

PROJECT
PLOUGHSHARES
CALGARY

Peace News

MARCH 2008



We are located:

**Parkdale United
Church
2919 8th Ave NW
(403) 270-7366**

Office hours:

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

DISABLE CLUSTER BOMBS. NOT PEOPLE.

**7:30pm Wednesday March 12th
Parkdale United Church - 2919 8th Ave. NW**

The short documentary film *Yellow Killers - the Impact of cluster munitions in Serbia and Montenegro* will be screened and **Jamilah Joseph** from the Red Cross will present additional information and lead a discussion on what WE can do to stop cluster bombs.

Ten years after the world came together to ban landmines, ordinary people are once again needed to make an extraordinary impact! Cluster bombs have killed and injured thousands of civilians during the last 40 years and continue to do so today. But now there is a real opportunity to make them a thing of the past. An international treaty is being drawn up within the Oslo Process which will see cluster bombs banned by the end of 2008.

Mines Action Canada (www.minesactioncanada.org) held their annual Canadian Landmine Actions Week from February 24 to March 1 this year.

Sing with the Strathees

7pm Sunday April 20th Parkdale United Church
a Project Ploughshares fundraiser concert

♪ celebrating peace work in Calgary ♪

Jim and Jean's music is an offering of hope and encouragement for all people, bringing a message of compassion, justice and healing. Bring your whole family and join us for a time of singing together that is joyful, playful, prayerful and always heartfelt.

Tickets: \$10 in advance
\$12 at the door
\$25 for a family



Call 270-7366 for more information, to join the choir for the concert, or to book your tickets (you can also reserve free childcare for children under 4 years).

(Don't worry! We will still be having our fall Singing for Peace Concert.)

Ploughshares Calgary News

Annual Ploughshares Spring Workshop

Please watch for information about the Project Ploughshares spring workshop to be held on Saturday May 24th. One of the speakers will be **Rev. Bill Phipps** who will be presenting information from his new book ***Cause for Hope: Humanity at the Crossroads***.



Photo courtesy of Dave Bell

Window on Iran—Reese Erlich

Independent journalist Reese Erlich visited Calgary as part of his North American speaking tour promoting his new book *The Iran Agenda: The Real story of U.S. Policy and the Middle East Crisis*. Reese was the guest speaker at the Ploughshares February monthly meeting and shared both stories from his travels in the Middle East as well as analysis of the situation.

Reese reported that since the 1979 revolution in Iran, the U.S. administrations have argued that Iran poses a threat to U.S. national security, with various reasons through the years. Reese refuted these reasons, claiming that the ruling elite is confusing national security with corporate/military interests. The nuclear weapons “reason” was disputed by the U.S. National Intelligence Estimate’s report released in December 2007 that Iran stopped its nuclear weapons program in 2003. The people in Iran are not happy with the existing government in power in Iran and there are many grassroots movements in Iran that are working to change it—their efforts are hampered by repeated threats of attacks and sanctions. Because of on-going grassroots movements both in Iran and in the U.S. (to prevent further misguided wars on terror), Reese remains a “sober optimist” that people from the two countries will make peace.

Ploughshares thanks the Muslim Association of Calgary, the University of Calgary’s Consortium for Peace Studies and Faculty of Communication and Culture for co-sponsoring to bring Reese to Calgary.

Ploughshares National News

- The latest issue of Ploughshares E-Newsletter is available at www.ploughshares.ca.
- Project Ploughshares national and Project Ploughshares Calgary have endorsed the statement on the following page.
- There is a new Ploughshares webpage (www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/Reduce/CanadaInAfghanistan.htm) that compiles in one location the documents produced by Ploughshares and Canadian churches (as well as some by other NGOs) on Afghanistan since the events of September 11, 2001. On that page is a new briefing titled *A Peace to Keep in Afghanistan* written by Senior Policy Advisor Ernie Regehr. The introduction section of this brief appears below:

The final report of the Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan (Manley Panel) (2008) reinforced a prominent misperception in the current debate over the role of Canadian forces in Afghanistan, namely that “there is not yet a peace to keep in Afghanistan.” In large areas of the country, essentially the northern half, there is indeed a peace to keep. To be sure, it is a fragile peace, but if it is not protected, built upon, and genuinely nurtured it will yet be lost.

Security assistance forces in the north are critical to maintaining conditions that are conducive to moving from a fragile to a durable peace. International forces deployed in the north, unlike those in the south, follow the model of peace support operations intended to protect people in their homes, communities, schools, and places of work. Thus these regions of the country, which are relatively free of the insurgency that increasingly plagues the south, have the opportunity to develop and advance the human security of Afghans. The peace support forces operate under a UN Chapter VII mandate and can certainly resort to lethal force, whatever national caveats may be in place. However, this use of force is clearly distinguishable from counterinsurgency combat that seeks to defeat the Taliban on their home ground in the south.

The harsh reality is that the counterinsurgency combat operations in the south are repeating history in their failure to stem, never mind defeat, the insurgency. The growing danger is that while the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and NATO focus on the south, the security, reconstruction, and governance challenges in the north will be neglected to the point that declining northern confidence in local and national government will lead to collapse there as well.

Accordingly, the military choice facing Canada in Afghanistan is not between combat and no combat; it is between counterinsurgency warfare and Chapter VII peace support, or peacekeeping, operations.

Restoring Canada's Nuclear Disarmament Leadership

Canada must recover its leading role in working for the elimination of nuclear weapons, a role that has been cast into doubt under the Harper government. That was the dominant finding for the sponsors of a special seminar of 20 nuclear disarmament experts held February 3-4, 2008 in Ottawa. The seminar was co-sponsored by six leading groups: the Middle Powers Initiative, Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the Rideau Institute, The Simons Foundation, Canadian Pugwash Group and Physicians for Global Survival – all of which have endorsed this statement.

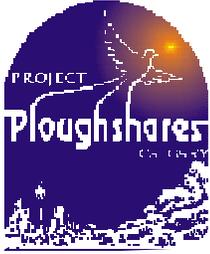
Special attention was paid to the incoherence and contradiction between Canada supporting the “unequivocal undertaking” to the total elimination of nuclear weapons required by the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Canada's continued allegiance to NATO's policies stating that nuclear weapons are “essential.”

Concern was expressed during the seminar that NATO's policies for the retention of nuclear weapons are now trumping the NPT's legal obligations for nuclear disarmament. The government's own website, stating that Canada's nuclear policy now must be consistent with NATO's policies, calls into question whether the NPT is still the central instrument in which Canada's nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament policy is rooted. A strong call was made for Canada to work with Germany and Norway in their current efforts to overhaul NATO's outdated policies, particularly as set out in its Strategic Concept, for retention of nuclear weapons.

Having heard the testimony and discussion of the experts at the seminar, and with a view to the preparations underway for the 2010 Review conference of the NPT, the sponsors of the seminar have set out this urgent agenda:

1. Prime Minister Harper must unambiguously affirm the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. In that call, he would be joining senior American figures Henry Kissinger, William Perry, George Shultz, and Sam Nunn who in January issued that call a second time, joined by Mikhail Gorbachev, Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell and a growing list of global leaders.
2. That assertion by the Prime Minister must in turn be coupled with a re-energized Canadian diplomacy to produce action on priority, actionable, and universally agreed steps toward nuclear elimination, such as:
 - De-alerting all deployed weapons to remove the threat of accidental annihilation,
 - Entry into force of the comprehensive ban on testing nuclear weapons (CTBT),
 - A ban on production of fissile material for weapons purposes (FMT), and
 - Substantial, irreversible, and verified reductions to existing arsenals.
3. Canada must work for a review of NATO nuclear policy to reject the fiction that nuclear weapons “preserve peace.” Canada should press NATO to revise its Strategic Concept to acknowledge that nuclear weapons pose an unacceptable risk to humanity, and that their early elimination is essential to human security. To move from words to action, NATO should be challenged to remove, and dismantle, all US tactical nuclear weapons from the territories of non-nuclear weapon states of the alliance and to call on Russia to reciprocate with cuts to its arsenal of tactical weapons as a step toward complete nuclear disarmament.
4. India, Israel, and Pakistan must be integrated into the disarmament and non-proliferation mainstream. To that end, Canada should continue to call on all three to honor the repeated demands of the international community “to accede to [the NPT] as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions.” Until India signs the NPT, Canada should also insist that the any proposed civilian nuclear cooperation with India be contingent on India taking clear and irreversible steps toward disarmament, including ratification of the CTBT, a verifiable freeze on its production of fissile materials for weapons purposes, and formal acceptance of the disarmament obligations set out in Article VI of the NPT.
5. Canada must also be energetic in non-proliferation efforts, especially since Canada is a prominent supplier of uranium and technologies for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In the context of increasing demand for energy and the inevitable spread of nuclear technology, Canada should be a leader in the pursuit of multilateral control over all weapons-sensitive elements of the nuclear fuel cycle.
6. Canada should also mobilize political and diplomatic resources to continue efforts to enhance the NPT's administrative, diplomatic, and enforcement mechanisms so that NPT states can more effectively address non-compliance issues.

The seminar recognized that a world facing rapidly advancing climate change and an extraordinary array of additional challenges – energy deficits, burgeoning pollution, acute water shortages, unrelenting hunger, grossly inadequate health services, and chronic armed conflict – should not also be burdened with the continuing threat of nuclear annihilation. In the face of cumulative and deeply consequential environmental damage, the human community is awakening to the reality that the earth is a delicate, fragile home. Each generation has a sacred duty to nurture the planet and to care for its people. It is a duty that is violated and dishonored by the maintenance of arsenals to assault, or even to threaten, the earth and its people with the almost limitless destructive power of nuclear weapons. Responsible stewardship of the earth requires no less than the permanent elimination of nuclear weapons, and Canada's place should be clearly in the vanguard of this inescapable struggle.



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, Bev DeLong, and Larry Kennard for their work writing and editing this issue of the newsletter.

Quarterly Screening
Film: *We Feed the World*
7pm March 11
River Park Christian Reformed Church (3818 14A St. SW)
 www.justicefilmfestival.ca for more information

The Consortium for Peace Studies is pleased to announce the recipient of the 2nd annual Calgary Peace Prize

His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan Bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan will be honoured at a banquet dinner on March 31, 2008 at the Calgary Zoo, where he will also speak to guests about his work to promote interfaith dialogue, international human rights and poverty reduction .

Tickets are now available for purchase from the Consortium at the cost of \$150 per person, of which \$100 is considered a tax-deductible donation to the Consortium for Peace Studies.

The Imam and the Pastor

At the end of January the organization Initiatives for Change hosted a screening of this film together with a presentation by the Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye, the two men featured in the film. From the Initiatives for Change website (www.iofc.org/en/resources/imampastor):

“At a time when many in the world are wondering whether friendly relations are possible between those of Muslim and Christian background, the Nigerian protagonists of this film emphatically assert that they are.

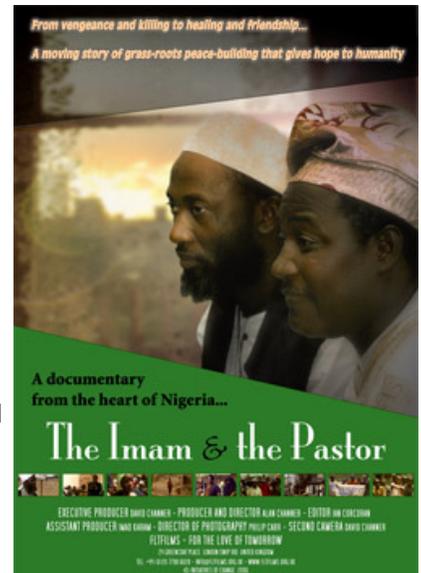
In recent years, Nigeria has been rocked by ethnic and religious conflicts, with tens of thousands killed and whole communities devastated.

In the 1990s, Pastor James Wuye and Imam Muhammad Ashafa led opposing, armed militias, dedicated to defending their respective communities as violence broke out in Kaduna, northern Nigeria. In pitched battles, Pastor James lost his hand and Imam Ashafa’s spiritual mentor and two close relatives were killed.

Now the two men are co-directors of the Muslim-Christian Interfaith Mediation Centre in their city, leading task-forces to resolve conflicts across Nigeria.

The Imam and the Pastor tells how they made this remarkable transition. It is both a moving story of forgiveness and a case-study of a successful grass-roots initiative to rebuild communities torn apart by conflict.”

A Ploughshares member donated the film to the Ploughshares library. Contact the office if you would like to borrow the DVD to view in your home.



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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

I'd like to become a Friend of Ploughshares and give a monthly donation of:

\$10 \$15 \$20 \$25 \$_____

(please attach a void cheque for monthly donations)

Here is my donation for this year of:

\$35 \$50 \$100 \$500 \$_____

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

I'd like to receive the monthly newsletter by:

Email (recommended)

Mail (requires \$35 donation)