

PROJECT
PLOUGHSHARES
CALGARY

Peace News

SEPTEMBER 2011



We are located:
Parkdale United
Church
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Office hours:
Mon & Thurs
10:30am - 3pm
Tues. - 11:30 - 4
Wed 2 - 6pm

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Peace in our Communities
International Day of Peace Celebration
Wednesday September 21, 2011
Calgary Community Peace Pole
Bow River Pathway* 12 – 1:00 PM

Our keynote speaker for this event will be Dr. Arthur Clark, U of C Professor of Medicine and founder of the Calgary Centre for Global Community. Additionally we will be having music and other surprises for you! Come show your support and hope for a non-violent future! See www.calgarypeacepole.org. For further information call: 403-270-7366.



What IS Peace Education Anyway?
October 12, 2011—7:30 pm
Parkdale United Church

Our Program Director, Karen Huggins, will lead an interactive meeting on the many facets of Peace Education. Together we will explore six basic tenets of Peace Education - Dismantling a Culture of War; Educating for Human Rights; Educating for Social Justice; Respecting the Environment; Educating for Intercultural Solidarity; and Promoting Inner Peace.



Singing for Peace Fundraiser
Songs of Justice & Joy!
October 15, 2011, 7:30 pm, Parkdale United Church

Featuring *Barry Luft* with *Louise Forsyth*

Barry Luft's singing has woven rich, colourful threads into the fabric of folk-style music in Alberta for more than thirty years.

He will be joined by Louise Forsyth. Join us for a very enjoyable evening!



Tickets: \$15 at the door; \$13 advance; \$8 students/low income Call: 403-270-7366 for info and advance tickets

Annual Holiday Peace Fair
St. David's United Church
3303 Capitol Hill Cres NW
(by U of C LRT station)
9:30 AM - 4 PM, November 26th, 2011



Supporting Social Justice and Fair Trade
SAVE THE DATE FOR YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING!

Ploughshares Calgary News



Vigil for the Japanese People Thursday, June 30th, 5 – 6 pm at the Calgary Community Peace Pole

Project Ploughshares held a vigil in remembrance of the triple tragedies that occurred in Japan last March. We were very pleased with the turnout of people who showed their solidarity and support with the Japanese people, both here in Calgary and globally. Of particular note was a very beautiful Japanese song, sung by Keiko Hache for the gathering (pictured). Thank you to everyone who came out for this important occasion!

Summer Fundraisers!

We had two very successful fundraisers over the summer months, beginning with an evening at Ten Thousand Villages, where we made \$489.72, a percentage of the total sales for the evening of July 14th. We also made a total of \$836 from selling Spolumbo's sausages. Our deepest and most sincere gratitude to both Ten Thousand Villages and Spolumbo's for their generosity and community-mindedness in helping us raise money to help Project Ploughshares Calgary achieve our financial and program goals.



Donations

Donations from individuals over the summer months came to \$2015. From organizations we received \$1550. We encourage you to support our peace work by donating whatever you can...it costs Project Ploughshares Calgary \$3000 each month to maintain our office, staff, and the projects that we are involved with. Our thanks to those who donated...we sincerely appreciate your support and commitment to the ideals of peacemaking!

Volunteers Needed!

Would you like to help in bringing peace to Calgary and the world? We have three special events coming up that we need volunteers for:

- ◆ We are planning to do another fundraiser selling Spolumbo's sausages again during the fall (early November) and need someone who would be responsible for taking the orders, placing the order with Spolumbo's, picking up the sausages, and having them ready to distribute at the Holiday Peace Fair on November 26th.
- ◆ We are also looking for a volunteer who would be interested in sitting on the committee for the Calgary Peace Run & Walk, which will take place next summer. If you are enthusiastic and feel that you have a knack for identifying and talking with potential sponsors for this event, we'd love to have you on board starting late September if possible!
- ◆ We would also love to have several people to find interesting items for us to sell at the Peace Fair at the Ploughshares table.



Please email Karen at office@ploughsharescalgary.ca or phone her at [403-270-7366](tel:403-270-7366) to tell us your willingness! Together, we will create more peace.



Entertainment Books

We have the 2012 Entertainment Books available for purchase now - these books can save you hundreds of dollars on dining, travel, recreation, and retail purchases - AND you'll be helping Project Ploughshares with our program goals and expenses. Email Karen at office@ploughsharescalgary.ca to reserve your book today! Only \$40.00!



THE SKY IS WEeping

By Robert C. Koehler

When our lives are torn open, when the worst possible thing happens, what we have, finally, are our roses and our courage.

“I chose to stay in Oslo the entire week. It has felt like the most natural thing to do. I have never experienced any place any time in my life with such a complete absence of aggression. It feels like the city itself has gone into a peaceful place.”

Is this possible? My sense is that Norway’s reaction to its tragedy transcends much of the media coverage about it, obsessed as the media are with big-headline drama, who did it, who will pay. But something the headlines can’t capture seems to be going on in this small country,

some determination among the people, above and beyond any political agenda, to stand — though wounded, though shattered by grief — for their highest values.

The quote above is from a young Norwegian-born mom named Turid, who lives in the U.S. but had sent her 9-year-old son to summer camp in Norway. She described her experience in a letter that was forwarded to me by a friend. She had just arrived in the country and was waiting for her son at the Oslo train station when the bomb went off nearby, creating momentary pandemonium and instantly changing her plans. Rather than traveling out of the city, she and her son stayed with relatives in Oslo and became part of the national mourning.

Her words of wonder at Oslo’s transformation — at not simply the absence of a public desire for vengeance but the palpable expansion of the reach of love — were reflected in numerous stories.

For instance, [the very first funeral](#) for one of the young murder victims, 18-year-old Bano Rashid, an Iraqi-born Kurdish refugee, became a moving affirmation of the values her killer sought to destroy. The service, held at a small, rural wooden chapel built in the 19th century, was conducted jointly by an imam and a Lutheran minister.

“Inside, the ceremony was poignant for someone who spanned two countries, two cultures and two religions,” wrote Richard Alleyne in the U.K.’s Telegraph. “It was the first ever in Norway — and maybe the world — to combine Christian and Muslim beliefs.”

A young woman named Ayesha, clutching a single red rose, said as her friend was being laid to rest, “This will make us more tolerant, bring us together, make Norway a safer place for people to come to,” Alleyne wrote.

And here are the words of [Trond Gunnar Rasmussen](#), chairperson of the Norwegian chapter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation: “As we wait for the names of the victims of these monstrous acts to be publicized, the sky is weeping.. Our country is so small that the chance some families in grief are known to us is fairly high. The leader of the populist right party said: All we can do now is to go around hugging and embracing each other. This demonstrates just how united we feel right now. . . .

“More than symbolic events, our societies need to seek a common understanding of the importance of nonviolence and a culture of peace. This must be our enlightenment in this time of darkness.”

The sky is weeping . . .

I think about this haunting phrase, which starts to get at the enormity of the tragedy — Norway’s tragedy and all the others. Certainly the sky wept a decade ago, when it was rent by two hijacked aircraft, when the World Trade Center fell to its knees and 3,000 people died. But has it ever stopped weeping?

In the United States, vengeance and a covert political agenda trumped the roses, trumped all the grief and self-sacrifice and heroism.

“Why are we violent, but not illiterate?” columnist Colman McCarthy once asked, making the point that nonviolence — pragmatic emotional restraint under extenuating circumstances — must be learned, just as literacy is learned. Rare (at least in my experience) is the political leader who sees much advantage to a populace with this much education.

I believe the United States could have gone in a different direction — other than war and shopping — after 9/11. When the sky was weeping, when everyone knew it and felt it, a different sort of leader might have reaffirmed the largest of American values rather than exploited the smallest.

“The Norwegian response to violence is more democracy,” Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg said to his stunned nation as they gathered in grief. “Norwegians,” he said, “want to defend themselves against violence by showing that they’re not afraid of violence.”

The ultimate tragedy of 9/11 is that this great opening, as [Michael Nagler](#) of the Metta Center for Nonviolence put it, was mythologized in the service of violence and a permanently bloated defense budget. It became a grand excuse for empire and occupation. We dehumanized the people of two nations and proceeded to destroy those nations. We did so for coldly strategic reasons, of course, but the patriotic rallying cry was revenge.

There is a passage we must traverse collectively, beyond geopolitics as usual and through our deepest fears, to a far deeper mutual understanding. Let’s follow Norway.

*Robert Koehler is an award-winning, Chicago-based journalist, contributor to One World, Many Peoples and nationally syndicated writer. His new book, **Courage Grows Strong at the Wound** (Xenos Press) is now available. Contact him at koehlercw@gmail.com*

Not Here – Rumi

There's courage involved if you want
to become truth. There is a broken-

open place in a lover. Where are
those qualities of bravery and sharp

compassion in this group? What's the
use of old and frozen thought? I want

a howling hurt. This is not a treasury
where gold is stored, this is for copper.
We alchemists look for talent that
can heat up and change. Lukewarm

won't do. Half-hearted holding back,
well-enough getting by? Not here.

from *The Soul of Rumi*
translated by Coleman Barks

Kiss the Earth

Walk and touch peace every moment.
Walk and touch happiness every moment.
Each step brings a fresh breeze.
Each step makes a flower bloom.
Kiss the Earth with your feet.
Bring the Earth your love and happiness.
The Earth will be safe
when we feel safe in ourselves.

Thich Nhat Han

"Human progress is neither automatic nor
inevitable... Every step toward the goal of
justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and
struggle; the tireless exertions and pas-
sionate concern of dedicated individuals."
Martin Luther King

The Conscientious Objector

The gates clanged and they walked you into jail
More tense than felons but relieved to find
The hostile world shut out, the flags that dripped
From every mother's windowpane, obscene
The bloodlust sweating from the public heart,
The dog authority slaverling at your throat.
A sense of quiet, of pulling down the blind
Possessed you. Punishment you felt was clean.
The decks, the catwalks, and the narrow light
Composed a ship. This was a mutinous crew
Troubling the captains for plain decencies,
A Mayflower brim with pilgrims headed out
To establish new theocracies to west.
A Noah's ark coasting the topmost seas
Ten miles above the sodomites and fish.
These inmates loved the only living doves.

Like all men hunted from the world you made
A good community, voyaging the storm
To no safe Plymouth or green Ararat;
Troubled or calm, the men with Bibles prayed.
The gaunt politicals construed our hate.
The opposite of all armies, you were best
Opposing uniformity and yourselves;
Prison and personality were your fate.

You suffered not so physically but knew
Maltreatment, hunger, ennui of the mind.
Well might the soldier kissing the hot beach
Erupting in his face damn all your kind.
Yet you who saved neither yourselves nor us
Are equally with those who shed the blood
The heroes of our cause. Your conscience is
What we come back to in the armistice.

Karl Shapiro

Karl Shapiro, "The Conscientious Objector" from *Select-
ed Poems* (New York: Library of America, 2003).

Note from Michael True:

*Karl Shapiro, author of this powerful tribute to conscientious
objectors during World War II, was born in Baltimore in 1913,
and died in New York City on May 14, 2000. He received the
Pulitzer Prize for V-Letter and Other Poems (1945), written
while he was on duty in the South Pacific. Later, he edited
Poetry and Prairie Schooner magazines, and taught at UC
Davis until 1986.*

Hunting down an Arms Trade Treaty

By Kenneth Epps

Canada has never been a strong supporter of international efforts to negotiate an effective Arms Trade Treaty. But in mid-July, it reversed its previous low-key but constructive role at the United Nations ATT preparatory meetings to become a potential treaty spoiler. All indications point to this change of heart arising from the domestic gun lobby's influence on Canadian foreign policy.



After years of preparation, member states of the United Nations will devote a month in the summer of 2012 to negotiating a global ATT to establish effective standards to regulate the international arms trade. With an estimated 740,000 annual deaths worldwide from armed conflicts and criminal violence, most states agree the treaty cannot come too soon.

Each state controls the transfer of arms across its borders. The current wide range of national standards makes nominally legal trade susceptible to diversion of arms into criminal and other illicit hands. Officially, authorized weapons shipments also are used irresponsibly in breaches of international human rights laws, in ignoring international humanitarian law that applies to armed conflict, and in undermining basic human development.

To work, the ATT must adopt high universal standards that would require many states to improve their arms transfer controls to meet these higher standards. A lowest common denominator approach to the ATT, by locking in low global standards, would actually make matters worse.

No one believed the ATT negotiation process would be easy. UN arms control and disarmament negotiations are notoriously difficult, with many initiatives held hostage by a few states that block progress.

Still, ATT discussions within the UN are well advanced. The UN has held three preparatory committee meetings in anticipation of the 2012 negotiation conference. And there were indications in July that the treaty was gaining wider momentum. For the first time, the five permanent members of the Security Council, which collectively export over four-fifths of all conventional weapons, issued a joint statement in support of the ATT negotiations.

But to the dismay of many observers, Canada's two statements during the July meeting reversed its prior supportive treaty stance.

The first Canadian statement was in response to the chair's circulated text on measures to advance treaty implementation. Instead of supporting the chair's suggested measures, Canada referred to the text as "too ambitious," with sections that were "too detailed" or "seeking too much."

Canada's statement overlooked the key point that a strong treaty will require a rise in standards across most states. If a wealthy state like Canada, which already has strong arms export controls, argues against the need for relatively minor improvements to its own practice to implement a strong treaty, how can it expect improvements from states with weaker arms transfer controls, many of which have much more limited resources?

Canada's second intervention, two days later, was even more troublesome. Canada reversed its earlier stance by questioning treaty criteria on socio-economic development and corruption, the removal of which would weaken treaty provisions related to poverty reduction and combatting bribery in many parts of the world.

Finally, Canada suggested particular wording calling for recognition in the treaty preamble "that small arms have certain legitimate civilian uses" and for the exclusion of "sporting and hunting firearms for recreational use" from the scope of the treaty. These suggested changes to the text appear to have been crafted by Canada's own gun lobby, and echo the position of the US National Rifle Association presented at the meeting by NRA executive vice-president Wayne LaPierre that the ATT aims to remove the rights of "America's 80 million law-abiding gun owners."

The exemption of sporting and hunting firearms from the treaty was the most damaging and impractical of Canada's suggestions. At the international level, there is no agreed distinction between civilian and military small arms. Moreover, for many states, all firearms are a threat in the wrong hands.

In its statement opposing Canada's suggestions, Mexico noted that "different interpretations for military and recreational use of firearms open gaps for subjective interpretation" of the treaty. Fourteen other states also objected to Canada's proposal, including Australia, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Sweden. Like Canada, these states control the export and import of all firearms, and like Canada, introducing an ATT exemption for a sub-class would contradict their existing controls.

These Canadian suggestions were not only unhelpful. They gave the impression that Canada misunderstands the purpose of the treaty. The ATT will not apply to civilian ownership or domestic transfers of firearms. Rather, it addresses the transfer of firearms and other conventional weapons across national borders.

The two interventions by Canada in the UN ATT meetings follow the recent announcement by Foreign Minister John Baird that Canada will boycott the UN Conference on Disarmament while North Korea holds the temporary presidency. Together, they suggest the Conservative Government is adopting a go-it-alone approach that is less than helpful in international arms control negotiations.

Kenneth Epps is senior program officer at Project Ploughshares, Waterloo, Ontario.



Ending Nuclear Evil

By Desmond Tutu

CAPE TOWN – Eliminating nuclear weapons is the democratic wish of the world's people. Yet no nuclear-armed country currently appears to be preparing for a future without these terrifying devices. In fact, all are squandering billions of dollars on modernization of their nuclear forces, making a mockery of United Nations disarmament pledges. If we allow this madness to continue, the eventual use of these instruments of terror seems all but inevitable.

The nuclear power crisis at Japan's Fukushima power plant has served as a dreadful reminder that events thought unlikely can and do happen. It has taken a tragedy of great proportions to prompt some leaders to act to avoid similar calamities at nuclear reactors elsewhere in the world. But it must not take another Hiroshima or Nagasaki – or an even greater disaster – before they finally wake up and recognize the urgent necessity of nuclear disarmament.

This week, the foreign ministers of five nuclear-armed countries – the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and China – will meet in Paris to discuss progress in implementing the nuclear-disarmament commitments that they made at last year's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference. It will be a test of their resolve to transform the vision of a future free of nuclear arms into reality.

If they are serious about preventing the spread of these monstrous weapons – and averting their use – they will work energetically and expeditiously to eliminate them completely. One standard must apply to all countries: zero. Nuclear arms are wicked, regardless of who possesses them. The unspeakable human suffering that they inflict is the same whatever flag they may bear. So long as these weapons exist, the threat of their use – either by accident or through an act of sheer madness – will remain.

We must not tolerate a system of nuclear apartheid, in which it is considered legitimate for some states to possess nuclear arms but patently unacceptable for others to seek to acquire them. Such a double standard is no basis for peace and security in the world. The NPT is not a license for the five original nuclear powers to cling to these weapons indefinitely. The International Court of Justice has affirmed that they are legally obliged to negotiate in good faith for the complete elimination of their nuclear forces.

The New START agreement between the US and Russia, while a step in the right direction, will only skim the surface off the former Cold War foes' bloated nuclear arsenals – which account for 95% of the global total. Furthermore, these and other countries' modernization activities cannot be reconciled with their professed support for a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is deeply troubling that the US has allocated \$185 billion to augment its nuclear stockpile over the next decade, on top of the ordinary annual nuclear-weapons budget of more than \$50 billion. Just as unsettling is the Pentagon's push for the development of nuclear-armed drones – H-bombs deliverable by remote control.

Russia, too, has unveiled a massive nuclear-weapons modernization plan, which includes the deployment of various new delivery systems. British politicians, meanwhile, are seeking to renew their navy's aging fleet of Trident submarines – at an estimated cost of £76 billion (\$121 billion). In doing so, they are passing up an historic opportunity to take the lead on nuclear disarmament.

Every dollar invested in bolstering a country's nuclear arsenal is a diversion of resources from its schools, hospitals, and other social services, and a theft from the millions around the globe who go hungry or are denied access to basic medicines. Instead of investing in weapons of mass annihilation, governments must allocate resources towards meeting human needs.

The only obstacle we face in abolishing nuclear weapons is a lack of political will, which can – and must – be overcome. Two-thirds of UN member states have called for a nuclear-weapons convention similar to existing treaties banning other categories of particularly inhumane and indiscriminate weapons, from biological and chemical arms to anti-personnel land mines and cluster munitions. Such a treaty is feasible and must be urgently pursued.

It is true that nuclear weapons cannot be uninvented, but that does not mean that nuclear disarmament is an impossible dream. My own country, South Africa, gave up its nuclear arsenal in the 1990's, realizing it was better off without these weapons. Around the same time, the newly independent states of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine voluntarily relinquished their nuclear arms, and then joined the NPT. Other countries have abandoned nuclear-weapons programs, recognizing that nothing good could possibly come from them. Global stockpiles have dropped from 68,000 warheads at the height of the Cold War to 20,000 today.

In time, every government will come to accept the basic inhumanity of threatening to obliterate entire cities with nuclear weapons. They will work to achieve a world in which such weapons are no more – where the rule of law, not the rule of force, reigns supreme, and cooperation is seen as the best guarantor of international peace. But such a world will be possible only if people everywhere rise up and challenge the nuclear madness.

Desmond Tutu is a Nobel Peace Prize laureate and supporter of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (www.icanw.org).



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

Calgary Peace Events



Dr. Sanem Sahin talks about Reporting the Peace on an Island in Conflict

September 7, 2011
PeaceTalk Series with the Consortium for Peace Studies
Reporting the Peace on an Island in Conflict: the Role of News Media in the Cyprus Problem

Professional Faculties 3257 - 5:30 pm - Dr. Sanem Sahin

The Consortium for Peace Studies together with SAIT's School of Information and Communications Technologies presents a talk that will explore how the Turkish Cypriot news media represent the Cyprus Problem and the ongoing peace process. It will also discuss whether peace journalism, a form of journalism that aims to contribute to peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts, can enhance the quality of news coverage and the role of the press in promoting rapprochement between the communities of Cyprus.

Dr. SANEM ŞAHİN is the Consortium's visiting scholar/ Research Fellow in Peace Studies. She is a media researcher. She earned her Master and PhD degrees from the University of Westminster in London in the field of journalism and media studies. She taught journalism and media-related courses at Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus for seven years. She is a Fulbright Scholar and co-author of 'Media Narratives, Politics and the Cyprus problem' (PRIO, 2010). Current main interests are journalism, media and identity; nationalism and the news media's role in conflict resolution and peace building.

September 11, 2011

This is a day of reflection for many people. This year, let's think about the ways in which we can each contribute to a non-violent future for ourselves, our children, grandchildren, and all future generations. The future is indeed in our hands - we all need to make the commitment to make our world a better and safer place.



Dr. Vandana Shiva, Recipient of the 2011 Peace Prize through the Consortium for Peace Studies, University of Calgary, Friday September 23, 2011
River Café on Prince's Island from 6:30 - 9:00 PM

There will be a cocktail reception at 6:30, followed by Dr. Shiva's presentation at 7:30.

Saturday September 24, 2011
9:00 AM - Making Peace With the Earth
Red & White Club, MacMahon Stadium

Project Ploughshares Calgary is proud to be a sponsor of this event! Join on us Saturday, September 24th 2011 at the Red & White Club as we hear from our 2011 recipient Dr. Vandana Shiva, philosopher, environmental activist, advocate for food sovereignty, eco feminist and author of several books. We would love to have you stop by our booth for a chat! For further information, please contact Saima at 403-220-2136 or check the website at www.peaceuc@ucalgary.ca

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 2010 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 (with \$35 donation)