

**PROJECT  
PLOUGHSHARES  
CALGARY**

# Peace News

**MAY 2009**



**We are located:  
Parkdale United  
Church  
2919 8<sup>th</sup> Ave NW  
T2N 1C8  
403- 270-7366**

**Office hours:  
Mon, Tue, Thurs  
10:30am - 3pm  
Wed 2 - 6pm**

## **Resistance to Media Narratives of War Wednesday May 13th 7:30pm Parkdale United Church (2919 8th Ave NW)**

Ploughshares Calgary is pleased to have Dr. Susan Ross, 2008-'09 University of Calgary Consortium for Peace Studies Research Fellow speak at our May monthly public meeting.

**Susan Dente Ross** holds a PhD in mass communication and is currently professor of English and associate dean of research in the College of Liberal Arts at Washington State University. An expert in media representation, peace journalism, and press and speech freedoms, she trains journalism professionals and students around the world and publishes widely on the role of the media in identity construction and intercommunal and international conflict.



## **Information on the Cuban Five and Ploughshares' AGM Wednesday June 10th 7:30pm Parkdale United Church**

Ploughshares' June monthly public meeting will begin with a presentation on the Cuban Five by members of the Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association (CCFA).

In the mid-1990s, five Cuban men (Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González) infiltrated several counter-revolutionary 'terrorist' organizations in Miami; in 1998 they were arrested by the FBI, falsely accused of espionage, conspiracy, and murder, and in a prolonged and flawed trial sentenced to lengthy prison terms. During their incarceration, The Five have repeatedly suffered cruel and unusual punishment inflicted without provocation, one aspect of which is being denied family visits. Both Amnesty International and the UN have complained of this treatment. CCFA representatives will bring the audience up to date on the appeals of the last eight years, show selected portions of two poignant videos, and speculate on what Obama's tentative easing of the 50 year embargo of Cuba might portend.

The evening will conclude with Ploughshares' Annual General Meeting which always includes a brief overview of the past program year, a review of the organization's financial status and the introduction of the executive board members for the 2009-2010 program year.

# Ploughshares Calgary News

## Report from the Spring Workshop: Making Nonviolence Work, April 17-18

Ploughshares Calgary was pleased to host a workshop on a topic that engaged and empowered both participants and presenters! Nonviolence uses philosophies and strategies for social change that reject the use of violence. Nonviolence is a positive force that is an alternative to passive acceptance of conflict (flight approach) and armed struggle against it (fight approach). There are always two aspects in nonviolent action which are inseparable and make it authentic: 1. a specific view of a human being, a certain attitude toward human beings and society, 2. certain techniques and methods that correspond to this attitude and that give life to the positive force of nonviolence, in a given conflict.

Close to 50 people attended the Friday evening portion of the workshop which featured a presentation on German Nonviolent Resistance by Dr. Sandra Hoenle, Professor of German at the University of Calgary, co-chair of the Consortium for Peace Studies at the University and on the executive of Ploughshares Calgary. After briefly describing the political and social climate in Germany that led to the rise of the Nazi regime, Sandra described in more detail two instances of nonviolent resistance. Many incidents of nonviolent resistance to the Nazi regime in Germany have only been discovered in the last 20 or so years. The White Rose movement was a small group of students in Munich who secretly prepared and distributed six leaflets calling for noncompliance with the war efforts. The members were caught and most were executed. Towards the end of the war there was an attempt by the regime to rid Berlin of all Jews, include those who were married to non-Jews. In a spontaneous protest inter-married women gathered outside a Berlin prison on Rosenstrasse street, to protest the incarceration of their spouses. For fourteen days and nights the women retained a vigil chanting "We want our husbands back," and eventually the men were all released. The film "Rosenstrasse" tells this story.

Around 35 participants returned on Saturday for the Nonviolent Conflict Intervention Training (NCI) portion of the workshop lead by Madelyn MacKay from Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) with help from Diane Janzen, Ploughshares Program Coordinator.

*NP International is building a large-scale, professional unarmed, paid civilian peacekeeping force. Their international field projects, in partnership with local groups, use proven nonviolent "tools" to protect human rights, deter violence, and help create space for local peacemakers to carry out their work. NP builds capacity for nonviolent intervention through recruitment, assessment, and training to build pools of qualified and experienced civilian peacekeepers, both internationally and within world regions—including the US and Canada. They also conduct public education and advocate to policy makers to increase recognition that civilian nonviolent intervention is effective in preventing violence and fostering a global culture of peace.*

*NCI uses a strong, visible nonviolent presence to help prevent or mitigate violence in conflict situations. The idea behind such an intervention is not to shut down the struggle or end the conflict, but rather to abide with the conflict without the violence – thereby "creating the space" for those involved to come to resolution. (from the NP one-day Participant Handbook, for more information on NP go to [www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org](http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org))*

The NCI one-day training uses discussions, role-plays and other exercises to introduce concepts and skills like: deep listening, finding common ground, understanding others truths, and CLARA (Calm-Listen-Affirm-Respond-Add, five techniques to de-escalate hostility.) Stories from the work of Christian Peacemaker Teams and NP teams were used to illustrate the use of these additional nonviolent conflict intervention techniques:

- Distraction/Interruption/Redirection
- Accompaniment
- Monitoring, Observation, Documentation
- Shuttle Diplomacy and Street Mediation - facilitating within or between communities
- Inter-positioning - placing one's body directly between people on the verge of violent action and/or words
- Presence - having visibility and presence at events or in places or situations to be a third party witness and to spotlight violent or potentially violent actions



Participants left the workshop with new contacts, and the desire to learn more about nonviolent conflict intervention. "Moral courage is as contagious as fear." (Gandhi)

Thanks to our volunteer spring workshop committee for all your work in planning for and helping during the workshop, and to our wonderful moderator during the workshop, Larry Fisk! Ploughshares gratefully acknowledges support for the workshop from the George Weaver Memorial Fund, Helen Stover Scott Fund, Gayle Laird Memorial Fund, the Parkdale United Church Foundation, the Consortium for Peace Studies at the University of Calgary, Margaret Fitch and All Canadian Printing.

# Ploughshares National News

*Ploughshares Calgary endorsed a letter, sent the end of April, addressing armed violence and development authored by Ploughshares national and Peacebuild, written to Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Excerpts of the letter are below.*

The Government of Canada has endorsed the *Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development*. We welcome the way in which the *Geneva Declaration* links these important issues and are encouraged that a growing number of governments are endorsing it and that United Nations bodies are showing increasing interest.

The UN General Assembly Resolution on armed violence and development (A/RES/63/23) asks the Secretary-General to collect views from member states on the relationship between armed violence and development. Our principal purpose in writing to you is to strongly urge the Government of Canada to engage in this process and submit both its views on the links between the reduction of armed violence, conflict prevention and the promotion of development, as well as proposals for more effective international responses.

While controlling and reducing armed violence where it already occurs is vital, we also believe that preventing violent conflict should be a central element of a coherent and integrated approach. A recent motion in the UK Parliament notes that “for every dollar spent globally on conflict prevention nearly two thousand times as much is spent on defence and the military” and calls for making conflict prevention a greater priority.

Armed violence is a significant barrier to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in many parts of the world. There also is a significant body of research suggesting that the number of violent conflicts may increase in the coming years due to climate change, environmental degradation, competition for resources (e.g. water, oil, land), migration, and economic crises. The international community needs to be prepared to prevent a rapid escalation of crises and armed violence by investing substantially in conflict prevention. This includes early warning and early response mechanisms, infrastructures for peace, multi-stakeholder dialogues, mediation capacity-building, peace education, and encouraging policies that build social inclusion.

## **Program Updates** - *from the March 31 Ploughshares E-Newsletter*

Regional Security in the Horn of Africa Executive Director John Siebert was in Mombasa, Kenya in mid-March for the final international conference of a 3-year project on building a peace and security architecture in the Horn of Africa. Scholars from across the sub-region were engaged to look at the root causes of violent conflict in a human security framework. The Africa Peace Forum (APFO), long time partner to Project Ploughshares in East Africa, coordinated the conference that included participants from the governments of Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Djibouti, as well as regional organizations and academics. The Canadian Foreign Ministry was represented at the conference by Abdul Omar, who, prior to joining the Foreign Ministry, was a Ploughshares Young Professionals International intern and then an employee of Project Ploughshares for several years.

## **Nuclear consultation begins in Alberta—Workbook and survey now available**

The Alberta government is encouraging Albertans to share their views on whether nuclear power is an appropriate addition to the province’s energy options.

An interactive online workbook and survey are now available at [www.energy.alberta.ca](http://www.energy.alberta.ca). This workbook is organized by key questions and topics often raised in discussions about nuclear energy with information based on the recent report of the Nuclear Power Expert Panel. Hard copies of the workbook and survey can also be submitted and are available online or by phoning toll-free 310-0000, then 780-427-0265. **The survey will remain open until June 1.**

By participating in the nuclear consultation, Albertans can ensure the government considers their views as it develops its official position. The consultation process will include meetings with stakeholders, discussion groups with randomly selected Alberta citizens across Alberta, and a public opinion survey.

In anticipation of a public consultation process, the Alberta government created a “Nuclear Power Expert Panel” in 2008 to gather information and present their findings on nuclear energy to Albertans. The Expert Panel’s report was released in March 2009 and presents information to help provide a clear understanding of the nature of nuclear power generation, and its relative risks/benefits for Alberta compared with alternatives.

*(The above is a Government of Alberta information bulletin.)*



**Project Ploughshares Calgary**

2919 8th Ave. NW  
 Calgary AB T2N 1C8  
 (403) 270-7366  
 office@ploughsharescalgary.ca  
 www.ploughsharescalgary.ca

Special thanks to Diane Janzen, Sally Hodges & Larry Kennard for their work writing and editing this issue.

**Mother's Day Proclamation**

*By Julia Ward Howe, written 1870*

Arise, then, women of this day!  
 Arise, all women who have hearts,  
 Whether our baptism be of water or  
 of tears!

Say firmly:

"We will not have great questions  
 decided by irrelevant agencies,  
 Our husbands will not come to us,  
 reeking with carnage,  
 for caresses and applause.  
 Our sons shall not be taken from us  
 to unlearn  
 All that we have been able to teach  
 them of charity, mercy and  
 patience.



*Julia Ward Howe.*

We, the women of one country, will be too tender of those of another country  
 To allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs."

From the bosom of the devastated Earth a voice goes up with our own.  
 It says: "Disarm! Disarm! The sword of murder is not the balance of justice."  
 Blood does not wipe out dishonor, nor violence indicate possession.  
 As men have often forsaken the plough and the anvil at the summons of war,  
 Let women now leave all that may be left of home for a great and earnest day  
 of counsel.

Let them meet first, as women, to bewail and commemorate the dead.  
 Let them solemnly take counsel with each other as to the means  
 Whereby the great human family can live in peace,  
 Each bearing after his own time the sacred impress, not of Caesar,  
 But of God.

In the name of womanhood and humanity, I earnestly ask  
 That a general congress of women without limit of nationality  
 May be appointed and held at someplace deemed most convenient  
 And at the earliest period consistent with its objects,  
 To promote the alliance of the different nationalities,  
 The amicable settlement of international questions,  
 The great and general interests of peace.

Julia Ward Howe is one of the 45 individuals/organizations profiled in *Practitioners of Nonviolence*, a new resource in the Ploughshares library.

**Yes!** I want to become a Project Ploughshares Calgary donor and partner in building peace.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

Here is my donation for 2009 of:

\$35  \$50  \$100  \$500  \$\_\_\_\_\_

(donations of \$10 or more will receive a tax receipt)

I'd like to become a Friend of Ploughshares and give a monthly pre-authorized debit donation, please send me an application form:

I'd like to receive the monthly newsletter by:

- Email (recommended)
- Mail (requires \$35 donation)

**Upcoming Events**

**May 7-9 International EcoConference**  
*Building Bridges, Crossing Boundaries*  
 University of Calgary  
 Speakers: David Orr, Joanna Macy,  
 Nettie Wiebe and Karsten Heuer  
 Online Registration: [www.ucalgary.ca/oikos/ecoconference](http://www.ucalgary.ca/oikos/ecoconference)

**May 12, 7pm—Warrior Boyz**  
 Marda Loop Justice Film Festival  
 Quarterly Film  
 River Park Church Auditorium  
 3818 14A St SW  
 Warrior Boyz takes an unflinching look at the root causes of gang violence, and offers real solutions and a hard-fought hope for the future. To date, more than a hundred young men from the South Asian community have died in gang-related violence in Metro Vancouver. Gangs are a reality of urban life, yet behind the body count and the headlines, a far different battle is being waged. Educators and parents are taking action against gang violence.

**May 28 Forum on Nuclear Power**  
 Sponsored by CAUSE  
 John Dutton Library