding compensation and differential benefit packages highlight the value of collective bargaining for players.

Scholarships: What's the fine print?

The suit's representative plaintiff is Sam Berg, a former player with the OHL's Niagara Ice Dogs. After two seasons in the OHL, Berg was injured last year and was unable to continue playing.

Now a first year student at McMaster University in Hamilton, Berg thought he was contractually entitled to a four-year scholarship once he decided to leave the OHL and pursue his education. Instead, he has only been given enough to pay for one semester of university.



He believes his absence from training camp this past September as a result of his injury is related to this.

While the league maintains that its scholarship packages are "generous," only 20% of players go on to complete a university degree.

Stipulations for accessing funding are notoriously difficult. Players are eligible for one year of funding for each year played in the CHL, but they must enroll within 18 months of completing their junior career, and only in a recognized institution (which excludes trade schools). Otherwise they receive no support.

If a player decides to pursue the NHL through playing in a minor pro league, they also become ineligible for funding. Many players do not receive room and board in their packages. Additionally, they are asked to make up the difference in tuition if the institution they choose to attend costs more than the allotted scholarship for institutions based within the team's domicile.

Citing its commitment to player well-being, CHL President and OHL Commissioner David Branch has pointed to the league's recently instituted reimbursement program, where players are eligible to be reimbursed for up to \$470/month in expenses.

However, as highlighted by Glenn Gumbley, who spearheaded the failed Canadian Hockey League Players Association (CHLPA) in 2012, by reimbursing players rather than giving

them stipends, the league is better able to argue that its players are not employees. He says, "The CHL league came up with a system which will allow them to write-off expenses."

Amateurism, NHL money and unions

Jamie McKinven, former CHL'er, author and blogger says the system is fickle when it comes to rewarding players.

"There is a lot of variation in school packages. Some kids get books paid for, some don't. Some kids get extra perks, such as housing and meal plans paid for, while some don't. There isn't consistency and there are too many loopholes," he says.

While the league also contends that many of its franchises are operating at a loss, McKinven points out that millions of dollars are being made through "development fees," or kickbacks the NHL gives to CHL teams when the former signs one of the latter's players. The dollar amounts of these fees often remain secret, which McKinven says allows the CHL to keep its veneer of amateurism.

"[T]here simply isn't enough transparency to know for sure how much money teams actually make. David Branch claims that only a handful of teams are profitable, but this is extremely hard to fathom by looking at the lucrative potential of running a business that doesn't pay its employees."

(Continued on page 47)

The Muzzled Science Timeline grows longer

Since 2012, **Scientists for the Right to Know**, a working group of Science for Peace, has been studiously recording moments in what the group describes as the ongoing silencing of scientists and related government organizations. We've pulled the entries up to June 2014. For entries dating back to April 2006, visit the website scientistsfortherighttoknow.wildapricot.org/timeline.

June 2014

- Meteorologists at Environment Canada are forbidden from publicly discussing climate change. The ban reportedly led to an 80% decrease in climate change coverage by the media, as meteorologists were the most highly quoted government experts. The rationale given for the ban is that meteorologists are not qualified to answer questions related to climate change.

May 2014

- Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada submits a written statement to the UN Human Rights Council calling for an immediate end to the surveillance of environmental organizations in Canada. The statement mentions an "unprecedented range of restrictive measures to reduce the legal, financial and political space available" to various groups, including academics.

- Emily Atkin, a journalist interested in seeing the (Alberta) tar sands, highlights her experience as one of many journalists who face numerous obstacles when trying to disseminate information.

- The fifth annual *Review of Free Expression in Canada* is released, highlighting the muzzling of scientists across the country. According to the report, the number of missing records complaints submitted to the information commissioner rose by 51% from 2012-2013. The report gave a failing grade to Canada's Access to Information system, with more than 80% of responses to information requests being partially or mostly censored.

April 2014

- In summer 2012, CBC reported the federal government would close its Addictions Research Centre in Montague, P.E.I. effective April 2014. The facility was established in 1999 to help substance abusers in the federal prison system.

- Concerns raised about the possible resurfacing of B.C.'s herring crisis without good governance of science. Despite the peaceful resolution of a northern B.C. herring roe fishery involving commercial fishermen and a First Nations community, mismanagement of fisheries leaves tension and the potential for future conflict in the area.

March 2014

- Environment Canada's three-year budget is released. Funding will be slashed by 19.2% for wildlife and water programs, 17.6% for weather services, and 42.2% for pollution management and mitigation programs. Despite Canada's tattered climate change record, support for climate change programs has been cut by a shocking 69.4%.

- Historically leaders in the promotion of life-saving harm reduction technology, Canadian diplomats are now under instruction not to speak of harm reduction and even to have the term deleted from statements. Canadian negotiators help to prevent the inclusion of beneficial harm reduction health strategies in international drug policies at the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna.

February 2014

- The Mersey Biodiversity Centre is closed despite attempts to partner with volunteers. The former Nova Scotia recovery centre for the endangered Atlantic whitefish was one of the latest casualties of federal government cuts. Scientists say the world's only surviving population of Atlantic whitefish is confined to three lakes outside (the town of) Bridgewater. Six years ago, the federal government committed to a recovery plan for the endangered fish and part of that plan involved the Mersey Biodiversity Centre.

- An intimate relationship is revealed between the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) and Postmedia, the news network that publishes the *National Post*, *Vancouver Sun* and *Calgary Herald*, among other major Canadian newspapers. Despite claims that "the association does not influence the editorial content of Postmedia papers," monthly "joint ventures" articles (written by CAPP), which highlight the role of energy in driving Canada's economic engine, continue to appear in major papers.


- A report released by the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada announces that the federal government plans to slash almost 5,000 jobs and over \$2.5 billion in funding from its "science-focused departments" in the next two years.

- The B.C. Civil Liberties Association files formal complaints against the RCMP and CSIS for illegally monitoring anti-pipeline environmental groups.

January 2014

- The federal government closes seven of 11 Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) libraries in what has been called "libricide" and a knowledge massacre. Critics compare the move to when former U.S. president George W. Bush cut federal environmental libraries, and concerns are raised about whether Canada's dismantled collections are being adequately digitized.

- Health Canada's primary research library is closed. Scientists are forced to work around the cuts to library funding, with some borrowing library cards from university students, and one scientist storing books and journals in his basement for use by colleagues.

- The Canada Revenue Agency conducts an audit of highly respected environmental groups. Critics claim political intimidation. Environmental groups are concerned that the CRA will use the shifting definition of "political advocacy work" to curtail their speech against pro-tar sands policies. 

The Good News Page

Compiled by Elaine Hughes

Salted spuds

Here, on one of the Netherlands' northernmost islands, windswept Texel, surrounded by encroaching ocean and salt marshes that seep sea water under its dykes and into ditches and canals, an enterprising farmer has taken the radical step of embracing salt water instead of fighting to keep it out. And now he thinks he might just help feed the world. Inspired by sea cabbage, 59-year-old Marc van Rijsselberghe set up Salt Farm Texel and teamed up with the Free University in Amsterdam, which sent him de Vos to look at the possibility of growing food using non-fresh water. Their non-GM, non-laboratory-based experiments had help from an elderly Dutch farmer who has a geekish knowledge of thousands of different potato varieties.

—*London Observer*

Dutch boy de-plastics ocean

Boyan Slat is a 20-year-old on a mission—to rid the world's oceans of floating plastic. He has dedicated his teenage years to finding a way of collecting it... [R]ather than chase plastic, why not harness the currents and wait for it to come to you? But can the system really work—and is there any point when so much new plastic waste is still flowing into the sea every day? The high school science project was awarded Best Technical Design at Delft University of Technology.

—*BBC*

Millennials ditch cars

The nation's largest generation—the so-called “millennials,” born between 1983 and 2000—have shown less dependence on driving to get around in recent years and aren't likely to change their ways, according to a new study released Tuesday.

—*Baltimore Sun*

500 MW of new solar

Brazil will take its first leap into commercial solar power generation on October 31 with a rights auction of at least 500 megawatts of new solar parks, adding a new energy source as a drought reveals the danger of depending on hydropower. Sun-kissed Brazil has one of the highest solar radiation factors in the world and plenty of land for solar farms, plus large reserves of silicon to make solar panels. About 400 solar projects are registered to participate in Friday's auction.

—*Reuters*

Malala's prize money to Gaza

The UN agency that assists Palestinian refugees says Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai has donated \$50,000 to rebuild a UN school in Gaza damaged during this summer's Israel-Hamas war. UNRWA says Malala is donating all of the proceeds of the \$50,000 World Children's Prize, which she collected in

Stockholm on Wednesday. The agency quoted Malala as saying Palestinian children deserve a quality education, and that 'without education, there will never be peace.'

—*CTV News*

Giant tortoise makes 'miraculous' stable recovery

Where once there were 15, now more than 1,000 giant tortoises lumber around Espanola, one of the Galapagos Islands. After 40 years' work reintroducing captive animals, a detailed study of the island's ecosystem has confirmed it has a stable, breeding population. Numbers had dwindled drastically by the 1960s, but now the danger of extinction on Espanola appears to have passed. Galapagos tortoises, of which there are 11 remaining subspecies, weigh up to 250kg and live longer than 100 years. The study, based on decades of observations of the variety found on Espanola, was published in the journal *Plos One*.

—*BBC News*

London phone booths find new lives

Two entrepreneurs are transforming decommissioned telephone booths (they call them boxes in Britain) into charging stations for mobile devices. The first one was unveiled in London this week, and five more are set to be operating in the city soon. The booths, now painted green and named Solarboxes, can charge up to 100 phones or tablets a day, the entrepreneurs say. The service is free: The power comes from a 33-inch solar panel on the roof, and other costs are covered by advertising displayed on a screen inside while a device is charging. Kirsty Kenney and Harold Craston, two geography graduates from the London School of Economics, are behind the initiative. They won 5,000 pounds (US\$8,000) to finance the project this year in a Low Carbon Entrepreneur competition sponsored by the mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

—*New York Times*

Regreening program in Ethiopia

Fifteen years ago the villages around Abrha Weatsbha in northern Ethiopia were on the point of being abandoned. The hillsides were barren, the communities, plagued by floods and droughts, needed constant food aid, and the soil was being washed away. Today, Abrha Weatsbha in the Tigray region is unrecognisable and an environmental catastrophe has been averted following the planting of many millions of tree and bush seedlings. Wells that were dry have been recharged, the soil is in better shape, fruit trees grow in the valleys and the hillsides are green again. The country plans to restore a further 15 million hectares by 2030.

—*The Guardian*

(Maher Arar, continued from page 1)

have understood.

At times, during various presentations today, my mind wandered back to the time when I sat in the well-worn witness chair of the O'Connor Commission. There, under the steely glare and close questioning of several people who are with us today, I provided answers to what I had done when confronted with Mr. Arar's rendition to Syria. Paul Cavalluzzo and Marlys Edwardh (both lawyers and presenters at the Arar+10 conference) still pop up in the occasional nightmare, and in my mind still represent being between the devil and the deep blue sea. I will not say who was which.

Justice O'Connor, as he demonstrated earlier today (in his presentation to the conference), displayed the reasons why we, as Canadians, can put our trust and confidence in the bedrocks of our political system: the rule of law and the independence of our judiciary.

And, of course, we have the two Canadians who have come to graphically symbolize the reason why conferences such as this must remain an essential part of our society. Maher Arar and Monia Mazigh symbolize more than the conflict between the unchecked demands of our national security behemoth and the ability of Canadians to get on with their daily lives. They symbolize the need for a national collective will to restore some measure of balance between the needs of national security and the protection of our rights as Canadians.

Even at this early date the events of the past few days demonstrate the overwhelming need for such a balance. It is just as easy to see that the reactions of our government so far suggest such a rebalancing is totally unlikely.

We've been here before

These issues turned my beard grey a long time ago. It was even before that fateful early day in September of 2001 when the U.S. security system, as part of its descent into hell, began a process that saw Mr. Arar rendered into the clutches of the Syrian security system. As Justice O'Connor's report made abundantly clear, there was no reason for such action. Sadly, the report also documented the originating and determining role in the U.S. actions of Canadian national security organizations.

It is not as if these issues have not been manifest before. In 1947, the Kellock-Taschereau Commission, established in the aftermath of the defection of Igor Gouzenko, touched on the ineptness of our security organizations in coping with a changing world. That was even before I was Canadian.

Since then, there has been a series of such commissions, starting with the Mackenzie Royal Commission on Security in 1968 and, again, the 1981 Macdonald Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Activities of the RCMP. Others have followed.

In 2006, [in his final report into the rendition of Mr. Arar], Justice O'Connor made extensive and sensible recommendations on how Canadians could be protected against the ravages of security organizations that rush into our daily lives with little understanding or knowledge of what they are about.

There will be successor commissions; it is a common tool of governments of all persuasions, in all parts of the world, to use members of the judiciary to deal with such sensitive matters. Unfortunately, in these processes, the issue of the relationship

of the individual to an ever-strengthening security leviathan becomes part of the longer term. As someone who spent 42 years wandering the corridors of government, I can assure you that the longer term rarely, if ever, arrives.

A few years ago, a British writer had a character in one of his social commentary novels remark: "I just saw someone peeing in Main Street. I am not sure if that was the end of civilization as we know it, or was it just someone peeing in Main Street?" There is an extensive literature out there on the ability of governments to tell the difference—to make distinctions between claims on the end of civilization and the ephemeral action of someone peeing in Main Street.

The events of the last few days require us to make that distinction. I would go even further and suggest that our response to the pernicious evil of our age, the collectivity of disparate events known as terrorism, needs the early and firm administration of that distinction. Are we dealing with "end of civilization" situations or persons with weak bladders?

Canadian governments over the decades have not fared well when circumstances required them to make that distinction. Pierre Trudeau's statement to a reporter when asked how far he would go in dealing with the "apprehended insurrection" in Quebec has become a classic. "Just Watch Me" established a standard for politicians ever since.

The detention of several hundred citizens, on little more evidence than that their names were French, demonstrated just how far Mr. Trudeau was prepared to go. It provides a salutary lesson for today when persons with names such as Arar or Almalki, Abdelrazik or Benatta, Khadr or Harkat fall within the ambit of our security organization, with enormous personal and societal consequences.

Prime Minister Harper's response to the events of the last few days was more nuanced. Supposedly speaking for all of us, with as much passion as he could muster, he simply said: "Canada would not be intimidated."

He said this even before he had any sense of whether the murder of two soldiers was part of an orchestrated plan or the work of individuals with serious mental problems. The Prime Minister has made it clear that he is not interested in causes when there is an opportunity to apply his well-exercised political stratagem of providing answers to non-existing problems.

Even worse, on Monday (October 27), the commissioner of the RCMP appeared before a parliamentary committee and, with some fanfare, reported on a video prepared by the murderer of the young soldier at the War Memorial. The commissioner stated that he put confidence in the fact that the murderer referred to Allah in the video and gave a "distorted" view of Canadian foreign policy. In the view of the Force this proved the event was one of terrorism.

If referring to the god of Islam, which most scholars would agree is not much different than the god of Christianity, and having a distorted view of Canadian foreign policy are sufficient grounds for declaring an act as terrorism then the concept itself is of less value than even I conceived. Probably most of the people in this room have a "distorted" view of Canadian foreign policy as practiced by this government. I know I do.

Already there is legislation before the House of Commons to give security organizations increased powers for preventive detention, restrictions on international travel,

and the provision of information on Canadians to foreign governments. And there appears to be plans for additional legislation that would give further power to our security organizations.

Flaws in the way of oversight

In this environment it is foolhardy and perhaps even quaint to provide an assessment of the existing oversight and review mechanisms for these organizations. The mechanisms are characterized by two serious flaws, which apply to all the main players including the Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSEC), Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and the RCMP. In the area of terrorism operations, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Department of Foreign Affairs and Department of Justice operate with no oversight or review.

The first flaw is that the mandates of these organizations are weak and out of date for a world characterized by instant and comprehensive communications. The second is that all our security organizations lack even minimal resources for effective oversight of real-time operations, or review of past activities.

Added to these basic issues is a serious question as to the minimal effort this government puts toward appointing members to existing oversight organizations such as the Security Intelligence Review Committee (SIRC). The sad episode of Arthur Porter, appointed first as a member of this CSIS oversight body and then as its chairman, suggests the government did not do a detailed investigation, or else it ignored warning signs.

Dr. Porter is now the involuntary guest in a Panamanian prison awaiting possible extradition to Canada related to his activities in the construction of a medical centre in Montreal. It is a Panamanian prison that I have visited, and I emphasize the word *visited*, on several occasions. And I can assure you that being a resident there is not a life enhancing experience.

I would also include a fourth factor limiting effective oversight and review mechanisms for our security organizations. This is the quality of the ministers appointed to head what is now called Public Safety Canada,



(Source: FreeOmarKhadr.com)

Persecuted: First photo of Khadr at the Bowden Institution in Innisfail, Alta.

formerly known as the Solicitor General.

Every minister appointed to this position is meant to ensure that our security organizations understand they have a dual mandate: they not only protect national security but equally they protect the rights of Canadians. In the past 10 years, there have been five different ministers in this key portfolio. It is an understatement to suggest they did not know what they were doing.

Even SIRC, the oversight mechanism for CSIS, in its last report to Parliament, was moved to write: "SIRC believes that many of the issues raised in this review go to the heart of ministerial accountability over CSIS." In its reply, CSIS stated that written justification to the minister was "still under consideration." Substantial ministerial oversight and responsibility has disappeared from our system. Only the buying of an overpriced orange juice in London is now cause for resignation.

It might make us comfortable to imagine that this neglect is a characteristic of our current situation only. That is not so. I can remember dealing with this matter when our [panel] chairman [the Honourable Warren] Allmand was the Solicitor General back in the early 1970s in the aftermath of the FLQ crisis. Without currying his favour, Mr. Allmand was the only Solicitor General who understood the dual nature of his responsibilities.

Lawyers in the security state

Another sad and neglected area of oversight and review for security matters is the role played by lawyers within our

government. As those of you in this room with a nodding acquaintance with the legal profession will know, you cannot administer the rule of law without lawyers, and today they are persuasive in all aspects of the governmental process. But their presence does not necessarily mean they are exercising proper oversight.

I had two rules when I worked in government. The first was to ignore the advice of government lawyers. The second was to listen to the accountants as to what was available in the till. But in the world of government today it is a much more complicated environment than those simple rules suggest.

Many societies have given their legal professions preferential status in their own administration. This is especially so in the establishment of rules, not only in the area of overt conduct, but in the need to create respect for the law and its application. I would suggest these rules are more respectfully applied in private practice than among those who accept the Queen's coin.

I would further suggest that this is an issue that all law-based societies might wish to examine, especially in the application of the rule of law in cases characterized by national security. It is not a stretch to suggest that the distinction between prosecution and persecution is thinner than it used to be. As we heard this morning, Omar Khadr will stand forever as an example of persecution at the hands of government.

In the United States this issue has received much attention. Jay S. Bybee and John C. Yoo, both lawyers in the Department of Justice, were the authors of a legal opinion in 2002 that gave authority for the aggressive interrogation of a suspected operative for al-Qaeda. In a detailed report, lawyers in the Office of Professional Responsibility concluded that both Bybee and Yoo had demonstrated "professional misconduct."

A second, more recent report rejected that conclusion, stating that there was only "flawed legal reasoning," and that the two lawyers were not guilty of "professional misconduct." The second report stated that among the difficulties in assessing Mr. Bybee and Mr. Yoo's work was that now, seven years later, "the context is lost."

The legacy of the Nuremberg trials, wiped out on the altar of urgency and

necessity. Lest any of you think that was the end of the story, you should know that Mr. Bybee is now a federal court judge, and Mr. Yoo a professor of law at the University of California in Berkeley.

A few days ago, I was in Nuremberg and had the opportunity to visit the courtroom in which several judges and legal officials were tried in the aftermath of the Second World War. These trials, conducted by the victors, found most of the defendants guilty, and established the principle that judges and legal officials do not owe a first loyalty to a government or the state. Rather, their first loyalty was to the protection of citizens.

It is, today, a principle that struggles for oxygen. But in the age of the national security state it is one that bears repeating. The creation of the International Criminal Court in The Hague finally gave international recognition to this principle. I would note that it was largely due to the work of Philippe Kirsch, a Canadian lawyer from Foreign Affairs and the Court's first president, who did much of the heavy lifting in the creation of the ICC. It also speaks to the creative work that Canadians used to do in international affairs.

The visit to Nuremberg also included a stop at the rally grounds for National Socialism. The German people, wisely, have not destroyed this monument. Rather, nature and poor construction materials have been allowed to play their destructive roles. The site is now derelict, appropriately reflecting the inherent weakness of bad concrete and bad ideology.

As with Ozymandias in the sands of Egypt, the rally grounds will not last for long, suggesting that this was not so much a rallying point but a monument for an aberration in the history of the world.

Justice Iacobucci spoke earlier today, and we should note the role he played in examining security organizations and the Department of Foreign Affairs in the imprisonment of four Canadians in Syria and Egypt. His main report, issued in October 2008, noted that the government objected to the inclusion of statements made by RCMP and CSIS officials in their testimony. The government argued the statements were injurious to international relations, national defence or national security in accordance with Section 38 of the Canada Evidence Act.

To his everlasting credit, Justice Iacobucci refused to accept the government's assertions and took the matter to the Federal Court, which gave authority for the publication of the statements. The statements by the RCMP and CSIS officials were published in a supplementary report.

These statements had nothing to do with international relations, national defence or national security. Rather, they asserted that, "it was not the responsibility of intelligence or law enforcement officials to be concerned about human rights of a Canadian detainee." I am sad to report that there is no evidence to suggest that reasoning has changed within either organization.

Inertia and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

A further matter that the legal profession should examine is the role of private sector lawyers in the preventive detention system associated with security certificates. The Supreme Court ruled this system was contrary to fundamental justice but later accepted the appointment of so-called special advocates to act

on behalf of persons issued with a certificate [for their prompt removal from Canada on the belief they pose a security threat].

The Court, in my view, inappropriately suggested the special advocates as a mechanism to overcome its conclusion that security certificates were contrary to fundamental justice. Special advocates had been adopted earlier in the United Kingdom to overcome similar objections to the use of security certificates there. As Paul Cavalluzzo detailed earlier today, special advocates are severely limited in both their access to information and what can be communicated to their clients. These advocates, by accepting such appointments, are legitimizing the preventative detention system, with all of its associated injustices.

In some measure, an analogous situation arose several years ago in the United States. This involved medical practitioners being used in the execution of convicted prisoners. The American Medical Association examined the matter and concluded that such practitioners should not be involved, and issued guidance accordingly. As recent events have demonstrated, without the involvement of doctors, executions have had to be severely curtailed.

In all of this I do not have any expectations that the existing system of oversight and review for security organizations can be improved to the point where it would be effective. The field is so vast, and with further significant changes coming to existing laws, to meet the unexamined needs of the security organizations, there is no support within government to expand oversight arrangements.

There is little possibility that mandates will be significantly improved, that resources will be increased or the appointment process will be improved, even to make the existing system meet the needs of Canadians caught in national security webs. Rather, the existing situation will become worse.


Even more pessimistic is that it is hard to envisage a successor government to the present one willing to act decisively in this sensitive area of government. If you disagree with this conclusion then I have an orange grove in Newfoundland for sale.

There is some irony in all of this. As I mentioned earlier in my presentation, Pierre Trudeau established a political standard when reacting to national security problems. He also created CSIS on the recommendation of Justice Macdonald. But fortunately he went even further.

Trudeau gave Canadians the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is this super law that Canadians increasingly use for protection against the excesses of our security organizations and our governments. The courts, to their everlasting credit, provide strong legal and moral support. May it ever be so.

In all of this I am reminded of the words of that great philosopher of the last century, Pogo, who said: "We have met the enemy and he is us."

Thank you.

CPAC filmed the Arar+10 conference panel featuring three judges—Hon. Dennis O'Connor, Hon. Frank Iacobucci and Hon. John Major—who have presided over important judicial inquiries dealing with national security in Canada over the past decade. You can watch it at the following link: <http://www.cpac.ca/en/programs/public-record/episodes/35889175/>. 

A Holiday Gift Suggestion

Give the gift of the CCPA this holiday season

If you have relatives, friends or co-workers who share your social, economic, political or environmental views but who aren't supporting the CCPA, consider making a gift in their honour this holiday season.

In addition to receiving *The CCPA Monitor* they will be introduced to all of the other studies, reports, commentaries and publications produced by the CCPA.

Or, if the recipient of this gift is particularly interested in education, you may wish to purchase a gift subscription to *Our Schools, Our Selves* or one of our other education-related subscriptions.

You can fill out the gift form below and send it to us by mail.

To speed up the process you can provide the names and addresses and arrange payment details by e-mailing Anskia — anskia@policyalternatives.ca — or phoning Jason at 613-563-1341 x312.

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Address _____

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Postal Code _____

Phone _____

Gift 3

\$35 \$50 \$100 \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Province _____

Postal Code _____

Phone _____

A comparison of Nordic and Canadian approaches

By Christopher Walmsley and Lise Tessier

During February and March 2014, Dr. Walmsley and his partner, retired social worker Lise Tessier, completed a six-week research tour of Finland, Sweden and Norway. They explored family support policies, programs and practices with a particular focus on child welfare-involved families. They visited eight communities in the three countries, and met with practitioners, graduate students, administrators, academics and researchers, as well as representatives of children's ombudsman's offices in Finland and Norway. This article presents findings from their research.

How might a society that truly cares about children support families? In Canada, children's welfare has been the focus of political controversy, ongoing media attention, public debate and government inquiry. This suggests we have not yet 'got it right.' The ultimate failure is when a child dies an unnecessary death, particularly when he or she was known to child welfare services. Characteristically, this sets in motion a chain of events that begins with public horror, extensive media coverage, the public pillorying of child protection social workers, and the appointment of a justice-led inquiry. This eventually leads to a series of recommendations for change, a more limited set of reforms, and a swing of the provincial child welfare policy pendulum. This swing can often be summed up in an overly simplistic dichotomy—the need to 'focus on the child' rather than 'focus on the family,' or vice-versa. Although only about 2% to 4% of Canadian children ever have contact with child welfare services over their growing years, these children are disproportionately drawn from poor, racialized and lone-parent families. However, when one considers Indigenous children, the figure increases to about 14%. In Western and Northern Canada, the majority of children in out-of-home care (foster homes and group homes) are Indigenous, ranging from 56% to 85% depending on the province.

Under Canada's Constitution, child welfare services are the responsibility of the provincial and territorial governments, with authority being delegated to Indigenous child welfare agencies in many provinces, as well as Children's Aid societies in Ontario. These agencies and services operate within the broader framework of Canada's national and provincial social programs for children and families. Over the past 30 years, these have been moving in a neoliberal direction. They have become short term or available in emergencies only, and there is an increased expectation that families provide for their own, that charitable organizations take up the slack, and that governments play a smaller role. In such a political and economic context, we were curious how other countries approach children's welfare today. In this article, we summarize findings from our research tour of Finland, Sweden

and Norway, where we came to see government (national and local) as an active partner with the family in raising children.

Free hot school lunches, a 'baby box' with all you need as a new parent, a monthly child allowance cheque, paternity leave for a newborn child, a mentoring family, and a right to housing and childcare services—these are some of the ways Nordic countries support families raising children. Although significant differences exist from one country to another, they have in common a strong commitment to both social equality and individual freedom, and they have all historically taken an active role in supporting parents with the many challenges and responsibilities of raising children.

Welfare state models

In academic literature, welfare states are generally divided into three models: liberal, conservative, and social democratic. The Anglo-American countries (Britain, the United States,

Canada, Australia and New Zealand) are described as 'liberal' and characterized by a residual approach to social welfare. This means minimal government intervention, lower rates of taxation, and short-term and stigmatizing state social benefits that are often means-tested and available only to the poor or those with low incomes. By contrast, Nordic countries represent the

'social democratic' model in which there is generally a positive view of government's role in providing services and promoting equality and social integration. There is an acceptance of higher levels of taxation, a commitment to a full-employment economy in which women and men are equally active participants, and popular support for a broad range of universal social welfare measures as a right of citizenship. The third, 'conservative' model relates to several continental European countries (e.g. Germany, Italy, France, the Netherlands) in which social policy has been, historically, strongly influenced by the Church. Traditional and paternal views of the family exist here, and benefits are focused on the breadwinning father and exclude the at-home mother. In conservative welfare states, the principle of 'subsidiarity' is key; government tends to intervene only when the local voluntary sector and family resources are exhausted.

In Nordic countries, the commitment to social equality is expressed through a sense of collective responsibility for welfare in society and an emphasis on universally available preventive services. These are set within a local and decentralized model of service provision where the municipal government provides health, education, childcare, housing and income assistance, as well as child welfare services. For example, Norway's population is 5.15 million and there are 430 municipalities each with a child welfare office. This family service model exists in sharp contrast to the legal-judicial model of child welfare common in Anglo-American countries. In the latter, social workers generally only intervene in a crisis, gathering evidence about neglect and abuse

There is an increased expectation [in Canada] that families provide for their own, that charitable organizations take up the slack, and that governments play a smaller role.

Table 1: Nordic Parental Leave Benefits

| Country | Entitlement (Total) | Mother Only | Father Only | Benefit Level | Notes |
|---------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Sweden | 16 months (65 weeks) | 2 months | 2 months | 13 months at 80% of salary; Remaining 3 months at 21 Euros per day (\$31 Can) | 12 months are shared parental leave |
| Finland | 53 weeks | 18 weeks | 9 weeks | 70-90% of previous earnings | 26 weeks are shared parental leave |
| Denmark | 52 weeks | 18 weeks (Includes 4 weeks pre-birth maternity leave) | 2 weeks | Depends on employment situation. See notes below | 32 weeks are shared parental leave |
| Norway | 47-57 weeks | 9 weeks: 3 pre-birth, 6 post-birth | 14 weeks: 2 weeks post birth +12 more weeks | See notes below | 26 to 36 weeks are shared parental leave |
| Iceland | 9 months | 3 months | 3 months | 80% of salary during last 2 years | 3 months are shared parental leave |
| Canada | 53 weeks | 15 weeks Flexible | Nil | | |

for eventual presentation to court. There is considerable conflict between parents and the state child welfare system, and children are frequently involuntarily removed from the family with the aim of ensuring their safety and well-being. The Nordic family service model takes a social-psychological (or therapeutic) approach to the needs of children and parents. The model is set within a context of universal social welfare programs, and characterized by a wide range of early intervention and preventative services. At the same time, this ‘family-focused’ approach co-exists with a ‘child-centredness’ principle within a framework of children’s rights.

All Nordic countries take the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child seriously and value the development of a child’s individuality. Corporal punishment has been banished for two to three decades, and each country has a children’s ombudsman responsible for ensuring children’s voices are included in public policy. Also, children’s behaviour is not criminalized until the age of 15—it is 12 under Canada’s Young Offender’s Act—and minor transgressions such as shoplifting and breaking and entering are regarded as a demand for therapeutic intervention. Through a three-month assessment process with multiple visits and a focus on the family, the aim is to understand why the young person might be behaving this way.

Universal measures

Many Nordic social programs are available to all children and parents and are usually provided by the municipal government. The main programs are discussed below.

Parental leave

When a child is born, parents have access to a parental leave system that ranges from 65 weeks in Sweden to 52 weeks in Denmark at between 70% and 100% of salary (See Table 1). Unlike in Canada, each country makes specific provision for ‘father only’ days. Sweden may be the most generous at two months but Finland sets aside nine weeks, and Denmark reserves two weeks for fathers. Parents can share the eligible parental leave, but if a father doesn’t take the ‘father-specific’ days these are lost and the overall leave is shortened. The policies encourage father involvement in an infant’s care, and hopefully set a positive course for active father engagement throughout the child’s life. This policy has led to the phenomenon, witnessed during our trip to Stockholm, of men with infants and strollers, at times in groups, strolling the streets and gathering on park benches and in coffee shops. In fact, fathers in Sweden account for about 24% of the total amount of parental leave days, considerably more than most European Union member states

Child allowance

Each Nordic country provides a non-taxable cash allowance to parents to assist with the costs of raising children under the age of 18. The monthly amount ranges from \$152 for a single child in Finland to about \$276 for a single child under two in Denmark. Some countries also provide a supplement for lone parents, northern parents, or parents with larger families (see Table 2 for details).

Childcare policies

Each Nordic country has an extensive public daycare system available for children under school age. Finland regards this as an ‘unconditional right,’ Sweden speaks of a ‘guaranteed spot,’ and Denmark indicates it provides ‘guaranteed daycare availability’ for children aged 26 weeks to six years. Although parents are responsible for paying some of the costs through fees, these are scaled to income and family size, with fees being reduced to zero for some. In Denmark, parental fees cannot exceed 25% of the centre’s operating costs. In Sweden, the maximum a parent can be charged for daycare is 3% of monthly income or \$211 per child per month, whereas in Finland the maximum parental fee is \$382 per child per month. Municipally administered group daycare centres are the most common form of daycare. For

example, in the city of Tampere, Finland, with a population of 220,446, there are 82 municipal daycare centres. In Sweden most centres are open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and in Finland some operate in the evening to accommodate the needs of shift workers. At times municipal governments contract with private or family-based daycare providers, but over the past 30 years all Nordic countries have also implemented 'cash for care' schemes at the municipal and/or national level. This option provides a subsidy to a parent (usually the mother) to stay home with the child at the conclusion of the parental leave period. These policies were introduced to 'close a care gap' by providing more flexibility and choice for parents caring for young children, and they are targeted toward parents with children between the ages of one and three. The subsidies range from about \$490 per child per month in Finland to \$505 in Sweden. While this money may be used to provide the mother with a 'wage' for childcare work, parents can also use the subsidy to engage a grandparent, friend or another childcare provider. However, by the age of three, between 94% and 97% of Swedish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Danish children are being cared for in daycare settings, in contrast to Finland where the ratio is 72%. In contrast, Canada provides a taxable benefit of \$100 per month per child to parents with children under the age of six to assist with the costs of childcare. (Ed. note: At the end of October, the federal Conservative government announced it was increasing the child care benefit to \$160 per month and introducing a \$60 credit for children aged 6 to 17. The first will go into effect on January 1, 2015.)

Health care

Each Nordic country has a system of universal health care, like Canada. But distinct from the Canadian system, primary health care is often provided by municipal health centres (Finland, Iceland, Denmark) or regional county councils (Sweden). Some countries require patients to pay a small deductible for a doctor's visit or essential medicines, although the major costs are covered through national health insurance.

In most countries, citizens have a right to a family doctor. In Finland, you can choose whether to see a doctor at the municipal health centre or in private practice. Families pay more for the latter, but the state reimburses some of the costs. In each of the countries, children's dentistry is free until the age of 18.

There is a clear emphasis on preventive and early intervention health care. In Finland, for example, each child has nine medical checkups in their first year, followed by an annual check-up until the age of 18. In the preschool years, three checkups are to be "extensive medical examinations organized in co-ordination with other professionals," according to the European Platform for Investing in Children." All children's checkups are free.

Housing

Nordic countries have a range of housing benefits for families that take into account family size and housing costs. In each

country, a tax-free means-tested benefit is available to families who live in rental accommodation. In Sweden, Norway and Finland, similar benefits are extended to families in owner-occupied housing. The visible homelessness we know in North America is virtually unknown in Nordic countries, and our hosts in Finland and Sweden spoke of the right to housing that exists. By contrast, we sometimes speak in Canada of the 'right to homelessness,' meaning no one has the right to force a homeless person into a shelter at night.

School lunches

In Finland and Sweden all elementary and secondary school students receive a free hot lunch at school. This program ensures all children have at least one hot meal a day, and by being universal it does not stigmatize those who are poor or hungry. As one parent explained to us, the lunches also reduce the food budget for every family, as well as the work involved

in preparing the evening meal. When children have had a substantial hot meal at noon, a light supper is sometimes all that is needed at home.

The Finnish 'Baby Box'

This universal program for expectant mothers has been a feature of Finnish life since 1938. It is a cardboard box filled with all you need to begin parenting: body suits, a sleeping bag, outdoor gear, bathing products, bibs, towels, a book, a toy, diapers, bedding and a small mattress.

With the mattress in the bottom, the box easily converts to a bed where many newborns have slept in their first months. It is available to every expectant Finnish mother, and 95% opt to receive the box, but a woman can choose to receive a cash grant instead, currently set at 140 Euros (about \$200). The baby box was initially for low-income families but became universal in 1949.

Family support measures

In each Nordic country the local municipal government offers a wide range of social services to children and families to complement the universal measures described above. Differences exist between countries, and from one municipality to another, but the level of service provided is, by Canadian standards, impressive. In general, a broader spectrum of the population uses family and child welfare services than in Canada with service requests frequently initiated by a family member. In Finland, family members initiated 38% of requests for help. In this family service approach to child welfare, the starting point is to ask the family 'what do you need?' Overall, Nordic municipalities make significant investments to ensure supportive therapeutic services are available to families. Here are a few examples.

Family work in public child welfare: Whether multi-systemic family therapy, ecologically oriented family assessments or strength- and solution-focused therapy, the concept of family work is one of the most popular community-based services in child welfare. In Finland, Sweden and Denmark child welfare social workers work in an 'integrated manner' on both inves-

Table II: Nordic Child Benefits: The Family Allowance

Monthly amount (in Canadian dollars*) paid by the state to support parents with the costs of raising children

| Country | Single Child | Five or more Children | Single parent supplement/child | Notes |
|---------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Finland | \$152.13 | \$276.86/child | \$70.88 | Non-taxable Under age 17 |
| Sweden | \$178.12 | + \$211.70/child | | Increase of €17 (\$25) for 2nd child |
| Norway | \$165 | | Additional amount equal to benefit for one more child | Up to age 18 Non- taxable; Also northern supplement of NOK 320 (\$54.40) |
| Denmark | \$276 (Under 2) \$172 (7 to 17) | \$393 per child per quarter up to age 7 | | Up to age 18 |
| Iceland | Supplement for child under 7 | Benefit increases with number of children | Based on parent's income | Up to age 18, Based on parent(s) income; non-taxable |
| Canada | \$100 (See Ed. note on pg 32) | 5 x \$100 | None | Taxable; under age of 6 only |

tigations and intervention. In Finland, social workers have three months to complete an assessment, and often meet the family five to six times to complete it. This might appear to be a leisurely approach by North American standards, but only a small percentage of cases involve abuse or physical neglect; most reflect a general concern about living conditions. This enables the social worker to work in partnership with the family to ensure the well-being of children.

The contact family/person program: This is a family or person from the community who volunteers to mentor and provide support to another family or a teenager experiencing challenges. It is the most common initial child welfare intervention. When children are under age 13, it is usually a contact family. With teenagers, the program is reminiscent of

the Big Brother and Big Sister programs in North America. The contact family or contact person may provide relief to a parent by taking the children for a day or weekend, but the overall aim is to support a parent, often with a limited social network, through concrete support, discussion and dialogue about the many challenges of parenting.

Supportive housing: In one mid-sized Finnish community, a supportive housing facility operates in conjunction with a children's treatment centre. Since housing is a right, municipalities are required to provide housing to all. In this community, families who have been evicted from other housing arrangements are provided safe, secure housing for three to 20 months by the municipality, but during this time social workers work with the parents to understand the conditions

that led to the eviction, and support children through after-school groups and programming. The aim is to resolve the underlying issues that led to the eviction, and provide stability for the children within their family and community.

Conclusion

In contrast to these Nordic models, Canadians look to the private market for childcare, housing and family therapy, and rely on their own resources to provide school lunches, clothes and the other costs of raising a child. Government child welfare services only intervene in cases of suspected child abuse and neglect. National and local governments in Nordic countries, on the other hand, work in partnership with families to support parents raising children. But they are not without challenges themselves.

The influence of neoliberalism has led to the dramatic privatization of K-12 education, as well as elder care and youth care in Sweden. This has resulted in considerable public debate about the role of the private sector in the provision of public education and social services. In addition, waves of unaccompanied children from countries such as Somalia, Afghanistan and Romania seek asylum in Nordic countries. This has led to an ongoing demand on municipalities to care for these children. In one Norwegian city we visited, 50% of youth in group homes were asylum-seeking refugees.



Daycare stroll in Stockholm.

(Photo by Chris Walmsley)

Not all people benefit from the universal measures. Street begging by Roma families in Sweden and Norway demonstrate they are not included. Also, the level of institutional care (including group homes) for youth is greater than in Canada, largely because youth who abuse drugs and engage in criminal activity are sent to a treatment centre rather than a detention centre or prison. A second reason is the increasing numbers of unaccompanied refugee children.

In spite of these challenges, the national commitments to children's rights through the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are impressive. Taking seriously children's right to participate in decisions that affect them raises theoretical as well as policy and practice questions about how to be child-centered and family-focused when supporting families with children.

We have much to learn from Nordic approaches to children's welfare, although Canada is constitutionally very different. In Canada, some national social programs for children and families exist. But most responsibility for such programming lies with provincial governments, except with respect to Indigenous peoples whose well-being is a federal responsibility under our Constitution. In spite of these differences, Canada could emulate the Nordic countries in several ways.

For example, the Universal Child Care Benefit could be expanded to cover all children under the age of 18 while increasing the monthly payment to \$250 per child. Canada could create a universal childcare program for children under school age. For those in school, Canada could offer a hot lunch program. The government could also introduce a maternal child health program that includes extensive pre- and post-natal check-ups, nutrition supplements, and a baby box for all expectant mothers, particularly focused on Indigenous communities and low-income areas, but available to all.

In each case, the lives of all Canadian families, particularly Indigenous children and families, would be significantly improved.

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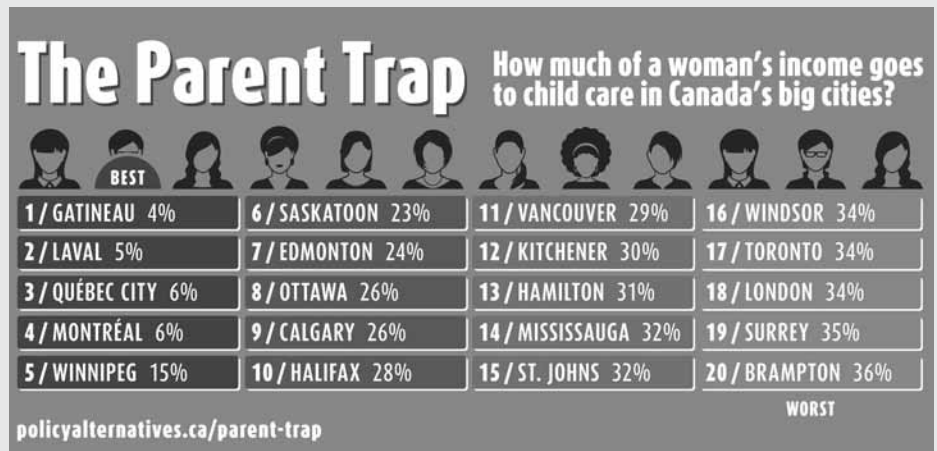
Most and least affordable cities for child care

A study released November 10 by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, *The Parent Trap: Child Care Fees in Canada's Big Cities*, presents a first-ever comparison of median unsubsidized child care fees for infants, toddlers and preschoolers across 22 urban centres. The report also develops an affordability index that compares those fees to the median income of women aged 25 to 34 in each city.

"Affordable child care is an important issue not just for parents, it's important for Canada's economy. When parents are given an affordable child care option, as in Quebec, they overwhelmingly choose to work," says CCPA Senior Economist David Macdonald, who co-authored the report with Martha Friendly, executive director of the Childcare Resource and Research Unit.

Among the study's findings:

- Toronto has the highest fees in all three age categories (infants, toddlers, preschoolers).
- Brampton is the least affordable city in Canada for child care, with fees accounting for 36% of a woman's income, the equivalent of



four months' worth of work.

- Quebec's provincial policies, particularly low daily fees, have made it dramatically cheaper for parents to place children in child care.
- The most affordable city is Gatineau, where child care takes up 4% of a woman's income, which is paid for in only two weeks' worth of work.
- Laval, Montreal, Longueuil and Quebec City are also among the country's most affordable cities for child care. Women in those cities spend between 5% and 6% of their income on child care fees, or about

one month's worth of work.

Provincial policies that set fees directly and that define regulations have a significant impact on child care fees. The regulated nature of child care means that provincial policies will generally have a more substantial impact on fees than market forces.

"More than three-quarters of mothers with children under the age of six are part of Canada's labour force," says Friendly. "But despite the high concentration of mothers who work, Canada ranks second last in the OECD in government spending on early childhood education and care."

Hardball tactics, powerful friends help move Energy East

By Joyce Nelson

On October 30, TransCanada Corporation submitted its 30,000-page application for the construction of the Energy East pipeline to the National Energy Board (NEB). Company execs, federal and provincial politicians, and promoters in the media say the project is more than just a new route for landlocked tar sands. In a November 6 *Globe and Mail* op-ed, New Brunswick's elite banking and energy board-hopper Frank McKenna said, "Energy East, much like the Canadian railway, is a true representation of nation-building at its very best."

Contradicting this faux-patriotism was none other than TransCanada CEO Russ Girling, who explained not 48 hours before filing the NEB application why his company was really building the pipeline. Despite the nationalist spin, and promises to supply East Coast refiners with cheaper crude to replace imports, Girling told the *Wall Street Journal* on October 28 that Energy East is about opening up a new route to U.S. refiners on the Gulf Coast.

"We can actually go all the way to the Gulf Coast without a presidential permit," said the CEO, referring to resistance in Washington to the Keystone XL pipeline. "Once we're on the water, we'll show up just like any other crude oil in the world in the Houston ship channel."

The scheme is even economical, said Girling. The cost of moving the oil 4,580 km to Atlantic Canada then putting it on a boat to the Gulf Coast "is probably a couple of bucks more than Keystone," he told the newspaper. It confirmed an October 29 report by Environmental Defence and Greenpeace that found the Energy East project "would supply very little oil to any Canadian refineries," and that up to 90% of its capacity would flow unrefined onto tankers for export, with enormous social and environmental consequences.

"[T]his project is actually about putting unrefined oil on massive super-tankers in the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Fundy. The pipeline would put communities across Canada at risk from major oil spills," said the report. "A spill from the tankers would threaten

ecological and economic disaster for coastal and riverside communities in Quebec, P.E.I., Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Energy East would export jobs but not the danger associated with transporting huge quantities of dirty oil."

Opposition to the pipeline and associated port infrastructure is growing as people wake up to the probability that its risks far outweigh marginal economic gains along the route. It is especially fierce at the end of the pipeline, where TransCanada hopes to build a marine terminal on the St. Lawrence River.

In mid-October, thousands of people marched in Cacouna, Quebec in opposition to the tar sands export terminal, partly because of how it would affect habitat essential to endangered whales (see sidebar). And from October 26 to November 6, the Council of Canadians, Conservation Council of New Brunswick, Ecology Action Centre, Fundy Bay Keeper, Stop Energy East Halifax, 350.org and Leadnow co-sponsored an anti-pipeline speakers' tour through Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

One of the speakers on that tour was Ben Gotschall, the energy director of Bold Nebraska, which represents U.S. landowners opposed to TransCanada's Keystone XL pipeline. His group and others south of the border have experienced first-hand the hardball tactics that TransCanada has and will no doubt continue to use against protesters and opponents of its new Energy East pipeline.

Hardball tactics

In September 2012, TransCanada endorsed the use by police of "aggressive pain compliance tactics," including arm twisting, choke holds, pepper spray and tasers against two blockaders involved in a non-violent protest in Texas against the Keystone pipeline. U.S. climate activist Bill McKibben called the tactics "more than a little sadistic" and "hard to imagine—handcuffing someone and then tasing them?"

According to the account of the protesters involved, following the arrest a TransCanada supervisor, "openly

congratulated the aggressive Sheriffs Department Lieutenant on a 'job well done.' To which the Lieutenant replied: 'if this happens again we'll just skip to using pepper spray and tasing in the first 10 minutes.' "

About a month later, another group of anti-Keystone activists in Texas was hit with a \$5 million SLAPP suit against 19 individuals and three organizations. TransCanada alleged the blockaders, "have engaged in acts of eco-terrorism through their coordinated, orchestrated and ongoing unlawful conduct and have trespassed on Keystone's property, have interfered with construction of Keystone's pipeline and/or threatened additional interference with construction of Keystone's pipeline in an attempt to deny Keystone use of Keystone's valid right of way."

The SLAPP suit was later dropped after activists agreed to avoid trespassing on company property, much of it controversially obtained through threat of eminent domain. Many U.S. landowners have subsequently said they were intimidated into signing contractual agreements for their land.

TransCanada also hired a private agency to collect intelligence on activists, and employed private security guards to make arrests. Two *New York Times* reporters and other journalists have been detained this way.

Bold Nebraska obtained evidence through a freedom of information request showing that TransCanada had provided training to federal agents and local Nebraska police. As reported in February 2013 on the Center for Media and Democracy's prwatch.org site, the group obtained a slideshow that TransCanada used on December 11, 2012 to brief law enforcement.

"[W]hile the slideshow acknowledges that there has been 'no physical violence to this point' [from protesters], it recommends reporting demonstrators to the FBI and suggests prosecution under state and federal anti-terrorism laws," said the article.

Lauren Regan, legal co-ordinator for the Tar Sands Blockade, a coalition

of Texas and Oklahoma residents affected by the pipeline, and executive director of the Civil Liberties Defense Center, called the slideshow, “clear evidence of the collusion between TransCanada and the federal government assisting local police to unlawfully monitor and harass political protestors.

“These documents expose the truth that the government is giving the nod to unlawful corporate spying. By slinging false allegations against peaceful activists in this presentation, TransCanada puts them at risk of unwarranted prosecution,” she said.

Such reports add to Canadian concerns about state spying and the criminalization of protest related to pipeline projects here.

SIRC review

According to government documents acquired through access to information requests and reported by the media in late 2013, the NEB and industry representatives, including TransCanada, have received several security briefings from CSIS and the RCMP related to pipeline activism. Targeted groups include Leadnow, ForestEthics Advocacy, the Council of Canadians, the Dogwood Initiative, EcoSociety, the Sierra Club of B.C., and Idle No More.

In February 2014, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) filed a complaint about RCMP and CSIS spying, asking why these agencies monitor environmental groups, the length of time they have been doing so, and the law allowing such surveillance. The complaint further asked why and what type of information gathered by the RCMP and CSIS is being shared with the petroleum industry and under what authority.

The BCCLA addressed these concerns and questions to the Security Intelligence Review Committee (SIRC), the watchdog responsible for monitoring the work of CSIS. In September 2014, the BCCLA was informed the review of its complaint would be limited in scope and led by SIRC member Yves Fortier, who is a former director of TransCanada Corp.

BCCLA lawyer Paul Champ wrote back to SIRC on September 25, asking that Fortier recuse himself from the investigation. Champ’s letter stated that in spite of Fortier’s “exemplary reputation,” his involvement creates

an appearance of bias. The BCCLA “submits that this is a highly serious complaint [about CSIS spying] and should be handled in a manner that is in every way beyond reproach, with justice not only done, but seen to be done.”


Days later, the *Vancouver Observer* revealed that Fortier is still a shareholder in TransCanada, possibly holding as much as \$100,000 or more in stocks in the company. NDP public safety critic Randall Garrison raised this information in Parliament, calling on Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney to “address the conflict-of-interest” surrounding Fortier’s role in the SIRC review. Blaney responded, “We have full confidence that they will impartially review actions taken by our security services to protect Canadians against threats from any activists or radicals.”

The Harper government now intends to strengthen the role of CSIS and the RCMP by reportedly expanding powers for “preventative arrest,” increasing the “monitoring” of potential domestic “terrorists,” and “making it illegal to write online statements that support a terror group,” according to an October 31 *Globe and Mail* article.

Other pipelines

TransCanada’s other proposed Canadian pipelines are also contentious. For example, its Coastal GasLink pipeline in northwestern B.C. is to be a 650-km fracked natural gas pipeline to Kitimat, crossing 320 watercourses, which includes the habitat of more than 100 species at risk, in order to bring 1.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day to Shell Canada’s planned LNG project.

TransCanada’s proposed Merrick Mainline Pipeline Project is a 260-km fracked natural gas pipeline that would extend from Dawson Creek, B.C. to Summit Lake (just north of Prince George), where it would connect with the controversial Pacific Trail Pipeline for delivery of gas to Chevron’s planned LNG facility near Kitimat. In total, TransCanada has \$12.6 billion invested in four natural gas pipelines under development in the province.

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Marine terminal could be fatal for resident whales

The St. Lawrence River Estuary is crucial habitat for endangered species like beluga whales, blue whales and fin whales. According to Karine Peloffy, administrator with the Centre québécois du droit de l’environnement, the area around Cacouna, northeast of Rivière-du-Loup, is a beluga nursery.

“It’s shallower, so the females feel more safe feeding there with their newborns than they would where it’s deeper,” she told CBC. Cacouna is across the river from the Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park, a national conservation area. It is also precisely

where TransCanada Corp. intends to build a marine terminal and international oil port for 175 Suezmax supertankers per year to collect crude delivered by the company’s proposed Energy East pipeline.

The project is now under review by the National Energy Board. Many scientists, marine mammal experts, and thousands of Quebec residents are opposed to the marine terminal. In October, Parti Québécois MNAs Pascal Bérubé, Martine Ouellet and Harold LeBel, and Quebec Solidaire MNA Françoise David marched with thousands in Cacouna against the

project.

Quebec’s environment ministry in mid-October stopped the resumption of drilling for the terminal, citing evidence that TransCanada had disobeyed provincial rules, and asking for a corrected proposal, which the company has now submitted. But the Parti Québécois, Fondation Rivières, Nature Quebec, the Centre québécois du droit de l’environnement, the David Suzuki Foundation, and Greenpeace are all demanding that the ministry revoke TransCanada’s permit.

—Joyce Nelson

Leftist parties win important national elections in 2014

By Asad Ismi

The Latin American Revolution continued to score major victories in 2014 with the re-election of leftist parties in Brazil, Bolivia and El Salvador. This is the left's fourth consecutive term in Brazil, its third in Bolivia, and its first re-election in El Salvador (see "Social movements and the FMLN's second term," October 2014). Altogether leftist parties now govern in 10 Latin American countries, with these latest victories showing a deepening of the revolution, and a growing political maturity and confidence on the left.

On October 26, President Dilma Rousseff of the Brazilian Workers Party (PT), which has been in power for the past 12 years, narrowly defeated pro-business rival Aécio Neves by 3.5 million votes. Rousseff describes herself as an economist, a mother, grandmother and wife who has overcome lymphatic cancer. She is also a former member of the *Palmares Armed Revolutionary Vanguard*, a Cuban Revolution-inspired urban guerrilla organization that fought the brutal 20-year U.S.-backed military dictatorship that seized power in 1964. She was imprisoned and tortured by the dictatorship.

The close margin of Rousseff's victory is not particularly unusual, since many U.S. presidents have won with similar numbers. This was, when all is considered, a vote for continuity. However, the tight race does signify important changes in the composition of the PT's base. Where previous elections were won with support from the middle class in the south of the country, this time Rousseff can thank the poor who live mainly in the north of Brazil.

According to Manuel Larrabure, a PhD candidate in political science at York University who is writing his thesis on alternatives to neoliberalism in Brazil and Venezuela, the Brazilian middle class is split: one faction still supports the PT while another has gone over to the neoliberal opposition represented by Neves.

"The pro-PT middle class could be called the 'progressive' middle class,"



Left in: Morales and Rousseff at a meeting in Venezuela, December 2011.

Larrabure explains. "Although there is some disappointment with the PT in this section of the middle class, most of it voted PT. However, some of this section has drifted to [other parties on] the left.

"The anti-PT middle class opposes the PT's social programs and could be called the 'centrist' middle class. Some of this middle class voted PT in the past hoping for growth and employment. However, a significant part of this middle class switched to Neves in this election in part because of the slowing economy and in part because of the fear and demonization campaigns launched by the corporate media against the PT."

The social programs of the PT have lifted 40 million Brazilians (from a population of 200 million) out of poverty during the last 12 years. Poverty has been reduced by 55% and extreme poverty by 65% in a country that had one of the highest rates of income inequality in the world. The PT also achieved record low levels of

unemployment and tripled per capita income growth.

Prominent amongst the PT's social programs is *Bolsa Família*, which gives cash payments to poor families on the condition they keep their children in school, and *Minha Casa Minha Vida*, which facilitates home ownership for low- and middle-income families.

"For the centrist section of the middle class, the anti-poverty measures of the Dilma government strike the wrong chord. They are simply too much for them."

The PT's affirmative action law reserves half of all seats at federal universities for low-income and racialized students (51% of Brazilians are Black and of mixed race). And recently, Rousseff introduced *Mais Médicos* (More Doctors), a program that increases the number of doctors in impoverished areas by bringing in foreign doctors, including from Cuba.

"These changes are significant and explain in part why Brazil's poverty and inequality rates have improved in the last decade," comments Larrabure. "Importantly, these changes have been felt more in the north of Brazil, where poverty rates are much higher and the

racial composition is mostly Black. These reforms have been effective at alleviating major problems experienced by large sections of the population. As a result, the PT's base has been slowly shifting towards the north."

Middle class support for Rousseff has been undermined by Brazil's slide into recession, although it is not as extreme as in other parts of the world and is largely a residual effect of the now six-year-old global crisis.

"For the centrist section of the middle class, the anti-poverty measures of the Dilma government strike the wrong chord. They are simply too much for them, particularly in the context of an economic slump. For them, the PT's social programs smell too much like Bolivarianism in Venezuela. They therefore voted for Neves," explains Larrabure.

The Brazilian vote also appears to be split along racial lines, which was encouraged and provoked throughout the election by an elite tiring of Rousseff and the PT.

"The corporate media has taken advantage of the recession to mobilize sentiments of fear. Not only fear about the economy but also xenophobic and racist sentiments targeting PT initiatives," says Larrabure. "We saw this when Brazilian doctors and supporters mobilized against Cuban doctors who were arriving in Brazil as part of the *Mais Médicos* program.

"The racism of sectors of the middle class became even more obvious when they realized that the north had been instrumental in re-electing Dilma. Social media and even some newspapers were filled with racist sentiments against the northern population."

In spite of the hostility of the mainstream media, the financial elite, part of the middle class, and the U.S. government, Rousseff still won largely by refusing to adopt austerity measures and otherwise staying faithful to the PT's redistributive welfare policies.

Bolivia: still moving toward socialism

Where the left squeaked by in Brazil this October, it won by a landslide in Bolivia with the re-election of President Evo Morales. His Movement Towards Socialism party (MAS) secured 60% of the vote versus 25% for his right-wing rival, Samuel Doria Medina Auza. After two terms and nine years in power, Morales is so popular that according to *Al Jazeera*, "millions of Bolivians have come to worship him."

This is because Morales has profoundly transformed Bolivia by nationalizing its oil and gas and mineral wealth and redistributing the economic benefits to the poor Indigenous majority through income transfers and the expansion of access to health care and education. As a result, the Morales government has wiped out illiteracy in the country and cut poverty by 32.2%, more than any other Latin American country, according to the UN. Bolivia's economy is currently booming with the highest growth rate on the continent.

Raul Burbano, program director at Common Frontiers, a Canadian network of labour, human rights, environmental, church and development groups focused on Latin America, says the presidential debate and election came down to opposing economic and political visions: "Morales' communitarian socialism and nationalization versus the

opposition's capitalism and privatization."

Burbano has been an international observer in Bolivia on several occasions and has produced two video documentaries on the Bolivian Revolution under Morales. He says people continually choose the MAS because of this revolution, which "has empowered the country's majority, the Indigenous peoples and popular classes, and at the same time uprooted Bolivia's historical political elites from power."

Burbano explains the October election also re-confirmed the country's faith in the broader MAS project towards communitarian socialism, or living well—"a vision that is community-centric and values plurality, self-determination, economic and social equality and participation and solidarity."

Morales' rival Medina, on the other hand, "is one of the richest men in Bolivia and owner of Burger King. He was proposing to take the country backwards toward capitalism and privatization," says Burbano, adding that Morales' political stance also enhanced his popularity with voters.

"Evo's approach has been one of dialogue and consensus and reaching out to all sectors in Bolivia. He has engaged the urban middle class and even the business elite, which is demonstrated in his electoral success in the wealthy departments (provinces) like Santa Cruz that have historically rejected his policies."


Burbano points out that another crucial source of Morales' popularity is the fact that he is the first leader of the country to firmly establish its sovereignty by significantly curbing the influence (and presence) of the U.S. government, which has dominated Bolivia for decades. This step has been key to carrying out Bolivia's social transformation.

"The Morales government successfully ended the political interference of the U.S. by expelling its ambassador in 2009, then did the same with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the U.S. Agency for International Development in 2013. All three had to close down their operations in Bolivia as they were accused by Morales of trying to overthrow him," says Burbano. Morales also removed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) from Bolivia.

The U.S. has overthrown several Bolivian governments in the past and imposed military dictatorships on the country, seriously undermining its development.

Indeed, Morales told cheering supporters at the presidential palace in La Paz after his October election victory, "this win is a triumph for anti-imperialists and anti-colonialists." He dedicated his victory to Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez, Venezuela's late president, both major opponents of the U.S.

In a later interview Morales added: "I have no regrets—in fact, I am pleased to have expelled the U.S. ambassador, the [DEA] and to have closed the U.S. military base in Bolivia. Now, without a U.S. ambassador, there is less conspiracy, and more political stability and social stability. Without the [IMF], we are better off economically."

Asad Ismi is an international affairs correspondent for the Monitor and the author of the anthology The Latin American Revolution, which can be ordered from the CCPA by writing ccpa@policyalternatives.ca. 



HARPERISM

HOW STEPHEN HARPER AND HIS THINK TANK COLLEAGUES HAVE TRANSFORMED CANADA



Neoliberal bedfellows

Harperism: How Stephen Harper and His Think Tank Colleagues Have Transformed Canada

By Donald Gutstein
Lorimer (September 2014), 288 pages, \$22.95.

Reviewed by Frank Bayerl

While it may sometimes seem the Harper government's policies are an ad hoc mixture of right-wing populism, poll-driven opportunism and economic austerity (with a dash of nationalism and military swagger thrown in), a new book by Donald Gutstein argues that Conservative policy development is more calculated than that, and heavily influenced by the work of think tanks.

The shared objective is neoliberalism, the political philosophy that sees economic freedom as the highest good—over and above political freedom. To right-wing think tanks, the role of government is simply to bring about the conditions that will allow markets to flourish, unhindered by regulatory and social constraints. In *Harperism*, Gutstein offers a clearly written explanation of how this political philosophy continues to guide the

actions of the current government.

Achieving a free-market utopia first requires a change in the climate of ideas, and this is where think tanks play their role. Gutstein, an adjunct professor at Simon Fraser University's school of communications, takes the reader through a brief history of the post-Second World War founding of neoliberal think tanks in Britain and North America, under the influence of such key thinkers as Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman.

Hayek and Friedman were co-founders of the Mont Pelerin Society in 1947, whose ideas can be directly linked to the victory of Margaret Thatcher in 1979. Other influential neoliberal think tanks include the London-based Institute of Economic Affairs, founded in the 1950s, and the American Heritage Foundation, dating to 1973. A publication by the latter, *A Mandate for Leadership*, became a blueprint for the Reagan administration when it came to power in 1981.

Here in Canada, the Macdonald-Laurier Institute has come to occupy a similar position of influence within the Harper government. Despite being established as late as 2009, the institute has already had an impact on government policy in the areas of "tough on crime" legislation, immigration policy, and securing Aboriginal support for the Northern Gateway pipeline. The institute also endorsed the idea of refocusing the Canadian Museum of History (formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilization) so that it featured prime ministers and wars instead of human civilization in a broad sense.

Harperism reveals the close and often hidden connections between Canada's right-wing think tanks (e.g. the Fraser and C.D. Howe institutes) and such neutral-sounding institutions as the University of Calgary's School for Public Policy, which is actually a neoliberal think tank embedded in a university, and Sustainable Prosperity, a project of the University of Ottawa's faculty of law that counts Preston Manning on its board of advisers.

The Fraser Institute is perhaps best known for its annual world economic freedom index. The fact that Hong Kong has consistently held first place in this index tells us much about the kind of society the institute desires. (Hong Kong also leads the developed world in income inequality and has been much in the news lately for its notable lack of democratic freedoms.)

As Gutstein explains, a neoliberal propaganda system has now become established in Canada. Think tanks transform the ideas of Hayek, Friedman and their followers into research.

"Sympathetic academics provide research studies compatible with the think tank's goals; corporate executives and the foundations of wealthy businessmen finance the research; and sympathetic media owners and commentators disseminate the research to target audiences. It's a package deal."

Gutstein devotes a series of chapters to illustrating how this system operates to advance various policy objectives, including weakening labour unions, encouraging the privatization of land on First Nations reserves, eviscerating environmental protections in the interest of giving a free hand to industry, preventing the free circulation of scientific knowledge by muzzling government scientists, denying income inequality by muddying the statistical waters, and promoting a narrow nationalism by emphasizing Canada's history as a warrior nation rather than its peacekeeping tradition.

He offers two especially poignant examples of co-operative reframing exercises in the environmental field: one in which "dirty oil" becomes "ethical oil," the other, spearheaded by former natural resources minister Joe Oliver, where environmentalists are transformed into foreign-funded radicals far outside the mainstream.

In four months, "Ethical Oil" went from being the title of a book by Ezra Levant to an official government talking point. Support for the deeply flawed concept came first from newspapers of the Sun Media chain, which employs Levant and published excerpts from

his book, giving it national exposure. This was followed by a column by the author attacking Greenpeace, then more favourable coverage, also in Sun papers, of a speech he gave to the Economic Club of Canada.

Ethical Oil—the book but more importantly the talking point—was given further exposure in the *National Post*. Levant also appeared at least four times on CBC radio and television, and was offered prominent appearances at The Vancouver Club and Fraser Institute events.

Conservative senators Nicole Eaton and Linda Frum soon jumped on the ethical oil bandwagon in a Senate inquiry into the oil sands, and Levant later testified on the subject before the House of Commons standing committee on natural resources. Soon the Harper government took full ownership of the dubious concept, using it in the Prime Minister's speeches, and otherwise making "ethical oil" the linguistic weapon of choice for avoiding discussions about Canada's dirty oil project.

Gutstein provides equally clear analysis of the Harper government's attempts to limit dissemination of scientific knowledge and research by cancelling the long-form census, abolishing the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, the First Nations Statistical Institute and the National Council on Welfare, and severely cutting funding to departments with an environmental mandate.

With a truly spectacular misunderstanding of the purpose of independent research, the Prime Minister is said to have asked a reporter on one occasion why his government should fund these agencies when they offer solutions that differ from government policy.

Harperism makes for dispiriting reading and the author sees a difficult path ahead for progressives. The changes already in place will make it hard to reverse many Conservative policies, he says, adding that the effort must still be made to imagine a new role for government that doesn't treat everything as an offshoot of the economy.

Gutstein is a bit vague as to

how this is to be accomplished, but certainly it must involve changing the conversation in as profound a way as Hayak, Friedman and friends did half a century ago.



Add men and stir

Feminism and Men

By Nikki van der Gaag
Fernwood (August 2014), 296
pages, \$27.95

Reviewed by Kate McInturff

What is the role of men in the struggle for gender equality? As Nikki Van Der Gaag reports in her new book, *Feminism and Men*, "the devil is in the details."

Van Der Gaag describes the Goldilocks-like dilemma of engaging men in feminism. Too much involvement and men in positions of authority may end up dominating the conversation. Not enough involvement and women are left trying to tango solo.

Van Der Gaag is clear on the need for men to be engaged. As she writes, "the struggle for gender equality depends on it." The book uses a combination of personal stories and broader social and economic analysis to make this point.

She begins with the social roles that structure our relationships to each other and to our own gender identities. If girls are reduced to pink and purple princesses from their earliest years,

then boys are equally contorted into the padded muscle suits of hyper-masculine super heroes. As Van Der Gaag points out, those male roles may turn out to be even less malleable than the female roles—girls who are 'tomboys' are cool, but 'sissy' is still an insult.

Men are expected to play the breadwinner role. At the same time, many of the men Van Der Gaag interviews assume their family responsibilities end with their participation in paid work: "my thinking was that I would earn money and everything else was her responsibility," reports one interviewee. The result is a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work for women—who haven't seen that unpaid work diminish at the same rate that their participation in paid work has increased.

The result is also a loss for men, argues Van Der Gaag. The same man who used to view himself as a breadwinner alone records how his life is enriched by greater participation in caring for his children: "Of all the things in the world that money can't buy, one is the love of a child."

In Canada, too, there is clearly an unmet need for fathers to spend more time engaged in caring for their children. Consider that when Quebec introduced targeted paternity leave with a significant replacement of men's incomes, the percentage of men taking parental leave rose to 76% compared to 26% in the rest of Canada. (See "Children's Welfare: A comparison of Nordic and Canadian approaches" on Page 30.)

The book also addresses the ugliest aspect of gender inequality—violence against women. Here, too, Van Der Gaag emphasizes the benefits to men of leaving violence behind. Here, too, the participation of men is essential to the well-being of women. Men, after all, make up the majority of perpetrators of violence against women (and against men, as Van Der Gaag also notes). Trying to end sexual and domestic violence by only speaking to the victims of that violence is about as helpful as aiming a campaign against drunk driving at pedestrians.

Van Der Gaag's book assumes the best of men and of women. It makes reasonable arguments about how gender equality is in the best (self) interest of men and women. Yet many

of the personal and political systems Van Der Gaag critiques come with significant benefits for men. Higher rates of pay and promotion come to mind. Less unpaid work sounds pretty good too.

Beyond these rational incentives to continue with an unequal system that is of benefit to (some) men, there is also the irrational to consider. The personal and political are more than symbolic bedfellows. Men, and feminists, are moved by irrational desires—for power, for pleasure, for love.

Many of the personal anecdotes related in the book have a slightly evangelical flavor, as in ‘I once was misogynist but now am feminist.’ The path to salvation in these stories is less often about reasoned self-interest and more often about finding new ways to love and be loved.

Where is the sweet spot for men in feminism? It lies in men’s participation in renegotiation of the distribution of power within political, familial and intimate relationships. It lies in how men react when they find that feminism has already broken into their house, eaten their porridge and slept in their bed.

Kate McInturff is a senior researcher at the CCPA and director of the Making Women Count initiative.

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Coffee, co-optation and fair trade

In Pursuit of Justice: Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-op and the Fair Trade Movement

By Stacey Byrne and Errol Sharpe
Fernwood (September 2013), 136 pages, \$19.95

Reviewed by Amy Wood

Have you had a cup of coffee today? If it was “fair trade” do you know if your purchase directly improved a poor farmer’s livelihood?

Fair trade advocates would like us to believe it does. And with annual sales of over \$1 billion, surely the fair trade movement must be having a net positive impact, right? The uncomfortable truth is that the gains from fair trade certification are varied, and the corporate co-optation of the

movement has prevented the goodwill of consumers from improving the livelihoods of producers.

This begs the fundamental question of whether the growth of the movement can be reconciled with its initial principles of social justice, solidarity and democracy? It’s the question Stacey Byrne and Errol Sharpe tackle in their book, *In Pursuit of Justice*, while telling the story of Halifax’s Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-operative, Canada’s first fair trade coffee establishment.

Jeff and Debra Moore, both passionate about social justice but with precious little knowledge of the coffee industry, envisioned a non-traditional business model based on producer welfare, and concern for democracy and the environment. After a trip to Chiapas, Mexico in 1995, a few loans and some luck, Just Us! started selling fair trade certified coffee purchased directly from the UCIRI co-op in Mexico.

Relatively little is known about the development of northern fair trade co-operatives. *In Pursuit of Justice* provides a necessary and intimate look into a worker management co-op that is historically and socially significant. Byrne and Sharpe give an unflinching account of the difficulties the co-op faced in developing its management structure. Central were the challenges of practising collective ownership, and balancing efficiency and democracy in a neoliberal environment.

The authors locate Just Us! within a wider movement that simultaneously attempts to be “in and against the market.” The existence of a co-op within a capitalist economy produces inevitable contradictions. These played out during the co-op’s development in two fundamental ways: in workplace relations where workers felt excluded from the decision-making structure, and in structurally unequal relationships between Just Us! and its producer co-operatives.

The founders of Just Us! were all too aware that as long as manufacturing took place in the Global North and extraction in the Global South the


most lucrative benefits would accrue in the hands of northern businesses. Although direct trade (i.e. trade that doesn’t require an intermediary), the payment of a social premium to producers, and the redistribution of profits to communities can offset these costs, Jeff and Debra became closely acquainted with the inherent limits of the fair trade movement, despite their co-op being successful by conventional indicators.

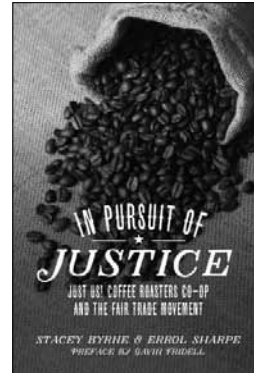
In Pursuit of Justice is largely a descriptive account of the development of the Just Us! co-op and, perhaps as a result, thin on analysis at times. Although Chapter 3 provides a helpful background on fair trade for non-specialists, the central question about balancing growth and principles comes, disappointingly, at the book’s conclusion. While Byrne and Sharpe locate Just Us! somewhere

in the middle of the spectrum between growth and principles, they offer little in the way of assessing the co-op’s impact on the broader fair trade movement.

In the final chapter, Byrne and Sharpe dip into a dizzying number of topics ranging from the corporate turn of the movement to the challenges of realizing producer-consumer solidarity, each of which could be a volume unto itself. This leaves the reader hazy on the prospects for a more emancipatory fair trade movement. That said, fully answering the question of why fair trade hasn’t transformed global social relations and dismantled capitalism is a daunting task, one difficult to take up in 136 pages.

Activists, educators and entrepreneurs will take away something from this book, whether it is about the struggles to balance ideology and growth, how to execute a value-driven business strategy, or how to think about global capitalism. *In Pursuit of Justice* is a compelling and accessibly written account for those curious about how to chart new paths in a market-driven world.

Amy Wood is a master of arts candidate at the Balsillie School of International Affairs and a research assistant at the CCPA. 





Archeology of social capital: David Cronenberg's *Maps to the Stars*

Reviewed by Chandra Siddan

“They made an offer that my mother could not refuse,” a child film star tells his fellow Hollywood teen buddies in David Cronenberg’s new film *Maps to the Stars*. It pithily encapsulates the position of the working child in the Hollywood family, as the fluffed and buffed house slave, rented out to others for a handsome price.

Maps to the Stars is a skilful if somewhat farcical archeology of American social capitalism. Written by Bruce Wagner, the film is reminiscent of Cronenberg’s 1996 *Crash*; its sparse style and sketched-out characters make *Maps* a satire, but one with a surprising genre-blasting twist at the end.

Benjie Weiss (played by Canadian Evan Bird) is the arrogant, troubled preteen actor, recently out of rehab and living with his parents in a fine modernist mansion befitting their *nouveau riche* status. Benjie’s father, Dr. Stafford (John Cusack), is a TV life coach and the Godfather of self-actualization for troubled actors (of which there are many). He and Benjie’s mother Christine (Olivia Williams) take care of their son as they would a goose that lays golden eggs, the one coaching and maintaining the plateau of his professional success, the other pandering to his sense of entitlement while controlling and negotiating his career.

There are other adults in Benjie’s life, like his PR agent who bears the brunt of his client’s anger when a photo op turns ugly. There is also a shrink on perpetual standby. But as Germaine Greer might have pointed out, these older characters are the eunuchs of a child’s harem. Benjie is a *working* child. His tantrums are to be put up with because paycheques depend on the actor’s productivity and brand maintenance.

It soon emerges that there is another child in this family, the black sheep if you will, played brilliantly by Mia Wasikowska. Agatha Weiss is a teenager who has returned to Hollywood after being released from an institution due to past crimes. The burn marks she tries to hide—in Hollywood, the ultimate marketplace for physical beauty—expose both a disturbing past and a poverty that cannot afford cosmetic surgery. Agatha zeroes in on her family, which tries to deny her despite the daughter’s attempts, with variable success, to form new relationships. The glassy Weiss fortress—much coveted in architectural magazines, admired for its open style, simultaneously a symbol of the grandiosity and vulnerability of American capitalism—is here at risk of infiltration.

The complex, finely constructed plot of *Maps to the Stars* contains parallel sub plots: the flagging career of aging Havana Segrand (Julianne Moore) and the uncertain rise of the young part-time cabbie/screenwriter/actor Jerome Fontana (Robert Pattinson). These characters are connected through Agatha; the burn-scarred newcomer becomes a personal assistant to Havana and a girlfriend of sorts to Jerome. All three desire the Holy Grail of Hollywood fame and will stop at nothing in their pursuit of it.



Olivia Williams, David Cronenberg and John Cusack on the set.

Havana struggles for an acting gig in a remake of an old film, a role played by her mother in the original. At the same time she is being coached by Dr. Weiss on how to get over the trauma of being sexually abused by her mother as a child. Jerome has sex with anyone—as research, for his writing, as and when the opportunities present themselves. But there is more to Agatha than these other two careerists. Her typically ambitious teen persona is dogged by a sense of irreparable failure in this temple of relentless personal success and, possibly, by a secret agenda. There is something she knows, consciously or otherwise, that may hold a key to their collective disease.

Besides the gladiatorial careers of Benjie and his young colleagues, there are other examples of childhood on sale. Havana’s public acknowledgment of parental abuse is a kind of monetization. Her childhood trauma becomes her social capital, and her slick marketing of the event makes Havana a caricature of the artistic mining of the self. While this is generally legitimized in art, in Hollywood self-mining becomes a desperate opening-up of private life for public consumption, even before its various problems are resolved. Life is put on display even before it is lived.

Cronenberg’s film sings an elegy for the premature deployment of life into work and in that sense it is very much like Richard Linklater’s brilliant film *Boyhood*, out earlier this year. Hollywood, after all, is a microcosm of capitalist America. In *Maps to the Stars* the adulthood of productive labour is haunted by the play-deficit of childhood. It could be called a film about child labour—the First World version of it.

There is not a single example of play in the whole film. The children and adults we meet are always at work, even when Havana is meditating by her swimming pool. Productivity pre-empts play where play should be a necessity of old and young alike. But the children fare worse. Trapped in a hyper-productive world where their fast-disappearing youth is the flavour of the week, Benjie and his friends are dispensable camera fodder. Escape from such a prison may well involve a death pact. You will have to watch to find out.

Chandra Siddan is a Toronto-based writer and filmmaker. *Maps to the Stars* opened in Canadian cinemas on October 31.

From *Citizenfour* to *Citizensmany*?

Reviewed by Andrew Clement

The broad outlines of the story of Edward Snowden and his revelations of surveillance by the National Security Agency (NSA) will be familiar to anyone who has followed news headlines since June 5, 2013. Leading up to that date, Snowden, a former system administrator contracted to the NSA, had met secretly with journalists in a Hong Kong hotel room where he handed over a trove of classified documents. The resulting series of media articles paint a disturbingly detailed portrait of the breathtaking range of state surveillance programs aimed at the comprehensive capture and analysis of electronic communications worldwide.

In her new documentary *Citizenfour*, Laura Poitras gives us a riveting portrait of Snowden, their fateful Hong Kong meeting and its wider significance. While adhering to the *cinéma vérité* ethos, Poitras is obviously far more than a sharp-eyed fly-on-the-wall observer. She is a central off-screen actor who makes the whole enterprise possible.

After Snowden fails to gain the attention of *Guardian* journalist Glenn Greenwald, he contacts Poitras via encrypted email, using the pseudonym Citizen Four. Poitras, at the time living in Berlin to avoid persecution by U.S. authorities for her earlier award-winning film work (*My Country, My Country* and *The Oath* in particular), had become adept at protecting her communication through encryption and other security techniques. Once she and Snowden had established a secure channel and mutual trust, she brings Greenwald back into the picture. Persuaded that their shadowy informant had something important to offer, they and another *Guardian* journalist, Ewan MacAskill, arrange a rendezvous fraught with promise and peril.

The heart of Poitras' new film takes place over eight days in Snowden's cramped room at the Mira Hotel. Unlike Deep Throat of Watergate fame, this undercover informant was no senior, high-level official, but a personable, 29-year-old computer 'geek.' We witness up close Snowden's remarkably calm and clear-sighted determination to show the U.S. public how its government has

betrayed the Constitution by embedding mass surveillance facilities into the global communications infrastructure.

Snowden fully expects he'll eventually have to face the brunt of the state's furious reaction, as other whistleblowers have experienced before him. It will ruin his life. But his overriding concerns are that the compelling evidence of wrongdoing contained in his documents be published before this happens, and that his family is protected from any fallout. He doesn't want to dump the information into the public

realm but relies on trusted journalists to exercise their professional judgment in ensuring that the message gets out without endangering anyone.

June 5, 2013 is the date Greenwald publishes an article (in the UK and U.S. media) on the mass collection of Verizon telephone records, followed by another the next day about direct access by the U.S. government, through its secret PRISM program, to the databases of the country's tech giants. There is an immediate worldwide uproar, and tension rises. In a poignant moment, we see signs of



John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Filmmaker, writer and activist Astra Taylor interviewed Laura Poitras in the November 10 issue of *The Nation*, from which this excerpt is taken with permission.

Astra Taylor: When I talked to you years ago, you identified as an artist first and foremost. Has your conception of yourself changed?

Laura Poitras: I identify as a visual journalist and as an artist. I don't tend to identify myself as an activist or advocate. In my films, I'm really interested in the world that I document, and so there's open-endedness, and people can come away with different conclusions. But I'm interested in taking people into a world where they come to understand issues through other people. And certainly the people I choose to follow represent things that I'm interested in. In this film, I was interested in NSA surveillance, but also in the act of standing up, in personal sacrifice to expose things. William Binney is important in the film because here's somebody who was also in the NSA and also saw the dangers and he chose a different path by which to raise concerns. That path led to the FBI showing up at his house with guns. And I was interested in the government cracking down on leakers, using the Espionage Act, as they did with Thomas Drake. So, to return to your question, I identify myself as a journalist/filmmaker, rather than an activist or advocate.

For the full interview: www.thenation.com/article/184689/qa-laura-poitras#

Snowden's pain on learning from his long-time partner, who he had to leave without giving an inkling of his mission, that the FBI is taking an active interest in his disappearance and checking out their Hawaii home.

Before his cover is blown, Snowden will have to go public, and the time is fast approaching. Again, unlike Deep Throat and many other leakers of secret documents, Snowden planned from the beginning to reveal his identity, to show he is not afraid. He just wants to hold this off as long as possible to avoid becoming the focus of attention, so as not to detract from the main story of government misdeeds.

As the media maelstrom builds, Snowden remains remarkably poised and determined, giving no hints of hesitation or bravado. In *No Place to Hide*, a good companion book for the film, Greenwald marvels that Snowden regularly goes to bed at 10 p.m., taking in a full night's rest, while he, the journalist, suffers from excitement-induced insomnia.

When Snowden identifies himself in an interview as the NSA leaker, and explains his reasons, he becomes a worldwide sensation. The media close in on his Hong Kong hotel and start calling his room. With the help of human rights lawyers and Wikileaks, Snowden escapes the hotel just ahead of a frenzied press horde. But the U.S. government cancels his passport while he is in transit at Moscow's international airport. Snowden is eventually granted asylum in Russia, where he continues to give interviews.

Throughout this dramatic personal narrative, Poitras supplements Snowden's descriptions of the burgeoning secret mass surveillance infrastructure (and its dangers) with public testimonies from other experts.

The first is William Binney, a good-natured mathematician who worked at the NSA for 30 years developing its capacity for algorithmic analysis of communication data. Binney resigned immediately after 9/11 when he saw how the NSA turned his techniques on the American people in ways that violated the Constitution. He later became an active whistleblower, joining three other (former) NSA officials in drawing attention to the illegal behaviour, first through internal official channels and then through the press. Rather than investigate their claims, the FBI targeted them instead. In Binney's case, the bureau invaded his home, guns drawn, while he was in the shower.

We also hear from computer security researcher and 'white hat' hacker Jacob Appelbaum who, like Poitras, lives self-exiled in Berlin to avoid U.S. government harassment. Appelbaum builds on Binney to show how meta-data, or data derived algorithmically from communication transactions, can be as revealing of personal movements, attitudes, social networks and other potentially sensitive characteristics as the communication content itself.

In counterpoint to the courage, candour and moral integrity of Snowden and his allies, those in positions of power, speaking for the security establishment, come off as much weaker individuals. We see Obama on the hustings, proclaiming that presidents don't have the authority to spy on Americans and are not above the law. After his duplicity is revealed, he lamely claims he had already initiated a review of surveillance operations, so Snowden's revelations were unnecessary.

We also see General Keith Alexander, former director of the NSA, and James Clapper, current director of national

intelligence, stating categorically, under oath and before public congressional hearings, that there is no warrantless surveillance or mass collection of personal data on U.S. residents. Of the two, Alexander is the far better liar. Clapper appears uncomfortable and admits, after Snowden's leaks reveal his mendacity, that his statement was the "least untruthful" one he could come up with under the circumstances. Astonishingly, at least for those of us who still hope for a modicum of democratic accountability in government, neither official suffered any apparent sanction.

We are also treated to some dark comic relief from the UK government. Poitras takes us into the basement of the *U.K. Guardian* newspaper to view security agents, suspecting that MacAskill has brought home secret documents on his laptop, absurdly drilling into the computer's chips and grinding away at the motherboard. Undeterred, the paper continues its devastating reports but from its New York office. Press freedom is still stronger in the U.S. than the UK.

Given the disturbing subject matter, and our apparent helplessness in the face of an omniscient state security and intelligence apparatus acting with impunity, the film ends with some welcome, surprisingly upbeat notes.

Another whistleblower, evidently inspired by Snowden, contacts Greenwald to provide evidence that 1.2 million Americans are on one of several U.S. watchlists—far more than any realistic 'terrorism' threat could justify. Could this new source represent a trend? Are other brave insiders revealing the dirty secrets that need public airing?


The closing scene shows Snowden, now reunited with his partner, cooking dinner together in domestic tranquility. It is shot from outside their kitchen window, bringing a whiff of both intimate voyeurism and menace. Is he still being spied upon (by the Russians now)? Or does it represent how all our quotidian lives are similarly captured and scrutinized?

Snowden has weathered the storm, for the moment at least. After risking so much for us all, his life has returned to a degree of normality. With his extraordinary bravery Snowden has offered us two great gifts.

We can't now avoid the fact that our democracies are gravely threatened from within, by a security/surveillance state-within-a-state gone rogue. If his revelations don't incite a move to radical reform, what would it take to bring things back or closer to the liberal democratic ideals we like to take for granted?

Furthermore, Snowden's fearless openness, and his principled resolve in adhering to these ideals in the face of enormous pressures to relinquish them, provide a stark contrast to the deception and cowardice of the official representatives of the public interest. He sets an inspiring example for those of us in more comfortable positions to stand up for what we believe.

A youthful David has rocked Goliath back on its heels, exposing both new threats and vulnerabilities. Snowden has more than done his part. It's our turn now. Can we provide the makings of a sequel—*Citizensmany*, anyone?

Andrew Clement is a professor in the faculty of information at the University of Toronto. Among his current research projects on surveillance is IXmaps.ca, which shows people the routes their communications take across the Internet, and where they may be intercepted by NSA surveillance operations. 

Captured life, compartmentalized ghosts

By Vitalyi Bulychev

Seventy-five years ago the Government of Canada initiated a media project that was designed to identify, catalogue and disseminate notions of Canadian identity. William Lyon Mackenzie King's personal interest in developing Canadian content for the screens of the nation, and his personal backing of John Grierson to head the project, formed the basis for the National Film Board.

Grierson, a Scottish filmmaker working in London, was headhunted in England then invited to Ottawa to review the potential of developing content that reflected Mackenzie King's vision. It was a vision troubled by the dominance of American pop culture in the film, radio and magazine industries, and influenced by the industrious efficiency of the Nazi propaganda films Hitler was then deploying in Germany.

Grierson, a quasi-socialist ideologue with fastidious principles, a visionary filmmaker in his own right who had coined the term "documentary," was to abandon filmmaking in the migration. He took on the preferred role of a producer-type figure, creating an environment in which filmmakers could, under his guidance, execute documentary films that reflected their society. In a television interview, Grierson hammers out what it was that the NFB set out to do:

The Film Board was a deliberate creation, to do deliberate work...it was there to bring Canada alive to itself and to the rest of the world. It was there to declare the excellencies of Canada to Canadians and to the rest of the world. It was there to evoke the strengths of Canada, the imagination of Canadians, with respect to creating their present and their future.

Impressively, from the outset, NFB films had an efficient distribution both at home and abroad. They propagated new visions of a society that reflected not only the country's physical dimensions and economy but its social relations as well. These visions grew in scope and eventually—shamefully late—included



Still from Kroitor's *Paul Tomkowicz: Street-railway Switchman* (1953)

a Francophone production unit.

The war years spurred the NFB to produce, among other things, the newsreel series *Canada Carries On*—a didactic, stern and outrageously propagandistic venture culled from material by international (mostly Allied) cinematographers documenting the dramatic and tragic events unfolding in the world. *The World In Action*, a subsequent series of newsreels tailored to an international audience, was seen by 30 to 40 million viewers in the United States, U.K., Australia, India and Latin America.

In Canada the NFB supplemented traditional urban film distribution (via the motion picture theater system) with the 'rural film circuit.' An NFB employee would load a selection of films, and a 16mm film projector, into a car and head for the country's further-flung places. The films were presented in community centers, public libraries, parishes and various industrial spaces. Where technical expertise or equipment was lacking it was imported, and absorbed. This period prepared the NFB for a 'golden era' that, to this day, it has not been quite able to live up to.

It is Grierson who is credited with the first instance of a *cinéma vérité* with

his British documentary, *Housing Problems* (1935), and it is the NFB that can be credited with the first instance of producing *cinéma vérité* films *en masse* (relatively speaking). These films completely broke with documentary tradition, and while still enforcing the NFB credo of promoting and depicting Canadian lives, they did so with a bold esthetic, breaking new ground in documentary form.

The Candid Eye series took as its subject representatives of 'typical' Canadian society. The finest example in the series is Roman Kroitor's *Paul Tomkowicz: Street-railway Switchman* (1953), which launched the NFB's golden age with the story of a Winnipeg man clearing snow off the city's tramway lines. The startlingly frank and beautifully shot film sits in complete contrast to everything the NFB had produced to that point.

In rock 'n' roll a golden age is triggered by people of certain character operating at the right time and the right place. When it burns up, as it must, we can usually blame hubris. The NFB's golden age began with an unusual mixture of advancements in technology (e.g. lightweight synch-sound camera equipment), a miraculous number of tenacious and dedicated personalities, and most importantly—and utterly

unique for the time—complete freedom from studio producers to explore the form. If it ended it was not because of hubris, as in the music world, but for a more ubiquitous Canadian reason: lack of government funding.

In his visit to Canada in 1958 the French director René Clair extolled the achievements and the uniqueness of the NFB. There is, he said, nothing in the world like it. In a way, there still is nothing like it in the world today.

The best way to keep track of the NFB in all things past and present is through its website (www.nfb.ca). The board has digitized thousands of films and is in the process of making its entire catalogue available online—for free. Alongside the carefully presented past, the NFB gives us a glimpse of the future in cinema, which is taking shape in web-based interactive technologies.

What is less easy to take away from the website is the under-represented story of the NFB and its relationship with the community. Sadly, this story came to an end with federal budget cuts in 2012 that saw the closure of vibrant walk-in centres in cities across Canada, including Toronto and Montréal. An important dialogue between the NFB and the community it serves ceased overnight.

An educational centre in Montréal offers an example of what has been lost. Viewing stations at CinéRobothèque allowed users to access far more of the NFB's film catalogue than presently available online, attracting researchers, tourists, school groups and cinephiles alike.


On top of this, a team of practitioners had designed 16 different workshops specializing in animation and

documentary films. The centre offered animation and film production workshops to teach, among other things, how to examine films critically. The workshops were available to any group of people—from preschoolers to the elderly. Remarkably, animation workshops were taught to the visually impaired, sound workshops to the hearing impaired.

The CinéRobothèque facility has vanished from the city's landscape as an NFB operation. While the museum-like full catalogue of films will exist on the website, preservation is no replacement for the originating goal of the NFB—the active exploration and engagement of evolving, expanding Canadian identities.

The “excellencies of Canada,” as Grierson put it, are no longer pursued in sobering focus, one titillating production after another, year after year. They are ancient history, to be categorized, compartmentalized by genre and date, preserved and archived by a team whose mission is to ensure that the films rest in ideal conditions for a lifespan of a thousand years.

Seventy-five years later we look back to see that the NFB played a crucial role in putting Canada on the world map, and oddly enough on its own map. It accomplished what it set out to do, and in the process, almost by accident, became a leader in animation, documentary and experimental cinema. Today, outside of online museums, and after anniversaries that occasion memory to speak, the NFB's role is less clear, and probably negligible when compared its golden past.

Vitalyi Bulychev is a freelance director and editor working in Montréal. 

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(PAS, continued from page 15)


regular “scare stories” from opponents, the safeguards appear to be working well in both Oregon and the Netherlands.

In 2005, 0.4% of patient deaths in the Netherlands were the result of what the Dutch call LAWER: Life-terminating Acts Without Explicit Request (from the patient). Taken out of context, that figure looks worrying; it means that the legal safeguards, in particular the requirement that no patient’s death should be hastened unless that patient makes an explicit request, are sometimes ignored. In other words, the data show that doctors in the Netherlands do not always follow the rules.

But is this not true everywhere, including in Canada? In fact, in the Netherlands, where the practice of euthanasia is highly monitored, the evidence shows there were *fewer* cases of LAWER *after* the decriminalization of euthanasia. Again and again, studies show that vulnerable patients are at least as well protected, if not better protected, in both Oregon and the Netherlands than they were before legalization of PAS. Regulation works better than prohibition.

Much has been made of the fact that the Belgian parliament recently allowed dying children to opt for hastened death. “Aha!” say the critics. “The slope is slippery.” But these same people neglect to mention that children are eligible for PAS only when they possess “discernment,” and only when parents and doctors agree. It seems unreasonable to turn compassion for the pain of dying children into a weapon against mercifully hastened death for competent adults.

Very few Canadians will want or need PAS in their lives. But if the practice were legalized then many would take comfort from knowing that if things do get really bad, their physician could help them to achieve a quick and peaceful death.

Arthur Schafer is Director of the Centre for Professional and Applied Ethics at the University of Manitoba and a CCPA research associate. His article, “Physician Assisted Suicide: The Great Canadian Euthanasia Debate,” on which this article is based, was published in the September–December 2013 issue of the International Journal of Law and Psychiatry. 

(Rank & File, continued from page 23)

McKinven supports players organizing into a union in order to make the league more accountable.

“A union will help to ensure transparency and proper dispersal of revenues to ensure players are receiving adequate benefits packages, including medical, mental health support, education packages and expense reimbursements.

“If they organize, they can make the league open its books, and then we’ll know how much players are making, how much teams are making, and where it’s coming from. Once we make sense of the finances, we can start to make things better and more equitable.”

Earlier this year, Unifor announced its intention to organize CHL players. Unifor representative Sarah Blackstone says that the lawsuit only underlines the need for CHL players to have better forms of representation.

“We have been having conversations with players and agents, and we’re not sure what specifically needs to be done there but we are trying to figure out the best solution,” says Blackstone.

Dreams versus reality

Although the league argues it represents the best route to the NHL—52% of NHL skaters are former CHLers—on average only 35 CHL skaters per year of birth play in “the show.”


Meanwhile, players who become ill or are injured while playing do not often

receive any long-term compensation. Tim Bozon, former Kootenay Ice forward and first round pick of the Montreal Canadiens, contracted meningitis in March, remaining in a Saskatoon hospital for one month. As a French citizen, Bozon was billed \$100,000 for his stay, the tab being in excess of the \$5,000 coverage provided through Hockey Canada’s Insurance Program. The league had to launch a campaign asking fans to help pay Bozon’s bill, and no funding was provided for his rehabilitation.

While Bozon made a full recovery, his story demonstrates the kind of precarious situations many CHLers face.

Last March, Terry Trafford of the OHL’s Saginaw Spirit was found dead in his vehicle in what was later determined to be suicide. Trafford had recently been dismissed by the club for smoking marijuana and was apparently “devastated” at the thought of not being able to play. It was known that Trafford was suffering from depression but he was not provided with professional care from either his team or the league.

The class action lawsuit seeks to address just one of the many troubles faced by league players. As Berg told the *Toronto Star*, “I hope we bring awareness to an issue that has been suppressed by the league. I hope kids that have a passion for the game won’t be exploited for it.”

Ryan Lum is a seasonal worker, labour activist and hockey fan living in Toronto. This article is taken from Rankandfile.ca. 

Monitored: Corporate Taxes

Twenty years ago this month, the *Monitor* highlighted Canada’s ranking with respect to corporate taxes (25th) on the World Economic Forum’s World Competitiveness Report. “Twenty-four countries get more tax revenue from corporations than Canada does, as a percentage of their GDP,” which was 2.1 per cent in 1992, according to the WEF. (The OECD estimates it was actually lower, at 1.8% as a percentage of GDP.)

Canada is still in 25th place this year, though it is for total tax rate (26.9%) based on a survey of 146 countries. The WEF report calculates total tax as a combination of profit tax (% of profits), labour tax and contribution (% of profits), and other taxes (% of profits) in 2012. That means 121 countries, including economic laggards such as Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Japan, the United States, China and India continue to take in more corporate taxes than Canada.

If we want to compare apples to apples, Canada’s corporate tax revenue as a percentage of GDP was 2.9 in 2012, according to the OECD. That is up from 1992—due to growth and not, obviously, tax hikes—but still puts us in the bottom half of the developed world.

WWI: Slave labour camps and other extraordinary renditions

By Richard Sanders

Many are locked in the grip of a national mythology that renders this country as a Peaceable Kingdom characterized by such Canadian values as multiculturalism, democracy and human rights. This official narrative, with its reassuring tales of Canadian exceptionalism, is on closer inspection a delusion.

With the centenary of the First World War, our government and corporate media have memorialized the nation with poignant tales of Canadian soldiers lost to war. Missing from Canada's militarized renditions are stories about the horrors inflicted on civilians at home.

In 1914, when Conservatives, Liberals and a solitary Labour Party MP unanimously passed the draconian War Measures Act, the cabinet of Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden gained nearly unlimited powers to restrict communications, travel, manufacturing, the control of property, and trade. The Act also bestowed dictatorial powers of arrest, detention and deportation without trial. Conservatives were soon waging a political war against immigrants, many of whom, not coincidentally, were anti-capitalist labour activists.

Between 1914 and 1920, 8,600 "aliens of enemy nationality," mostly of Eastern European origin, were interned in what authorities originally called "concentration camps." Among them were 5,000 whose only crime was being Ukrainian.

The 24 camps were commanded by Major-General Sir William Otter, "father of the Canadian Army." During the 1885 North-West Rebellion, his troops smashed Aboriginal resistance to land plunder, genocide and captivity on reserves. Otter then led a battalion during the Boer War (1899–1902), which forced Dutch settlers and Blacks into concentration camps where 40,000 died. For his service to Empire, Otter was knighted in 1913.

The general's report on Canada's internment operations between 1914–20 quoted the official rhetoric—and wording of the War Measures Act—that the prison camps protected "the security, defence, peace, order and welfare of Canada." Otter also noted "the tendency of municipalities to 'unload' their indigent was the cause of the confinement of not a few." In fact, by mid-1915, 4,000 people had been interned for being poor and unemployed.

There were two classes of inmates. A small number were military officers or their civilian "equivalents." Mostly German, these "first class" prisoners, held in cities, received better food and lodgings, and they were not forced to work.

The vast majority of "second class" internees were civilians, mostly of Ukrainian origin. Banished to wilderness camps, and working under armed guard, these prisoners endured hunger, disease, overcrowding, and dangerous work. Some were beaten, put into solitary confinement, prodded with bayonets, suspended by the wrists, or shot for fleeing the barbed wire.

When the First World War caused labour shortages, prison camps filled the gap, providing what Major-General Otter called "a great advantage to the organizations short of labour." As former camp guard Colonel Anderson-Whyte remarked in an interview much later, "We had plenty of

labour... we provided the slaves."

Immigrant slaves were forced to clear land, build railways, roads and national parks, or work on farms, in factories, steel mills and coal mines.

Mark Workman, president of Dominion Iron and Steel, wanted interned and "troublesome" immigrants because "there is no better way of handling aliens than to keep them employed in productive labour." In 1917, Workman urged Prime Minister Borden to request internees from Britain to work Cape Breton mines.

Even after the war, internment continued. Some, like former Liberal MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj, have argued that the camps "benefited Canadian corporations to such a degree that even after the end of World War I, for two more years the Canadian government carried on the internment and the forced labour."

This view ignores the additional political role that internment played in controlling unruly immigrants. As the War Measures Act stated, the emergency was presaged on "the existence of real or apprehended war, invasion or insurrection."

During the 1913–1914 recession, Ottawa predicted that by the winter of 1914–1915 unemployment might reach 100,000, largely among immigrant labourers. When Borden asked Canada's colonial masters for advice, London suggested detention camps. The elite's worst fear was the revolt of impoverished East Europeans radicalized by socialism.

Some Ukrainian-Canadians had long been publishing anti-capitalist newspapers, building socialist organizations and promoting revolutionary unions like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Ahead of their time, these Canadians demanded an eight-hour work day, a minimum wage, universal suffrage for those over 21, social insurance for seniors and the disabled, and the abolition of child labour.

Ukrainian socialists also protested conscription, not because they supported Austro-Hungarian imperialism, which controlled Ukraine, but because the war was slaughtering workers around the world in the interests of competing capitalist elites.

Although the 1917 Russian Revolution boosted morale among Canadian radicals, it frightened Canada's rulers. In September 1918, the government issued order-in-council PC 2384 prohibiting public meetings, except church services, in "any of the languages of Russia, Ukraine or Finland." The IWW and 12 other socialist and anarchist organizations, largely East European, were outlawed.

Banned groups had their offices raided in dozens of cities. Just distributing literature could mean years in prison. This, says Ian Angus, founder of Canada's Socialist History Project, was "one of the most determined and conscious assaults on civil liberties ever seen in Canada."

The government was also systematically deporting immigrants who threatened official narratives about war and capitalism. Between 1908 and 1918, 12,274 newcomers were deported, many to Eastern Europe.

Canada's post-war "Red Scare" was a godsend to the Mounties. The national police force saw its ranks grow from

300 at war's end in November 1918 to 1,600 a year later.

The mass psychosis of Canada's first "Red Scare" peaked in June 1919 during the Winnipeg General Strike. Conspiring in this madness were industrialists, lawyers, politicians, bankers and media moguls. Despite the official fearmongering, when strike leaders were rounded up at gunpoint, 30,000 supporters defied Winnipeg's ban on public gatherings. Mounties fired into the crowd, killing two, then charged in on horseback. "Special police" wielding bats beat fleeing protesters.

Winnipeg became an occupied city patrolled by police trucks mounted with machine guns. Hundreds were arrested and many were sent to an internment camp in the northern Ontario town of Kapuskasing.

Sir Hugh Macdonald, former Conservative politician, son of Canada's first prime minister, and Winnipeg's Police Magistrate at the time of the strike, urged Ottawa to get "rid of as many undesirable aliens as possible" because, he complained, so many Russians, Poles and Jews harboured "Bolsheviki ideas." Saying "fear is the only agency that can... keep them within the law," MacDonald argued "the foreign element here will soon be as gentle and as easily controlled as a lot of sheep."

Outside the camps, another 88,000 "enemy aliens," mostly Ukrainians, had to report regularly to authorities. Internment was thus used as a psychological weapon to scare whole communities into submission.

Immediately after the First World War, Canada deployed 4,200 troops to join Britain, the U.S. and a dozen other capitalist countries in the "cordon sanitaire" of Soviet Russia, thus launching the Cold War's containment doctrine.

Although it is all too easy to blame scaremongering wartime Conservatives for abusing civil liberties, the culpability of Liberals and progressives must be recognized. Despite government attacks on freedoms of association, assembly and speech, leaders of Canadian churches and progressive organizations, like the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC), did not support Canada's besieged dissidents.

Fed up with the TLC's government-friendly executive, and their refusal to denounce conscription, oppose PC

2384 or demand the release of internees, unions in western Canada left the labour federation in early March 1919. They formed a revolutionary alternative, the One Big Union, which had 70,000 members within a year.

Leading Canada's crackdown was Charles Cahan, Borden's euphemistically titled director of public safety, who headed investigations into "Enemy, Socialistic and Revolutionary Propaganda." Cahan's Empire Club speech in late March 1919 praised the TLC's president as "one of the sanest and most patriotic leaders in the Trades Union movement, [who] vehemently opposed all radical and revolutionary tendencies."

Besides its union allies, the government enjoyed strong support from opinion leaders in Canada's dominant Anglo-Protestant culture. These voices expressed the nation's paranoid nativism in everything from "Imperial Adventure" novels to sermonizing religious tracts.

Canada's best-selling novelist and moralizing crusader for social justice, Rev. Charles Gordon (pen-named Ralph Connor) shaped the supremacist attitudes of many Canadians. In *The Foreigner* (1908), Gordon modeled his hero after himself, a missionary working among Galician Poles and Ukrainians in Winnipeg's north end. His hero wanted "to make them good Christians and good Canadians, which is the same thing." Doubting they could be assimilated with what many would now call "Canadian values," a secondary hero calls them "dirty little Galicians," and warns: "You...give them some of our Canadian ideas of living...and before you know they are striking for higher wages and giving no end of trouble."

Winnipeg North was the real world setting of another Protestant minister, J.S. Woodsworth, who became an icon of the Canadian Co-operative Federation (CCF) and its successor New Democratic Party (NDP). In 1909, Woodsworth published *Strangers Within our Gates*. Although filled with negative stereotypes of Blacks, Aboriginals and Asians, Woodsworth reserved a special antipathy towards "ignorant" and "animalized" Galicians.

"Their unpronounceable names," said the author, "appear...often in police court news," and "figure...frequently in crimes of violence." To Woodsworth, these East Europeans were "utterly unfit to

be trusted with the ballot" because "the vote of one of these foreigners 'kills' the vote of the most intelligent Canadian."

Linking them with socialism, Judaism and anarchism, Woodsworth wrote, "Many of our immigrants from Russia and Roumania are Socialists, some of them of the most extreme type. This seems rather strange, as naturally the Jew is individualistic... Some of them have preached anarchy."


Woodsworth was a captive of his upbringing. His father, Rev. James Sr., who led Methodist Missions in Canada's western provinces (1885-1915), described Galicians as, "destitute of any provision for their religious and spiritual training. The evil effects of this state of things are already being felt by other people in the vicinity."

The introduction to Woodsworth's tome was written by Rev. J. W. Sparling. The principal of Woodsworth's alma mater, Winnipeg's Methodist college, described their city as "the storm centre" of Canada's immigration problems, and warned of a "great national danger." Sparling wrote:

"Either we must educate and elevate the incoming multitudes or they will drag us and our children down to a lower level. We must see to it that the civilization and ideals of Southeastern Europe are not transplanted to and perpetuated on our virgin soil."

Some apologize for such historic figures saying they cannot be judged using today's standards. However, on this centenary of the Great War we should recognize these were Canadian leaders promoting an elitist anti-immigrant hysteria, which helped create the cultural psychosis that supported mass internments. Many of their contemporaries knew better and their life-long struggles can still inform us.

The challenge of freeing ourselves from national narratives that render us captive, and the construction of new narratives to better understand our nation's role in history and the world, must remain, as always, a struggle to be continued...

Richard Sanders is writing a book on four centuries of mass captivity in Canadian history and preparing an issue of Press for Conversion! magazine on the First World War and the "Red Scare." 

The Scrooges are stealing Christmas for Canada's poorest kids

By Ed Finn

On Christmas morning this year, how many children in Canada will wake to find no presents from Santa, no new clothes or shoes to replace their threadbare garb, no turkey dinner cooking in the oven, no joyful celebration of the annual Yuletide feast?

Most of the hundreds of thousands of impoverished children among us will be more fortunate that day. Thanks to relatives, friends and charities they'll have toys to play with, warm new clothing to wear and a traditional holiday meal to allay their hunger.

But many of Canada's indigent children and their parent(s) will have no relatives or neighbours to help them; there are limits to the number of poor the food banks, the Salvation Army and other charitable organizations can feed. The rising numbers of Canadian homeless are especially vulnerable.

And even the needy families who benefit from the charity of others at Christmas can't count on food security in the future. Many will soon find themselves slipping back into the blight of penury when the holiday season wanes.

The latest report from Food Banks Canada informs us that in a typical month of this year more than 840,000 people required food bank assistance—one in three of them children.

This appalling and increasingly steep rate of child poverty tarnishes Canada's image and international reputation. A country that is so bountifully endowed with wealth and resources has no excuse for failing to provide all of its citizens, particularly the youngest, with a decent and secure standard of living.

Instead, poverty afflicts one in eight Canadian children and, even worse, one in four Aboriginal children. A nation that condemns so many of its boys and girls to such a grim fate certainly cannot legitimately claim to be "the best country in the world," nor even among the best. In our legislatures and boardrooms, the yet un-rehabilitated Scrooges and Grinches still keep Canada well down the social benefit scale.

UNICEF has ranked Canada in a dismal 19th place among the richest 26 nations in its rate of child poverty. No wonder the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier de Schutter, after visiting Canada a few years ago, was moved to deliver this stinging rebuke: "What I've seen in Canada is a system that presents barriers for the poor to access nutritious diets and that tolerates increased inequalities between rich and poor, and Aboriginal (and) non-Aboriginal peoples."

Canada's rate of child poverty (15%) is three times higher than in the Scandinavian countries and also much higher than the rest of Europe. The OECD puts Canada in a worse position on child poverty—22nd of 31 member countries—than the UNICEF ranking.

Even the business-funded Conference Board of Canada deplored our country's neglect of its children in a recent

annual report: "Children who experience poverty, especially persistently, are at higher risk of suffering health problems, developmental delays, and behaviour disorders. They tend to attain lower levels of education and are more likely to live in poverty as adults."

The ranks of the poverty-afflicted have been swelled by the many thousands of Canadians who have been stripped of their livelihoods by the 2008-09 financial meltdown and the ensuing prolonged recession. Employers in both the private and public sectors have resorted to mass layoffs; most victims either remain unemployed or have settled for much lower-paying jobs. They also comprise most of the larger numbers of Canadians now forced to rely on the food banks.

Our federal and most provincial governments, instead of deploying their financial capability to eliminate or significantly reduce the scourge of poverty (as many governments did during the Great Depression of the 1930s), have slashed social spending. In effect, they have drafted the poor children of Canada to serve in the trenches of the "war" they are waging to further enrich the country's big business barons and bankers.

The terrible deprivations inflicted on the poor and jobless by this callous disregard for equitable treatment have dire lifelong consequences, notably for the children thus abused. And the abuse is as much mental and emotional as it is physical.

Several years ago, Grade 4 and 5 students from low-income families in Ontario were asked by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition to answer this question: What does being poor mean to you? Here are some of their replies:

- Feeling ashamed because my Dad can't get a job
- Not getting to go to other kids' birthday parties
- Being afraid to tell my Mom I need new gym shoes
- Not having pretty barrettes for my hair
- Hearing my Mom and Dad fight over money
- Wishing I had a nicer home
- Not being able to go camping
- Not being able to have my friends sleep over
- Pretending that I forgot my lunch
- Not having any breakfast some mornings
- Not being able to afford swimming lessons
- Not being able to afford a holiday trip
- Being teased for the way I'm dressed
- Having to get meals from a food bank

Reading those replies would be heartbreaking for most Canadians. You might think that would include our government leaders, but it doesn't. They remain inflexibly flint-hearted. They have no trouble sleeping at night knowing

so many children suffer from their barbarous dereliction.

Back in 1989, every MP in the House of Commons, the prime minister and all his cabinet ministers and backbenchers included, solemnly passed a resolution pledging to eliminate child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. They not only broke that unanimous promise, but their successors in Parliament have since allowed the poverty rate to rise, dooming many thousands more children to lives of hunger and destitution.

How does this political indifference to the anguish of so many children continue? Most likely it is perpetuated because of the invisibility of the victims, who for our political (and corporate) leaders are simply numbers in a food bank report that can be shrugged off, not living, breathing, suffering kids.

Imagine if we could send a procession of impoverished girls and boys down the aisle of the House of Commons, one by one, their sad, pinched faces and undernourished bodies plain to see. It would never happen, of course, but let's suspend reality for a moment. It would take many months, perhaps years, for all 300,000 children to pass by. But at some point in the somber procession, perhaps even after just a few weeks, the MPs of all parties would surely have seen enough and order it stopped.

You would hope the MPs in this experiment, especially those on the government benches, would be stricken by remorse to act. Or would they simply draft and pass another poverty-ending resolution and, when the images of all those destitute children faded, just as unashamedly renege? In which case we might need more than moral arguments alone to spark concern for child poverty.

But there is already a strong anti-child poverty case to be made on economic grounds, too. It shouldn't take all that much intelligence, surely, to realize that people trapped in poverty when young are likely, when grown up, to be less skilled and less productive workers, to engage in criminal activities, to become ill more often and more seriously and thus require more costly health care treatment.

A few years ago, the Center for American Progress, a progressive think-tank in Washington, did a study on the economic costs of child poverty in the

United States. Its researchers calculated that Americans who were poor as children—there are now more than 40 million—are much more likely than other citizens to be less productive in the workforce, to commit more crimes, and to need more medical care.

CAP researcher Harry J. Holzer stated that the costs to the U.S. in crime, health care and reduced productivity associated with poverty in childhood amount to an estimated \$500 billion a year. This breaks down to about \$170 billion a year in increased crime, \$160 billion in increased medical costs, and another \$170 billion in decreased productivity.

We have to be careful about applying these U.S. statistics to Canada. We can't just make a demographic projection and assume that, because our population is roughly one-tenth that of the U.S., the overall economic costs of child poverty in this country amount to one-tenth the U.S. figure, or about \$50 billion a year. We also have to keep in mind that a) Canada's national poverty rate is not as high as the U.S. rate; b) there could be a weaker correlation between poverty and criminality in Canada, and; c) the cost of treating the sickness-prone poor under our public health care system is lower than in the for-profit U.S. system.

Even with these differences, however, it is safe to assume that the economic costs of child poverty in Canada would be in the billions if not tens of billions of dollars. Canada Without Poverty points out we would save \$7.6 billion per year on health expenditures alone, "by merely moving people from the lowest incomes bracket to the second lowest income bracket." This money is being wasted, in effect, to maintain an atrociously high rate of child poverty instead of funding the remedial measures that would greatly reduce if not completely eradicate it.

How many break-ins or robberies in Canada are committed from desperation by people deprived in their youth of adequate food, shelter and affection, and in their adulthood of the legitimate

means of earning a living? How many violent crimes are committed by people so embittered by a poverty-stricken youth that they vent their anger in anti-social behaviour? Such crimes, of course, are inexcusable, but most could probably have been prevented if the perpetrators had been provided with a safe, secure, happy childhood.

It would be a mistake, however, to heap all the blame for persistent child poverty on unfeeling governments and greedy corporations. The politicians who govern us are put in power by all adult Canadians, either by voting for them or failing to exercise the right to vote against them. The corporations that hog so much of the economic GDP are kept in business by our purchase of their goods and services.

As citizens, we salve our collective conscience by contributing to the food banks and other poverty-fighting organizations. But we tolerate the deeply flawed political and economic systems of which poverty and unemployment are necessary and inevitable components.

I have often heard people concerned about poverty console themselves by giving thanks that "at least no Canadian children are allowed to starve to death." But is that really true? Our poor children may not die from hunger while young, but the impairment of their cardiovascular and immune systems while in the crucial early development stage can take a heavy toll later in life. Just because they do not succumb from this "death-by-a-thousand-nutrition-cuts" until they reach their 20s or 30s, or die prematurely at any age, have they not in effect been starved to death? That fate has not then been averted, merely delayed.

I've been unfair, however, when I compare our coldhearted political and business leaders to Scrooge or the Grinch. Scrooge, after all, was eventually humanized. So was the Grinch. So the Tiny Tims and the little Whos in Canada's Whoville are facing still another forlorn and wretched Christmas.

Ed Finn is Editor Emeritus of the Monitor. 

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