



SEPT 2019

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### Did you know?

Canada resettled the largest number of refugees out of 25 countries in 2018, according to the UN's refugee agency. Canada accepted just over 28,000 refugees last year, while the U.S. came in second with 22,900.

2018 was the first year that the U.S. did not lead the world in refugee resettlement since 1980.



Photo courtesy of Albert Woo

Lanterns on the pond at the Floating Lantern Peace Ceremony, Olympic Plaza, Aug. 3, 2019

### WHAT IF ISIS FIGHTERS TRY TO RETURN TO CANADA?

September 11, 2019, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Parkdale United Church, 2919 – 8th Ave. N.W., Calgary

We invite you to a presentation by Trudy Govier and David Boutland as they explore the topical issue of what Canada's response should be to returning foreign fighters. Three approaches will be described: keeping them out, proceeding with legal prosecution, and seeking rehabilitation. Trudy is a philosopher who is active in the Calgary area, retired from the University of Lethbridge, and sits as the current chair of the Ploughshares Calgary Society. She is also the well-known author of numerous books and articles, including "Dilemmas of Trust" and "Forgiveness and Revenge." David Boutland is a philosophy instructor at the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University who teaches a range of courses including bioethics; business ethics; philosophy of sex, love, and death; and intro ethics. He is also vice chair of the Ploughshares Calgary Society. Join us for what promises to be an enlightening and vigorous presentation and discussion.

### JOIN US FOR

### THE ETHICAL RESPONSES TO REFUGEE NEEDS CONFERENCE

September 21, 2019, 9:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Parkdale United Church, 2919 – 8th Ave. N.W., Calgary

- ➡ Discover the realities of the refugee experience
- ➡ Learn and dispel myths about who refugees are, where they come from, and why we accept them into Canadian society

Tickets (includes a light lunch): \$30 regular, \$20 low income

To purchase tickets, see [Eventbrite](#)

For more information, see page 7 of this newsletter and the [Ploughshares Calgary website](#)



# Chair's message

SEPTEMBER

As I write on August 20, I can feel the pace of changing activities with the pending shift into September. Inquiries and meetings, notices about schools and back-to-school shopping, and earlier sunsets all indicate the impending change of seasons and lifestyles. Yes, I am retired—but these shifts are not felt only by working people and the parents of schoolchildren.

For many concerned with peace and conflict issues, an important point of the summer is early August, when Ploughshares Calgary sponsors its annual Floating Lantern Peace Ceremony to commemorate the victims of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings and reiterate the resolution 'never again.' This year's event, held on August 3, was successful and moving, following weeks of careful planning and organization by Sally Hodges, Shinobu Apple, and many volunteers. The Olympic Plaza area was impressively full; it is estimated that 800 – 1,000 persons attended to hear several choirs and an inspiring talk by Rev. Bill Phipps, followed of course by the lighting and floating of the lanterns. You can see some wonderful pictures in this newsletter.

For those who follow the news, themes of peace and conflict are in constant focus: to me, they have seemed even more prominent than usual over the past several months. Questions about the nature and potential of nonviolent protests are of enormous import and interest. As a means to assert the power of the people, such demonstrations offer the promise of ending oppression and injustice without recourse to violent means. But, they can also be precursors of deception (feared in Sudan) or lead inadvertently to violence, as happened in Syria and has occurred in some circumstances in Hong Kong. Hong Kong has seen three months of largely nonviolent protests, reportedly involving as many as two million participants. There have been some property violence by protesters and injurious responses of tear gas and beatings by police on some occasions. We can only hope that the vast displays of idealistic energy will not end with violent repression.

Despite their profound importance, nuclear weapons issues are seldom prominent in the news. This past summer was an exception. Democratic U.S. presidential hopeful Elizabeth Warren has advocated that the U.S. adopt a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons. Her stance gave the nuclear weapons issue a presence in the Democratic candidates' second debate. However, it has not been well received by military leaders or other candidates. On August 2, the U.S. formally pulled out of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), which had banned short and medium-range missiles. A report August 20 indicated that the United States has tested a medium range cruise missile. Expert commentators fear a new nuclear arms race, though leaders in Russia and the U.S. claim not to want one.

Tension in and regarding Iran, North Korea, and Kashmir in each case has ominous nuclear aspects. The U.S. withdrawal from the agreement to limit Iran's development of nuclear weapons was followed by U.S. imposition of rigid sanctions and conflict over their enforcement and Iranian policy. Regarding North Korea, despite 'friendship' between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, North Korea has recently tested a number intermediate range missiles. As to Kashmir, India and Pakistan, in ongoing conflict over the territory for some seventy years, are both nuclear-armed states.

An accident at a nuclear testing facility in Russia on August 8 killed at least seven people, injuring twelve more. The explosion is thought to have been caused by the testing of a nuclear-propelled missile. After it, four stations that monitor radiation levels ceased to transmit data.

Returning to our local scene, what can Ploughshares offer in this troubling context? We can offer information, interesting meetings, respectful discussion, support from concerned others, and opportunities to act. We hope to see you at our regular meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of each month at Parkdale United Church, and our September 21 conference on refugee issues. We also look forward to welcoming you at the Peace Village (formerly Holiday Peace Fair) event on Nov. 15 to 17 at River Park Church.

*Cheers,*

*Trudy Gouier*



- ❖ **Tens of thousands protest army rule in Sudan.** This June 30, 2019, *PBS* article describes the background behind protests in Sudan that called for civilian rule nearly three months after the army forced out long-ruling autocrat Omar al-Bashir. Demonstrations in Khartoum, Sudan, and across the country took place during a weeklong standoff between the ruling military council and protest leaders. See [Sudan protest movement](#).
- ❖ **How Sudan’s military overcame the revolution.** In this Aug. 5, 2019, article in *FP (Foreign Policy)* magazine, Justin Lynch discusses how Sudanese protestors, although wanting to overthrow their president and his regime, were only half successful. As Lynch notes, “The new government is set to begin on Sept. 1, and organizers of the revolution say the deal falls far short of their hopes. The agreement calls for a joint civilian and military council to lead the country for more than three years until elections in 2022. The military holds veto power over decisions in the country’s top body, and the junta remains free of civilian oversight.” See [Sudan’s new transitional constitution](#).
- ❖ **North Korea’s new weapons, and how they affect Trump’s nuclear deal hopes, explained.** This Aug. 12, 2019, article by Alex Ward in *Vox* outlines how, contrary to what Trump says, North Korea has become much more dangerous—not less—since he took office. See [North Korea’s new weapons](#).
- ❖ **Hong Kong airport shuts down amid pro-democracy protests.** This Aug. 12, 2019, article by *Associated Press* reporters Yanan Want and Christopher Bodeen details how Hong Kong, one of the world’s busiest airports, cancelled all flights after thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators gathered in Hong Kong’s main terminal on Aug. 12. Meanwhile, Beijing’s central government characterized the protest movement as something approaching “terrorism.” See [Hong Kong airport protests](#)
- ❖ **Hong Kong protests: Huge crowds rally peacefully.** This Aug. 19, 2019, article in *BBC News* describes the massive crowds that gathered peacefully in Hong Kong on Sunday, Aug. 18, to support Hong Kong’s pro-democracy movement. The gathering shows that the push to drive the pro-democracy movement towards a more peaceful direction appears to have worked. See [Hong Kong peaceful protest](#)
- ❖ **What is the status of the Iran Nuclear Agreement?** This July 31, 2019, backgrounder by Zachary Laub on the website of the *Council on Foreign Relations* describes how the withdrawal of the U.S. from the arms control agreement has heightened tensions and left the remaining signatories struggling to keep the deal alive. See [Status of Iran Nuclear Agreement](#).
- ❖ **Iran and the crisis in the Gulf explained.** This *BBC News* article from Aug. 19, 2019, provides background on the causes of the crisis that has erupted between Iran and Western countries—particularly, the UK and U.S.—after a series of incidents in and around the Gulf, a strategically important waterway in the Middle East. Both sides are blaming the other and fears are that it could lead to war. [See Iran and the crisis in the Gulf](#)
- ❖ **U. K. citizenship stripped from ‘Jihadi Jack,’ leaving him with only Canadian citizenship.** This Aug. 19, 2019, *Global News* article by Maryam Shah describes how British-Canadian Jack Letts has been stripped of his British citizenship,

leaving him with only Canadian citizenship. This is one of the issues that will be discussed in Ploughshares Calgary's September meeting topic about how Canada should manage returning foreign fighters. See [Jihadi Jack](#)

- ❖ **Boy Scouts are holding together a war-torn country.** This short article by Kevin Volkl in *The Atlantic* (July 2019 issue) explains how Boy Scouts in the Central African Republic (CAR) are assisting travelers in a country consisting of an "enfeebled" government and armed contending religious groups. See [Boy Scouts](#).
- ❖ **"Not proud as an Indian" . . . Amartya Sen's critique of Kashmir's move.** This Aug. 19, 2019, *NDTV* article by Vishnu Som outlines how philosopher and economist Amartya Sen, who won a Nobel Prize, has strongly criticized the Indian government's policy ending the special status of the Kashmir/Jammu area. This area has been the focus of long-standing and often violent conflict between Muslims and Hindus. See [Kashmir](#).
- ❖ **India orders Kashmir government staff back to work amid protests.** In this Aug. 19, 2019, article in *The Guardian*, Azhar Farooq and Rebecca Ratcliffe report that Indian officials have ordered government employees in Kashmir to return to duty and some schools have reopened after a tense weekend of protests in the territory. See [India orders Kashmir staff](#).

### 2019 Floating Lantern Peace Ceremony

Thanks to all those who came out to support us as hundreds of glowing lanterns were launched on the reflecting pond at Olympic Plaza on August 3, 2019, during Calgary's seventh annual Floating Lantern Peace Ceremony. Organized by the Ploughshares Calgary Society, this family-friendly, free event commemorates the approximately 213,884 victims who lost their lives in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, on August 6 and 9, 1945, respectively. Symbolically, releasing floating lanterns is a traditional Japanese ceremony called "Tōrō nagashi," with the lanterns representing the departed spirits of lives lost. This event also looks with hope towards a world of peace that is free from violence and nuclear weapons.

The program featured the Very Reverend Bill Phipps as keynote speaker, Syrian TED-TALK poet Ghada Alatrash, the Calgary Women's Chorus, a Japanese children/adults' choir, award-winning television anchor/journalist Nirmala Naidoo as MC, and greetings of peace from mayors around the world. The following event pictures were provided courtesy of **Albert Woo** of Calgary.



Photo by Albert Woo, Calgary



Photo by Albert Woo, Calgary



Photo by Albert Woo, Calgary



Photo by Albert Woo, Calgary

Following are the verses of a song called “One Voice” that was sung at the Lantern event:

This is the sound of all of us,  
Singing with love and the will to trust.  
Leave the rest behind—it will turn to dust

This is the sound of all of us.

(Music and lyrics by Ruth Moody;  
see <http://www.thewailinjennys.com/>)

### Did you know?

In 2009, the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly declared August 29 as the International Day Against Nuclear Tests. This day reminds us that efforts to stop nuclear testing can succeed and brings hope that one day all nuclear weapons will be eliminated.

Click [here](#) for more information.



# ETHICAL RESPONSES TO REFUGEE NEEDS CONFERENCE

Educate, Inform, Make Aware

September 21

9.30am - 4.45pm

Parkdale United Church (2919 - 8 Ave NW)

Learn about the realities of the refugee experience, dispel myths about who refugees are & where they come from & why we accept them into Canadian society.

**Guest speakers** Calgary Catholic Immigration Society  
Canadian Council for Refugees  
Immigration & Refugee Board  
University of Calgary

## Tickets

\$30 regular | \$20 low-income  
[refugeeneedsconference.eventbrite.com](http://refugeeneedsconference.eventbrite.com)

## Contact

Ploughshares Calgary Society  
[office@ploughsharescalgary.ca](mailto:office@ploughsharescalgary.ca) | 403.270.7366

Special thanks to: Parkdale United Church African Community Association Calgary

Presented by:



[Click here](#) for the conference agenda, speaker biographies, and talk synopses.

We welcome donors/supporters for the refugee conference. Although we cannot provide income tax receipts, your support will be recognized at the conference and in our October newsletter. Thank you.

We are very grateful for your loyal moral and financial support over the years that has allowed us to continue working for and educating about peace. Please consider donating for 2019 soon if you haven't already done so. If you have already sent in your donation for 2019, we thank you. Please make your cheque payable to Ploughshares Calgary Society. If you write the cheque to the name of Project Ploughshares, the bank *will not* honour it for us, so please write it to Ploughshares Calgary Society. Thank you.

Yes, I am interested in supporting the peace work of the Ploughshares Calgary Society. I'd like to make a donation in the following amount:

\$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ or in an amount of \_\_\_\_\_

or with a monthly donation of \_\_\_\_\_ or I am interested in volunteering \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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Cheque \_\_\_\_\_ PayPal \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_

Make cheques payable to **Ploughshares Calgary Society** or go to [www.ploughsharescalgary.ca](http://www.ploughsharescalgary.ca) to make your payment via PayPal. Please mail completed form with donation to the Ploughshares Calgary Society, 2919 - 8 Ave. N.W., Calgary, AB, T2N 1C8. Please note that we are unable to provide tax receipts at this time.

