

**PROJECT
PLOUGHSHARES
CALGARY**

Peace News

APRIL 2014



We are located:

**Parkdale United
Church
2919 8th Ave NW
T2N 1C8**

403- 270-7366

Office hours:

**Mon Tues & Thurs
10:00 am - 2:30pm**

Wed 12 - 4 pm

**Calgary Peace Run & Walk Festival
Volunteer Appreciation Event
Thursday April 17, 2014 - 7:00 - 8:00 PM
Parkdale United Church Conference Room
2919 - 8 Avenue NW, Calgary**



A special thank you evening for all the many volunteers who came out to help with the Calgary Peace Run Festival in 2013 - as well as for those who are interested in joining us for the newly re-branded Calgary Peace Run and Walk Festival, which takes place on Saturday September 20, 2014 starting at Eau Claire Market. We deeply appreciate and count on volunteers to help us out with this large community event.

For those who helped last year - please come and see what treats we have in store for you! For those who would like to join this fun and engaging event - either with the advance planning, or on the day of - we'll have information regarding what kinds of jobs are available for the 2014 event. Snacks and other goodies provided!

Please RSVP to Karen at 403-270-7366, or office@ploughsharescalgary.ca.

**Creating Earth Democracy:
Reclaiming the Commons from
Corporate Enclosures with Dr. Vandana Shiva
Thursday April 10, 7:00 PM - Red & White Club
McMahon Stadium, 1817—Crowchild Trail NW**



Public Interest Alberta (PIA), in conjunction with several community groups including Project Ploughshares, is pleased to announce the keynote speaker for PIAS's 8th annual advocacy conference, Reasserting the Public Good In a Corporatized World, is Vandana Shiva. Corporate Globalisation is based on the enclosures of the commons and privatisation of the public good. Patenting of seeds, privatising water, health, and education are examples of the contemporary enclosures. Across the world, citizens and communities are defending and reclaiming the commons. The talk will focus on the story of the seed, and the work of Navdanya (An organization started by Dr. Shiva) to defend Seed Freedom and create Earth Democracy.

This event will be followed by a reception. For tickets, please follow the link: <http://pialberta.org/content/pia-2014-annual-conference>



Public Interest Alberta



Ploughshares News



Donations

We received **\$210** during the month of March from individual donors. We want to continue our important work of peace education in the Calgary community and need your help to do so! Please think of Project Ploughshares when you're planning your charitable donations, and give generously! We value each and every contribution. We can't continue to do the important and meaningful work of peacebuilding without you!

Nuclear Abolition Group Meeting - Highlights

Bev Delong gave an update regarding the abolition of nuclear weapons. See www.abolishnuclearweapons.ca as well as www.nucleardarkness.org

- There are 17,000 nuclear weapons still, with 2000 on alert
- Annual global expenditure on nuclear weapons is \$105 billion. The U.S. spends \$100 million a day on nuclear weapons.
- The Canadian Government believes in a 'step by step' process for nuclear abolition : one treaty at a time. The last treaty was signed 18 years ago. This slow process does not respond to the danger that the existence of nuclear weapons poses.



Save the Dates for the following Special Events! More info to follow next month.



Peaceful Parenting and Violent Toy Trade-In

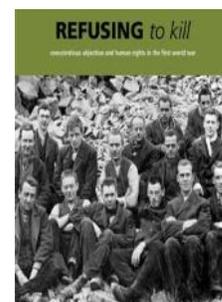
Saturday May 24th, 12 - 4 PM

Parkdale United Church Auditorium, 2919 - 8 Avenue NW

Mahendra Singh and Naomi Terner will facilitate this session. Parents will be immersed in thinking and discussion about positive parenting while creating a new toy/project with their child. Children are invited to bring one toy that could be considered violent. In exchange, they'll have the opportunity to make an amazing toy of their own creation! The violent toys will ultimately be turned into a sculpture of peace by a local arts group. Register here for this free event - Karen @ 403-270-7366 or office@ploughsharescalgary.ca

June 4th Project Ploughshares Meeting - Beyond the Centenary Celebrations

We are in the early stages of developing a panel discussion for this evening. In addition, we would like to call on all Ploughshares members and all Calgarians to consider submitting a letter (or any creative expression - art, music, etc.) ostensibly written to or created for a WW I soldier from the perspective of a conscientious objector. What would you like to say to a grandfather, brother, uncle, or son who was fighting in the war? We will share your letters and other expressions of objection to war at this meeting. We are striving to create a peaceful world without having our identities as Canadians defined by the glorification of a war.



Special Workshop - Local and Global Justice

Wednesday June 18th, 4 - 9 PM

Parkdale United Church Auditorium, 2919 - 9 Avenue NW

Facilitated by Superstars of the educating for peace and social justice world! Toh Swee-Hin and Virginia Cawagas

Through creative and participatory pedagogical strategies, participants will be facilitated in integrating social and economic justice themes and issues into high school social studies curriculum, such as the urgent need to reduce the gaps between rich and poor; transforming over-consumption and consumerism that fuel unsustainable use of resources toward a culture of voluntary simplicity and equitable sharing of global resources; and the role of global North nations, including Canada, in promoting people-centred aid and just and sustainable international economic policies and globalization for the common good. Registration info will be available in our May newsletter.

Upcoming Calgary Peace Events



The Human Voice Project - Lives Touched by War Sunday May 4th, 2 - 4 PM

Endeavor Arts Gallery, #200, 1209 - 1 St SW

The purpose of the Human Voice Project is to learn from the lives, experience and wisdom of people willing to share what they have discovered about the human condition on life's journey. It also encourages us to reflect on our own lives and the gifts we can share to become more active, engaged and hopeful global citizens.



Mennonite Central Committee

UPROOTED...May 5 - 28, 2014

Uprooted is a Learning & Service Tour for Alberta & Saskatchewan Young Adults. Approximately 8 Young Adults will travel with MCC to the Northern & Southern borders of Mexico and explore themes of Migration & Peacebuilding. This 3 week tour will be hosted by MCC Mexico & MCC West Coast and hopes to provide a rich experience for Young Adults to learn about themselves, learn about MCC and gain a greater awareness of the barriers faced by peoples in Mexico and countries to the south.

Goals

- Encourage faith formation
- Engage in cross-cultural learning
- Foster global awareness and an ethic of service
- Develop transformative relationships and leadership skills
- Gain exposure to MCC international programs & partners
- Develop connections with MCC locally in Alberta & Saskatchewan



Age: This program is targeted towards young adults ages 18-25.

Dates: Orientation May 5, Departure May 7th Returning May 27/28th (to be confirmed)

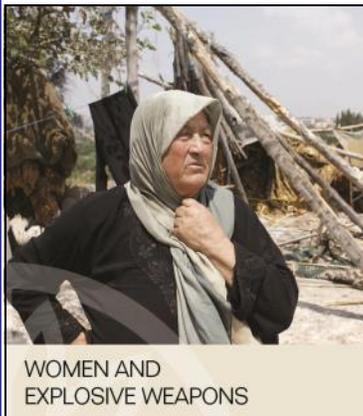
Cost: \$2,400

The fee includes everything you need from departure to arrival (orientation in Canada, airfare, in-country accommodations, travel, and food). Fundraising is encouraged. MCC Saskatchewan and Alberta will work alongside participants to fundraise a portion of the program costs.

Contact Megan Enns, Youth & Peace Program Coordinator
meganenns@mccab.org - 403-275-6935



“Peace is an occurrence of harmony characterized by the lack of violence, conflict behaviors and the freedom from fear of violence. Commonly understood as the absence of hostility and retribution, peace also suggests sincere attempts at reconciliation, the existence of healthy or newly healed interpersonal or international relationships, prosperity in matters of social or economic welfare, the establishment of equality, and a working political order that serves the true interests of all.”
<http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Peace>



WOMEN AND
EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

New publication: Women and Explosive Weapons

Today we are launching our new report [Women and Explosive Weapons](#). Concern with the use of explosive weapons in populated areas has increased over the last few years, due to the severe harm caused to civilians and the wider community. However, the debate has so far not sufficiently highlighted the specific impact that explosive weapons have on women. This publication therefore seeks to draw attention to some of the unique impacts on women that explosive weapons have when used in populated areas.

The [report](#) calls on governments to recognise that the use of explosive weapons in populated areas causes severe humanitarian problems, requiring the development of stronger and more explicit international standards, restrictions, and prohibitions. For a full list of our recommendations, please click [here](#).

The focus on women and explosive weapons is part of Reaching Critical Will's attempt to highlight the impact of weapons on women and the importance of a [strengthened gender perspective in disarmament and arms control](#) in order to ensure inclusive security and prevent all human suffering.

The report briefly describes explosive weapons and the legal tools available to assess their use, focusing in particular on legal documents that support greater inclusion of gender analysis and women's participation. The second part of this paper gives an overview on how explosive weapons specifically affect women and why a gendered analysis of the impact of explosive weapons use in populated areas is needed.

You can download the full report as a pdf [here](#), and the recommendations [here](#).



Reaching Critical Will



CONSCIENCE CANADA

Promote peace. Stop paying for war.

The reason for our existence

For many of us it is not enough to avoid personal military service because we know that funds taken from us in the form of tax will be used for war and other violent purposes. In other words, we know that we will be made complicit in war through our taxes no matter what our beliefs and values might be. As Conscientious Objectors we want to know that all funds that we turn over to government will be used only for peaceful purposes. We therefore call ourselves **Conscientious Objectors to Military Taxation (COMT)**.

Conscience Canada has worked since 1978:

to promote a change in law to allow all Canadians the right to conscientiously object to military taxation as a right of conscience guaranteed in the [Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#);

- to educate Canadians about freedom of conscience and conscientious objection to military taxation;
- to support conscientious objection to military taxation; and to defend freedom of conscience.

To register your objection to your tax dollars being used for military purposes, please fill out either Option A or Option B and send this to the Minister of Finance, James Flaherty, as well as to all Party leaders and your own Member of Parliament. It's quick and easy to do - and if we all participate, we can make an impact. Use the form located [here](#).

For those reading a paper copy of the newsletter, the website is: <http://www.consciencecanada.ca/eptr/>



Volunteers Needed!

Calgary Peace Run & Walk Festival - would you like to sit on a genuinely fun committee that is dedicated to advancing peace in Calgary? **The Calgary Peace Run & Walk Festival Committee** is for you! We are looking for people who have a knack for finding sponsorships, grants and other funding options that will

help keep the Calgary Peace Run Festival a viable, engaging and sustainable community event. The **Calgary Peace Run & Walk Festival** is a great way to meet new people and to help out in a very worthy cause - the cause of peace!

Contact Karen at 403-270-7366, office@ploughsharescalgary.ca



Daisaku Ikeda heads Soka Gakkai International, one of the world's largest and most diverse Buddhist movements.

Emerging from the Nuclear Shadow (*The Japan Times*, Sep. 14, 2006)

By Daisaku Ikeda. Read full essay here: <http://www.daisakuikeda.org/sub/resources/works/essays/op-eds/jt-oped05.html>

"At any given moment in history, precious few voices are heard crying out for justice. But, now more than ever, those voices must rise above the din of violence and hatred."

These are the memorable words of Dr. Joseph Rotblat, who for many years led the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, a global organization working for peace and for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In the final phase of his life, he consistently voiced his strong sense of foreboding about the chronic lack of progress toward nuclear disarmament and the growing threat of nuclear proliferation.

The startling development of military technology has entirely insulated acts of war from human realities and feelings. In an instant, irreplaceable lives are lost and beloved homelands reduced to ruin. The anguished cries of *victims and their families are silenced or ignored. Within this vast system of violence--at the peak of which are poised nuclear weapons--humans* are no longer seen as embodiments of life. They are reduced to the status of mere things. In the face of these severe challenges, there is a spreading sense of powerlessness and despair within the international community, a readiness to dismiss the possibility of nuclear abolition as a mere pipe dream.

Peace is a competition between despair and hope, between disempowerment and committed persistence. To the degree that powerlessness takes root in people's consciousness, there is a greater tendency to resort to force. Powerlessness breeds violence. But it was human beings that gave birth to these instruments of hellish destruction. It cannot be beyond the power of human wisdom to eliminate them.

The Pugwash Conferences that were Rotblat's base of action were first held in 1957, a year that saw a rapid acceleration in the nuclear arms race that came to engulf the entire planet. On Sept. 8 of the same year, my mentor, Josei Toda, issued a call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. The day was blessed with the kind of beautiful clear sky that follows a typhoon, as Toda made his declaration at a gathering of some 50,000 young people in Yokohama:

"Today a global movement calling for a ban on the testing of atomic or nuclear weapons has arisen. It is my wish to go further; I want to expose and remove the claws that lie hidden in the depths of such weapons . . . Even if a certain country should conquer the world using nuclear weapons, the people who used those weapons should be condemned as demons and devils."

Toda chose to denounce nuclear weapons in such harsh, even strident, terms because he was determined to expose their essential nature as an absolute evil--one that denies and undermines humankind's collective right to live. Toda's impassioned call issued from a philosophical understanding of life's inner workings: He was warning against the demonic egotism that seeks to bend others to our will. He saw this writ large in the desire of states to possess these weapons of ultimate destruction.

The idea that nuclear weapons function to deter war and are therefore a "necessary evil" is a core impediment to their elimination; it must be challenged and dismantled.

If we are to eliminate nuclear weapons, a fundamental transformation of the human spirit is essential. Since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki more than 60 years ago, the survivors have transformed despair into a sense of mission as they have continued to call out for nuclear abolition. As people living today, it is our shared responsibility--our duty and our right--to act as heirs to this lofty work of inner transformation, to expand and elevate it into a struggle to eliminate war itself.

In 1982, as Cold War tensions mounted, the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) organized the exhibition "Nuclear Arms: Threat to Our World" at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. It toured 16 countries, including the Soviet Union and China and other nuclear weapons states. It was viewed by some 1.2 million visitors in total. The purpose of these and other efforts has been to arouse the hearts of people seeking peace.

Needless to say, it is young people who bear the challenges and possibilities of the future. It would therefore be valuable to hold a gathering of youth representatives from around the world prior to the annual U.N. General Assembly, giving world leaders an opportunity to hear the views of the next generation. Affording young people such venues and opportunities to engage as world citizens is critical to building the long-term foundations for peace.

Crying out in opposition to war and nuclear weapons is neither emotionalism nor self-pity. It is the highest expression of human reason based on an unflinching perception of the dignity of life. Faced with the horrifying facts of nuclear proliferation, we must call forth the power of hope from within the depths of each individual's life.

To emerge from the shadow of nuclear weapons we need a revolution in the consciousness of countless individuals--a revolution that gives rise to the heartfelt confidence that "There is something I can do." Then, finally, we will see a coming together of the world's people, and hear their common voice, their cry for an end to this terrible madness of destruction.



Project Ploughshares Calgary

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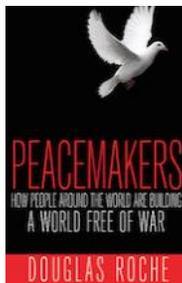
office@ploughsharescalgary.ca

Special thanks to Karen Huggins & Sally Hodges for their work writing and editing this issue of the newsletter.

"The situation of the world is still like this. People completely identify with one side, one ideology. To understand the suffering and the fear of a citizen of the Soviet Union, we have to become one with him or her. To do so is dangerous — we will be suspected by both sides. But if we don't do it, if we align ourselves with one side or the other, we will lose our chance to work for peace. Reconciliation is to understand both sides, to go to one side and describe the suffering being endured by the other side, and then to go to the other side and describe the suffering being endured by the first side. Doing only that will be a great help for peace."



Thich Nhat Hanh, Being Peace, 1987



New Book by Douglas Roche, OC
Peacemakers: How People Around The World Are Building A World Free of War

A world without war: this is the vision that Douglas Roche has pursued for decades. A long-time Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament, Canadian ambassador for disarmament, and later a senator, Roche has been in the thick of international affairs for more than forty years.

Though few of us realize it, today the world is more peaceful than in past centuries. Death and destruction due to war have diminished dramatically in the past two decades. This is no accident – it is the cumulative result of the work of the world's peacemakers. Sometimes in public, often behind the scenes, talented high achievers are waging a campaign for peace that is in ascendance over the warlike intentions of the arms industry, military generals, and aggressive government leaders.

Neither Roche nor the peacemakers shy away from the thorniest issues the world faces – including the threat posed by nuclear weapons, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and multiple threats of cultural violence. Roche shows how new ideas such as the responsibility to protect innocent civilians from genocide or armed attack by their own government, and new institutions such as the International Criminal Court are moving the world along the path to the end of war.

Roche documents the many successes of the past two decades in reducing conflict in the world, and in creating structures and institutions which are making war less likely and more difficult for states to initiate.



Project Ploughshares Calgary

Yes...I am interested in supporting the peace work of Project Ploughshares!

- \$50
- \$100
- \$250
- \$500
- \$1000
- Other Amount (Specify) \$ _____
- I'd like to make a monthly donation of \$ _____
- I'd like to volunteer

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____

Donation Options: Cheque PayPal Cash

Make cheque payable to Project Ploughshares Calgary or go to www.ploughsharescalgary.ca to make your payment via PayPal.

Please mail completed form with donation to:

Project Ploughshares Calgary, 2919 - 8 Ave. NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1C8

(Project Ploughshares is a charitable organization - we issue tax receipts for all donations over \$20)