

dominion, n. 1. Control or the exercise of control. 2. A territory or sphere of influence; a realm. 3. A self-governing nation in the British Commonwealth.

The Dominion

news from the grassroots

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CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

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RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT • GENOCIDE • THREE BLOCK WAR & MORE

A special issue examining Canada's role in the world

AN INTRODUCTION

Implicit in most Canadian media coverage is an assumption that Canada's activities in the world are benefitting those who are affected. Even if they're not beneficial, at least Canadians are well-meaning, we say. Peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, helping "fledgling democracies": these are central components of a comprehensive Canadian mythology.

Observing media coverage—personal soldiers of soldiers who serve in Afghanistan or aid workers who are helping impoverished children in the "developing world"—it becomes clear that the myth of Canadian benevolence is a powerful one. Those who wield it skillfully apparently have the capacity to explain away any misdeed as an exception to the obvious fact that Canada is making the world a better place. As Paul Martin put it, "the world needs more Canada."

But underlying the strength of Canada's mythology is a deep anxiety. This anxiety shows up in the insistence with which commentators and politicians reaffirm Canada's claim to be helping the less fortunate—whether indigenous people here, or the poor of the majority world.

Constant reaffirmation, however, only works when there is a corresponding silence. Silence about Canada's singular role in explicit attempts to extinguish the indigenous population at home, and silence about Canada's role in creating the conditions of misery in the

impoverished world that we claim to be helping.

It seems that no matter how much evidence is available, ascribing nefarious—much less genocidal—motives to Canada's statesmen (they are men, for the most part) is almost unthinkable. How could we not be the well-meaning humanitarians we so often claim to be?

A source of power for all national mythologies is the stake we have in the myth as a basis for feeling good about ourselves.

But it's a trap, because mythology prevents us from feeling bad about misdeeds, and keeps them from being addressed. As a result, we spiral away from awareness of our actions in a recursively destructive reliance on the myth.

To be aware, we need to be able to keep the myth at bay. The way to do this is to keep a steady eye on the evidence. Even if it fails to convince, evidence has the advantage of being more receptive to criticism than an irrefutable idea.

That is the modest goal of the *Dominion's* special issue on Canadian Foreign Policy: to look at evidence while the myth has been warded off.

But we don't necessarily seek to *destroy* the myth. If there is in fact a humanitarian *intent* in Canada, then surely a thorough understanding of the power structures that cause so much damage is consistent with it.

—Dru Oja Jay

ABOUT THE DOMINION

The *Dominion* is an attempt to connect independent journalists to people who want to read their reporting. We aim to establish a newspaper that provides a serious alternative to the corporate press. It is a grassroots effort, and relies on the contributions of dozens of writers and hundreds of supporters. To find out more, visit www.dominionpaper.ca. Here are some ways to get involved in creating or supporting independent journalism:

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GUESS WHO LOVES CANADA IN HAITI?



"We have, of course, a very close relationship in Haiti. Canada is a part of the Core Group on Haiti... When I was in Haiti, I met with the Civilian Police Administration that is headed by the Canadians and they've been very active there."

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during her trip to Ottawa, October 2005

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Supporting Indigenous and campesino organizations in Guatemala, Honduras & El Salvador, dealing with environmental and development harms and human rights violations caused by Canadian mining and resource companies, Rights Action salutes The *Dominion's* contribution to a much needed debate about how "Canada the god" contributes to and benefits from unjust global economic, political and military relations.

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Being a Member

A visit to the Canada Club in Bogota, Colombia

by Chris Arsenault

There is something implicitly boring about Canada's elite.

Even in the fastest, flashiest, most beautiful places, they're still lumbering, reserved and placated; that's the only conclusion I can draw from an evening at the Canada Club in Bogota, Colombia.

We walk from the old city, where every bag of garbage left outside is torn apart by people looking for something to sell or something to eat, to arrive at the carpeted hotel convention centre that hosts the Canada Club every Friday night.

In Bogota's posh Zona Rosa convention centre, we saunter past the lobby and up a flight of stairs with brass rails to a medium-sized lounge. Canadian business boys in their mid-50s, wearing golf shirts with oil company insignias tucked into waist-high khakis, shoot pool as Colombian waiters in bow-ties carefully replenish their drinks.

Waiters slice and pass around delicious white cake with a cherry red topping; a seafood bar with iced shrimp and squid sits in the corner.

An unspoken three-drink maximum seems to be in effect and conversations are quiet and distant.

At neighbourhood bars in the city's historic district, young Colombians are just sitting down for a beer. Soon the tables and chairs will be pushed aside and every square inch of space will become a dance floor.

"You know, 60 per cent of the Canada Club's members are Colombians," says a tall, affable fellow with a blond mustache; the group's president.

I nod respectfully. It would, after all, be sensible that an organization based in Colombia would have Colombian members.

"But you know," he whispers in my ear. "Most of them are women trying to meet



Bogota: easy access with a Canadian passport.

GFDL

Canadian men," he smiles. I stare.

In the era of globalization, passports are personal power—privilege from a piece of paper connected to nothing but the randomness of one's place of birth or parents.

And when it comes to passports, Colombia has a losing hand. "We can't go anywhere," says my friend Michelle as she negotiates the paperwork for a Canadian travel visa so she can visit her boyfriend's hometown of Montreal.

When I entered this country, I just walked in.

"Welcome to Colombia," said the customs officer after taking a quick look at my Canadian passport.

One doesn't need to follow immigration policy closely to know why a Colombian passport is held as suspect by anxious border officials and timid wonks at the department of citizenship. To much of the world, Colombia has come to represent drugs and violence.

But the drug trade, and the violence that often accompanies it, is based on that simplest of all capitalist principles: supply

and demand.

The American (and Canadian) people demand cocaine. Colombian cartels supply it. The American government decides cocaine demand among Americans is problematic and initiates a \$3 billion eradication campaign called Plan Colombia, contracting private militias like Dyncorp to spray toxic herbicides over vast swaths of land.

Powerful nations destabilize countries and then wonder why refugees show up at their borders; in 2004, 3,635 Colombians applied for refugee status in Canada—more than any other nationality.

Colombia grows some good coffee; instant Nescafé is served at many local restaurants.

Profits are shipped north, but problems stay behind. Someone is getting rich here; Colombia's stock market performed better than any country in the world in 2004, according to the *Economist*.

And when it comes to getting rich, the boys at the Canada Club are doing just fine. I just don't know if they're having much fun doing it.

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Whose Trauma?

The “Somalia Affair” and Canadian mythology

by Maya Rolbin-Ghanie

During Canada’s 1993 peacekeeping mission in Belet Huen, Somalia, Canadian soldiers captured impoverished Somalis who were said to have stolen food and supplies from the Canadian military encampment. The captives were subjected to beatings, torture and public humiliation. Most victims were children, many of whom were tied to one another around posts in the street, blindfolded and left next to signs that read ‘thief’ for all passers-by to see. On March 4 of the same year, two Somalis were shot in the back by Canadian soldiers, one fatally. In what came to be known as the “Somalia Affair,” 16-year-old Shidane Arone was tortured over the course of an entire night before being killed by Canadian soldiers barely two weeks after the shooting. Six Somalis were killed in total. A series of shocking “trophy photos” of detainees were later exposed, often depicting detained children being degraded by members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment. In the case of Shidane Arone, an infamous series of photos of the boy at various stages of his torture was revealed, including one of a Canadian soldier using a baton to hold up his head, which is covered in blood. The soldier is grinning at the camera. A video of soldiers on the base making blatantly racist comments about Somalis was discovered a little later, in January of 1995. In it, one of the soldiers announces to the camera that their Somalia operation is called ‘Operation “Snatch Nig-Nog.”’

The revelations came as a shock to Canadians accustomed to a steady image of armed forces dedicated to benevolent and competent “peacekeeping.” Canada’s “national mythology” is a central focus in Sherene Razack’s study of the official



From the cover of *Dark Threats and White Knights*. During the “Somalia Affair,” Canadian soldiers captured and tortured Somalis from Belet Huen.

response to the “Somalia Affair.” The result was her 2004 book *Dark Threats and White Nights: The Somalia Affair, Peacekeeping, and the New Imperialism*. Razack writes that with the exposure of torture by Canadian soldiers, “modern peacekeeping revealed its sordid colonial origins. Soldiers had acted more like conquerors than humanitarians.”

In response, Canadian officials instituted a Commission of Inquiry. The Canadian government, however, shut down the Commission before it could fully investigate the murders or the potential complicity of military leaders in these acts. What the Commission did have time to convey was closer in form to an acquittal. In the opening lines of its report, the Commission said that “The soldiers, with some notable exceptions, did their best. But ill-prepared and rudderless, they fell invariably into the mire that became the Somalia debacle. As a result, a proud legacy was dishonoured... the leadership errors in the Somalia mission were manifold and fundamen-

tal.” Despite this acknowledgment, the Commission stopped short of holding specific leaders accountable, while maintaining that the troops were not to blame for the torture and murder they committed.

Media reports, says Razack, were “reporting with sympathy the animosity Canadian soldiers were feeling towards rock-throwing Somalis” long after Arone’s murder.

“Many soldiers say privately they wish they could shoot more often,” Paul Watson reported in the *Toronto Star* in a story describing the “rough life” of the soldiers in Belet Huen. But it wasn’t as though the media were not interested in the “Somalia Affair” as a scandal. Razack asks us to look at the particular kind of attention that it was paid, however; the violence against Somalis didn’t interest the media, but the “cover-up of that violence by the military did.”

Canadians “believe we were duped by our own, and that it was our very niceness and national naivete that led to the debacle in Somalia.” Even though Canada

was clearly responsible for the killings, what the media and the government chose to focus most on was a “nice” Canadian character that had been tainted by a few rogue soldiers. On Razack’s account, Canada has integrated the “Somalia Affair” into its national understanding in a narcissistic fashion.

To recap, violent acts of an arguably and fundamentally racist character were committed, six human beings were killed and several more were tortured. But to the Commission—and to the dominant public interpretation—it was Canada that had been betrayed. This betrayal, however, was committed by an anonymous institution, conspiring with the “mire” of Somalia, which was never held accountable, either for its murder and torture or for its betrayal of Canadian self-perception.

Racism slid out the back door of Canada’s collective interpretation. Heroism took its place.

“The hold that mythologies have should not be underestimated,” writes Razack. “They have the power to make a nation replace tortured and dead bodies with traumatized soldiers.” The prevailing account stressed that “our mythological virtues as a nation that is somehow too gentle, too bureaucratic, and too given to navel-gazing,” Razack argues, “enabled us to look at racism in the Somalia Affair and still not really see it.”

It is the mythology itself, Canadian identity, which acted to enable the conclusion that the racist torture and murder committed by members of the airborne division was exceptional. In fact, several witnesses suggested to the Inquiry that if there were racists in the military, it was unlikely to be a number higher than existed in “Canadian society as a whole.”

What, Razack asks, does

“Dust in the Eyes of the World”

Feminists debate logic of “humanitarian” war

by Anna Carastathis

The claim that the war in Afghanistan will liberate Afghan women has been circulating since before the bombs began to drop, on October 7, 2001. By mid-October of that year—the day before World Food Day—the UN High Commissioner for Refugees reported that 7.5 million Afghans had no access to food and were at risk of starvation. A few months later, on January 29, 2002, during his State of the Union address, George Bush jubilantly declared: “Today, women are free and are part of Afghanistan’s new government.” In July 2006, it was reported that the war had created 2.2 million refugees and at least 153,200 internally displaced people. It is estimated that between 12,541 and 25,308 Afghan people have died in the war.

Global opposition to the invasion of Iraq was mobilized even before the war began; by contrast, the war in Afghanistan, spun as a humanitarian effort, is the war relatively few Canadians seem to want to—or know how to—audibly oppose. Canadians take pride in themselves for not following the United States into an illegal war in Iraq, but not many questions were raised about Canada taking over the US mandate in Afghanistan (which allowed the US to focus its military and resources in Iraq). Part of the reason for this is that the war in Afghanistan—named ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’—was, from the beginning, promoted as war that would restore the women’s rights by deposing the Taliban.

In a recent article published in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, Penni Mitchell, a prominent Canadian feminist who is managing editor of the national feminist magazine *Herizons*, suggests that the war in Afghanistan is doing just that. In fact, Mitchell argues that the Con-



Is the military deployment in Afghanistan—which some Afghan feminists are calling an occupation—improving the lives of women?

servative government is failing to make the same commitment to human rights in its domestic policy that is embodied in its deployment in Afghanistan, referring to the government’s decision to close the Court Challenges Program, which provided litigation support to individuals seeking to challenge a federal law on the grounds that it contravened the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Mitchell writes: “Human rights of linguistic minorities and women are worth Canadians fighting for in Afghanistan, but advancing the rights of minorities and women in Canada’s courts are a luxury Ottawa says it can little afford.” In an article published on October 15 in the *Toronto Star*, Linda McQuaig points to the same disjunction. Referring to Harper’s attack on Status of Women Canada, emblematic of his socially regressive domestic policy, McQuaig quips: “for women, the good news is—burqas are out. The bad news is—so are careers [for Canadian women].”

At present, 2,300 Canadian soldiers are stationed in Afghanistan, of whom approxi-

mately 2,000 are actively engaged in combat as part of the International Security Assistance Force, currently led by a Canadian general. In an interview with the *Dominion*, Mitchell acknowledged that “Canada should re-focus its mission” in Afghanistan, and said, “It is clear that women in Afghanistan want greater security, they want girls to be able to attend school, they want a justice system that will protect them, not warlords who will rule by violence and intimidation.”

But the question is, will the military deployment—which some Afghan feminists are calling an occupation—achieve these ends? When I pose this question to Roksana Bahramitash, she asks, by way of reply: “What is the historical evidence to show that war has ever liberated women?” Bahramitash is a feminist scholar at the Centre for Developing-Area Studies at McGill University and at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute at Concordia University, who produced a documentary on Afghan women, “Beyond the Burqa,” in 2004. She says that the notion that the

US and Canada are emancipating Afghan women by bombing them is a dangerous fiction produced by a “war propaganda machine” that feminists need to undermine. She worries that some feminists have forgotten the historical roots of the North American feminist movement in anti-militarist and anti-racist struggles, and are now “supporting a neoconservative agenda.”

Rather than positing Canadian military intervention as the solution to Afghan women’s problems, Bahramitash urges feminists to make connections between Canada’s foreign policy and its domestic policy. Unlike Mitchell, who sees a contradiction between Harper’s domestic and foreign policies, Bahramitash argues that both emerge from the same ideology: “The policies are not separate. Neoliberalism [at home] and neo-conservatism [abroad] are part of the same package.” To see this, Bahramitash suggests that we need a feminist analysis that sees that race, class and war are inseparable factors in women’s experiences. And we need to understand how, transnationally, feminist struggles are unified. Take, for example, the issue of participation in formal political institutions. “As a feminist,” Mitchell says, “I do consider that having women occupy 28 per cent of seats in [the Afghan] government is... an improvement.” It’s not clear, however, that Canada has much to teach Afghan civil society in this regard; only 20.8 per cent of members of the Canadian Parliament are women. “To assume that the struggles for women’s rights are fundamentally different is a major problem,” Bahramitash says. Also dangerous is the assumption that Western women or governments know what Afghan women’s actual needs are. Bahramitash warns

Selectively Terrified

How Hezbollah became a terrorist organization in Canada

by Mary Foster

Throughout much of the Arab world, Hezbollah is being celebrated as the champion that was, at long last, able to establish a victory over invincible Israel and its omnipotent western backers. In the Middle East, Hezbollah's victory has energized movements against imperialism and its system of client regimes.

In Canada, Hezbollah is a terrorist organization. It is thus illegal to "participate in or contribute to, directly or indirectly, any activity" of this Lebanese political party or even to urge anyone to act in a way that could be construed as benefiting Hezbollah.

Some explanation for the distance between these starkly different approaches to the same organization can be found in the story of how Hezbollah's political wing came to be placed on Canada's list of terrorist organizations in December 2002. Examined in detail, this brief history provides insight into how key Canadian foreign policy decisions are made.

Hezbollah's ideological roots lie in the 1970s "movement of the deprived," which advocated for the rights of Lebanon's historically marginalized Shi'a population and for all oppressed groups. In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon, killing as many as 14,000 and wounding another 20,000—the vast majority of whom were civilians—in the first two weeks alone. Hezbollah emerged out of the popular Shi'a militias resisting the Israeli occupation and participating in the civil war, formally announcing itself in an open letter to "all the oppressed in Lebanon and the world," published in 1985. The letter endorsed Khomeini and the Iranian revolution and proposed an Islamic state for Lebanon "which, alone, is capable of guaranteeing



A Hezbollah flag hangs in Baalbek, Lebanon. Hezbollah enjoys popular support in much of the country.

moogdroog

justice and liberty for all." It was stipulated that this should be achieved only through the will of all the people, however, and not by force. "Confessional privileges [the domination of one religious group over others] are one of the principal causes of the great explosion which ravaged the country," the letter noted. Since 1992, when the party first ran for national elections, Hezbollah's leadership has publicly endorsed the importance of co-existence and pluralism within a multi-religious, diverse Lebanon and the vision of an Islamic state has faded into the background.

Today, Hezbollah is at once a political party with 14 seats in the Lebanese Parliament, the main provider of social welfare throughout the poor areas of Lebanon, a social movement voicing the aspirations of the Shi'a, and a fighting force. It receives financial and logistical support from Iran and political support from Syria and, lately, Venezuela. Its ideological underpinnings blend Lebanese nationalism, Islamism, social justice and pan-Arab nationalism.

It would be a serious

challenge to substantiate the claim made by Canadian Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day; that the "stated intent of Hezbollah is to annihilate Jewish people." An examination of official texts and speeches indicates, rather, that Hezbollah's opposition to Israel is based on Israel's history as a European colonial movement that occupied Arab lands, established an exclusionary state at the expense of the original inhabitants and has subsequently pursued a persistent pattern of settlement and expansion.

Hezbollah's military operations wound down in 2000 with the end of the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, but a military wing was maintained on the grounds that Israel continued to violate the "blue line" established by the UN, illegally held Lebanese prisoners in their jails and occupied a tract of what Hezbollah considered to be Lebanese land in the Golan Heights.

By 2002, Canada had arrived at a typically Canadian, middle-of-the-road position: Hezbollah's armed wing—the Hezbollah External Security

Organization—was classified as a terrorist group, while its political wing was not.

A campaign to list the Hezbollah political party started in July 2002, when the government failed to include the party in an expanded list of designated terrorist organizations.

Pressure to list Hezbollah came from the Canadian Alliance Party (the precursor to today's Conservative Party), senior Liberal politicians Irwin Cotler and Art Eggleton, B'nai Brith (a Jewish human rights organization, staunchly pro-Israel in orientation), and the Canadian Jewish Congress.

A series of articles by Stewart Bell published in the *National Post*—replete with terms like "terror suspects," "clandestine cells" and "masterminds," and based largely on information obtained from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), dating from the 1980s—documents the campaign. The *National Post* at the time was owned by ardent Zionist Israel Asper. Stewart Bell himself has been questioned about his role in CSIS's practice of selectively leaking information to the media.

Denis Coderre, Minister of Immigration at the time, recently claimed to have played a role in the campaign as well. Indeed, the arrest and deportation of a supposed Hezbollah "agent" took place in October 2002, with accompanying media fanfare.

Interestingly, both Jean Chretien and Bill Graham, then Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs respectively, resisted placing Hezbollah on the terrorist list. Chretien met with Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary general of Hezbollah, in Beirut in October 2002. On November 28, a new set of groups was banned—and Hezbollah was still not among them. Irwin Cotler denounced

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Making War in Canada

Canada produces military equipment used in attacks on Lebanon, Palestine

by Dru Oja Jay

Canadian companies and taxpayers played an important role in the production of much of the military equipment that is currently being used to bomb villages, neighbourhoods and key infrastructure in Lebanon and carry out military operations in Gaza. That is the conclusion of research compiled by the Ottawa-based Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade (COAT).

CTV.ca recently reported on the tens of billions of dollars in military aid supplied to Israel by the US government. COAT, however, says that aside from diplomatic support for Israeli bombing, Canadian taxpayers are also doing their part in military support, albeit indirectly.

According to research conducted by COAT's Richard Sanders, F-16 "fighting falcon" and F-15 "eagle" fighter/bombers, as well as Apache helicopters, partly owe their existence to Canadian contractors, government subsidies, and investments from the Canada Pension Plan.

Companies like Canadair, CMC Electronics, and Magellan Aerospace, for example, are responsible for making parts for infrared guidance systems, radar equipment, and training simulators for F-15s. Many of the same companies receive subsidies from the Canadian government under programs like Industry Canada's "Technology Partnerships Canada".

According to COAT, Canadian war industries have received about \$5 billion in grants and unpaid loans over the last 30 years. Additionally, the Canada Pension Plan has invested at least \$282 million in arms manufacturers like Boeing, Lockheed, and Raytheon.

Designed by Seattle-based Boeing, the F-15 has been widely used in bomb and rocket attacks



Many federally-subsidized Canadian firms make components for the F-16, the F-15 and the Apache helicopter, all in use by the Israeli Air Force in Lebanon and the Occupied Territories.

in civilian areas in Gaza, the West Bank, and now Lebanon.

Israeli attacks in Lebanon have killed over 1000 people, injured an estimated 3000, and displaced nearly one million people—a quarter of Lebanon's population. Bombing of key infrastructure such as airports and bridges has caused an estimated \$2 billion in damage, and oil slicks cover Lebanon's coastline. Reports typically do not identify the aircraft used, though many mention F-15s and F-16s.

South of Lebanon, however, locals have learned to differentiate between Israeli aircraft.

"From a young age every Palestinian child learns to distinguish the Apache's sound and associate it with assassinations, destruction and blood in the street," Shawan Jabarin, general director of the Palestinian human rights group al-Haq, told the *Guardian*.

"For Palestinians, it's a symbol of indiscriminate military violence."

Israeli officials do not deny using aircraft like the "Apache" and the "Eagle" for political assassinations (over 150 leaders have been assassinated in the

last five years), though officials claim that operations are carried out for anti-terrorism purposes. Last October, Israeli Captain Yael Hartmann told *New Standard* journalist Jon Elmer that a Gazan school was targeted because "it was bringing up the next generation of Hamas members."

Over a dozen Canadian companies make components used in the Apache, and the Canada Pension Plan has invested \$71 million in Boeing, the primary contractor involved in its production.

Lockheed Martin's F-16 "fighting falcon" is also familiar to Gaza residents. After Israeli settlers withdrew from Gaza, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) began subjecting populated areas to sonic booms by flying F-16s at low altitudes over the Gaza strip. With its massive number of refugees, the Gaza strip is among the most densely populated areas in the world.

The flights continued day and night for months, often timed to coincide with a dawn call to prayer. "Although it is not lethal, it can lead to death indirectly, of unborn children. It can lead to highly traumatizing

effects on children particularly, and adults too," a Palestinian psychiatrist told Al-Jazeera.

"Yes, these sonic booms target the Palestinian people," Israeli spokesperson Avichav Adrai was quoted as saying by Al-Jazeera. "The purpose is so they can pressure those who fire the rockets to stop them." Adrai said that Israel does not see the sonic booms as collective punishment.

The Canada Pension Plan has invested \$27 million in Lockheed Martin, and over a dozen Canadian firms are involved in the construction and maintenance of the F-16 "fighting falcon".

AlliedSignal Aerospace of Mississauga, for example, received a contract for fuel control systems on the F-16 from Lockheed Martin. Between 1993 and 2002, AlliedSignal contributed \$60,152 to the Liberal Party of Canada. Between 1996 and 2003, AlliedSignal received \$83.3 million in subsidies from Industry Canada.

Héroux-Devtek, which makes landing gear components for the F-16, received \$2.8 million in subsidies during the same period. The CEO of the Longueuil, Québec based firm recently told the Canadian Press that billions in new spending announced by the Conservative government is "an opportunity" that only comes along "once every 30 years."

Other companies involved in the production of the F-16 include Derlan Aerospace, which received \$9.5 million in government subsidies, Haley Industries, and the Canadian Marconi Company.

In 2001, Israel placed an order for 102 new F-16s, giving it the second largest fleet of the airplanes, after the US. The deal, worth \$4.5 billion, was paid for through US military aid, which totals to approximately \$3 billion per year.

UN-Justice in Canada

Canada has opposed the United Nations Draft Declaration of Indigenous Rights

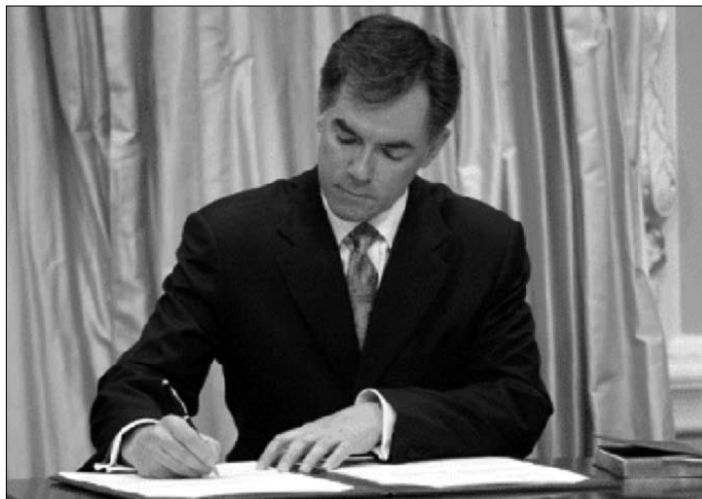
by Kim Petersen

On June 29, 2006, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a Draft Declaration of Indigenous Rights. The Declaration affirms the right of self-determination of Indigenous Peoples, including the right to traditional territory and resources, and the right of Indigenous Peoples to oversee their own education in their own languages. It was passed by a vote of 30-2—Russia joining Canada in opposition to the Declaration.

There are several high-profile territorial confrontations occurring in Canada today, including the standoff with the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations Confederacy) in Caledonia in southern Ontario; the encroachment of multinationals onto the Lubicon Lake First Nation in northern Alberta; the struggle of the Secwepemc people over plans to convert their territory, Skwelkwek'welt, into a ski resort in B.C.; the deforestation of the homeland of the Haida; and the marginalization of the Innu of Nitassinan.

"It is no coincidence that the Canadian government so adamantly opposes the adoption of the Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," says Adelard Blackman, special emissary for Buffalo River Dene Nation in Northern Saskatchewan. "They believe that it will present a threat because of the power that it will give to Indigenous Peoples, especially in the area of free, prior and informed consent as it applies to lands, territories and resources."

The people of Buffalo River Dene Nation were removed from their traditional territory in 1952, purportedly to establish the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range. The territory contains the world's largest oilsands deposit and Blackman believes



Indian Affairs minister, Jim Prentice, cites legal conflicts to explain Canada's opposition to a declaration that would affirm the right of self-determination for Indigenous Peoples. jimprentice.ca

the Canadian government knew the land was rich in natural resources. "It was a calculated move by the government and multinationals to gain control of our traditional territory and natural resources contained in it," he says. Blackman believes the federal government fears the impact the declaration may have on land claims across Canada.

Ghislain Picard, regional chief of Quebec and Labrador, is frustrated that Canada is seen by so many as an international leader in human rights, while it continually undermines the rights of Indigenous People. "It is very disappointing, even frustrating, to see that the government of our own country has such a closed mind towards the protection of the rights of Indigenous Peoples," he says. "All the more so that Canada pretends to be a key player on the level of human rights internationally."

The Canadian government has been garnering some criticism from the international community regarding its stance on the declaration. The London-based foreign affairs magazine, the *Economist* lambasted Canada's treatment

Kofi Annan noted that of the more than 370 million Indigenous Peoples living in some 70 countries, "Much remains to be done to alleviate the poverty faced by many indigenous people, to protect them against massive violations of human rights, and to safeguard against the discrimination ..."

To this end, Annan sees the Declaration as "an instrument of historic significance for the advancement of the rights and dignity of the world's indigenous peoples."

Harper's Indian affairs minister, Jim Prentice, cited legal conflicts between the declaration and Canadian laws as the reason for his government's opposition. But Mary Simon, president of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (Canada's National Inuit Organization) considers this opposition "odd and unsupported," and Liberal Indian Affairs critic Anita Neville agrees: "The government's argument that the draft resolution may be inconsistent with Canadian laws is a non-starter."

The Declaration of Indigenous Rights is now before the 61st session of the UN General Assembly awaiting ratification of the human rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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Israel, Lebanon and your own backyard

Canada and Israel are the same type of state: a nation state founded on colonialism

by Stewart Steinbauer

When Israel has reduced its Arab population to three per cent of the national total and that Arab three per cent has stopped resisting and been “pacified,” to use counter-insurgency jargon, then Israel will have reached the place where Canada is now. Canada and Israel are the same type of state: a nation state founded on colonialism.

In 1923, Vladimir Jabotinsky—one of the founders of Zionism—wrote ‘The Iron Wall,’ an essay that laid out a direct comparison between expropriation of the Arabs with the genocide of the indigenous people of North America.

“There can be no discussion of voluntary reconciliation between us and the Arabs, not now, and not in the foreseeable future,” wrote Jabotinsky. All well-meaning people long ago understood the complete impossibility of arriving at a voluntary agreement with the Arabs of Palestine for the transformation of Palestine from an Arab country to a country with a Jewish majority. Each of you has some general understanding of the history of colonization. Try to find even one example when the colonization of a country took place with the agreement of the native population. Such an event has never occurred.

Israel’s actions in the Middle East receive public support from the heads of state of Canada and the US because both are involved in the same type of behaviour.

Canadians rightfully decry the deaths of hundreds of Lebanese civilians under Israeli military attacks, but there is no public outcry over the 2,374 on-reserve accidental deaths in Alberta between 1983 and 2002 recorded by Health Canada. Half of these deaths were suicides, while almost all involved addictions. This is just in Alberta; multiply these



Canadians concerned by injustice abroad should consider the land under their feet.

Lone Primate

numbers by the entire landmass known as Canada and you have a staggering ongoing death toll.

In the pacified stage of colonial oppression, the resistance turns inwards and becomes self-directed. Better to die, or to live under the influence of drugs and alcohol, than to struggle hopelessly in a trapped and tortured situation. Incarceration rates are high, unemployment is high, disabling addiction levels are high, educational outcomes are low, health is poor; and all this happens in an environment micro-managed by Canada’s Indian and Northern Affairs Department. Canadians lament the Israeli pass system for Palestinians, the bantustans, and the military control of the Arab population, but these were all aspects of Canada’s Indian policy—written right into the Indian Act—between 1876 and 1960.

Things being what they are, the most effective place

for well-meaning Canadians to protest Israeli actions is right at home, under their own feet. Canada’s elected government can actually do something about this situation, unlike its capacity to right wrongs in the Middle East.

Five contested sites of power—namely race, gender, class, authority and ecology—come together in the indigenous struggle for survival in Canada. From north to south, the indigenous peoples of the Americas are leading the resistance to the global colonial madness. If Canada can be pulled out of alignment with the US/UK/EU sphere of influence, and into the Turtle Island-wide indigenous sphere of influence, it will have more impact on the Israeli/US Middle Eastern project than any amount of hand-wringing or fist-waving about a colonial project half a world away.

Why alter the colonial arrangement? Canadians will not act out of pure altruism; you

need to see the money. Canada’s GDP is over the trillion-dollar mark; \$1.3 trillion in 2004 and \$1.4 trillion in 2005. What if, instead of the current colonial arrangements—where a legal fiction called ‘The Crown’ holds root title to all lands, and the state exercises totalitarian control over Indigenous Peoples through the Indian Act—we go into a straight business relationship?

‘Fee simple’ (the term for the current property rights regime where people ‘own’ property while the Crown retains the underlining title) could be left intact, except with root title transferred from the Crown to Indigenous Peoples, and with the introduction of an annual royalty or rent to be paid to Indigenous Peoples, based directly on Canada’s GDP. A two per cent royalty on Canada’s GDP would be about \$28 billion, which could be paid through the foreign debt repayment section of the federal budget. No new money has to be raised from taxpayers. Scrap the Indian Act, terminate the Department of Indian Affairs, and save about \$12 billion that is currently pouring into that black hole built to hide corruption. Indigenous Peoples can establish an international trust fund that we will manage ourselves.

It’s a business arrangement. Theft and murder is the business that organized crime is in; it doesn’t have to be the business that the nation of Canada is in.

The most effective place for well-meaning Canadians to protest Israeli actions is right at home, under their own feet.

Stewart Steinbauer is an internationally-known stone sculptor who lives on the Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Alberta, where he was born and raised. He is the author of Voice from the Coffin, a book about life on the Rez.

Recognition and Little Else

Canada's anti-Venezuela diplomacy

by Yves Engler

Since Venezuela elected a government led by Hugo Chavez in 1998, the South American country has frequently been on the receiving end of US-backed attempts to destabilize its government. Some say Canada has tacitly or openly supported the US campaign to replace the government of Venezuela.

In January of 2005, Foreign Affairs officials invited Maria Corina Machado to Ottawa. "While the Government of Canada recognizes the legitimacy of the democratically elected government of Venezuela," the invitation explained, "Súmate's visit to Canada will provide a useful opportunity to hear about the human rights situation in Venezuela from a different perspective."

Why was it necessary to note Canada's recognition of Venezuela's government? Machado is the head of Súmate, an organization that is nominally an NGO, but has been at the forefront of anti-Chavez political campaigns. The NDP has called on the government to invite Chavez for an official visit, but the president was passed over in favour of the leader of the US-funded opposition group.

Súmate was most recently at the head of an unsuccessful campaign to recall Chavez through a referendum. Before that, however, Machado's name appeared on a list of people endorsing a 2002 military coup that took Chavez prisoner and imposed a new, unelected government in Venezuela. The coup only lasted two days, before popular demonstrations and a split within the army forced the return of the elected government. But that proved time enough to incur strong condemnation of the coup from most Latin American and Caribbean countries—and for



Venezuela is vying for a seat on the UN Security Council.

UN

the US to announce its recognition of the short-lived government. Canadian diplomats were silent.

Now, Machado faces charges of treason; if convicted, she could spend as long as 28 years in prison for her involvement in the coup. She denies signing the now-infamous Carmona Decree, which suspended the elected government, and annulled land reforms and increases in royalties paid by oil companies passed by the Chavez-led government. Machado now claims she only visited the presidential palace during the coup and entered her name on a sign-in sheet.

Súmate receives as much as six per cent of its funding from the National Endowment for Democracy, an arm's-length satellite of the US State Department and USAID.

Canada has also supported Súmate.

According to disclosures made in response to a question by NDP Foreign Affairs critic Alexa McDonough, Canada gave Súmate \$22,000 in 2005-06. Minister of International Co-operation Jose Verner explained that "Canada considered Súmate to be an experienced NGO with the capability to promote respect for democracy, particularly a free and fair electoral process in Venezuela."

After meeting with NGOs, officials and members of Parliament in Canada, Machado went south, where she was granted an

hour-long meeting with George W. Bush and met with other officials and NGOs.

Canada has also taken sides in the diplomatic row between the US and Venezuela over the Western Hemisphere Security Council seat vacated by Argentina. The US is backing Guatemala, while Venezuela is seen as a protest vote by developing countries fed up with US policy.

Some observers have called the US backing of Guatemala a bizarre choice, given the country's dismal human rights record. Before voting began on October 16, 90 NGOs from Guatemala sent a letter to members of the UN General Assembly opposing Guatemala's candidacy.

"Guatemala has allowed, and occasionally has contributed to, the deterioration of the situation of human rights and the proliferation of violence, again making these issues a matter of profound concern for the international community," the letter read.

A second letter, signed by Guatemalan human rights groups and 200 prominent figures, explained that "little has been done to combat impunity and strengthen the judicial system to prevent the recurrence of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious human rights violations carried out during the conflict."

US diplomats have been pushing other countries hard to vote for Guatemala. Chilean

President Michelle Bachelet, for example, announced in early October that Chile would vote for Venezuela. After pressure from Washington, Chile backed off, deciding to abstain in the charged Security Council vote. *The Los Angeles Times* reported that the US had sold fighter jets to Chile, but Chilean pilots "will not be trained to fly them if the government supports Venezuela's bid." Evidence points to similar diplomatic pressure in other countries that might consider voting for Venezuela.

In the face of this pressure, many governments have continued to support Venezuela. The 15-member Caribbean Community, for example, has thrown its support and 14 General Assembly votes to Venezuela.

What would a Venezuelan Security Council seat mean? According to Venezuela's UN ambassador, it would give impoverished nations "an independent voice needed on the Security Council to fight against the power of money."

While Venezuela would not be able to veto any resolutions, it would have an effective platform from which to criticize US interventions in places like Iran, Iraq, Korea and Israel. Given the myriad of double standards enshrined in US foreign policy on human rights standards, war crimes, possession and use of weapons of mass destruction and violations of sovereignty, Venezuelan diplomats would not lack opportunities to embarrass the US.

By contrast, no observers are suggesting that Guatemala would be a critical voice. Given a lack of awareness of Canadian diplomacy inside Canada, and taking into account American pressure, that makes the small Central American country a safer place for Canada to place its support, for the moment.

Post-Colonial?

Canada Post and the privatization of Guatemala

by Michael Skinner

Originally published in
Briarpatch Magazine

In 1997, the World Bank loaned 13 million dollars (US) to the government of Guatemala to finance privatization of the country's seaport, electrical grid, and telephone and postal services. A Canada Post subsidiary and its offshore partner, International Postal Services (IPS), received the lucrative concession to manage the privatization of the Guatemalan postal service.

Canada Post International Limited (CPIL), which at the time was known as Canada Post Systems Management Limited, is a subsidiary company of Canada Post, a crown corporation wholly owned by the government of Canada.

The World Bank had predicted that the three labour unions representing Guatemalan postal workers would resist the privatization project and the plan to 'shed excess labour.' But rather than negotiate a contract with the unions, CPIL is alleged by former postal workers and postal union leaders to have deliberately eliminated all three unions using illegal tactics.

Former workers and union officials allege that by using bribery, company unions, intimidation, physical assaults, death threats, and various other illegal tactics, CPIL-IPS not only eliminated the unions, but also engineered a complete turnover of staff within 18 months.

Guatemalan labour federation leader José Pinzón observes that even the worst labour abuses during the dictatorships (which followed the CIA coup against the labour-friendly democratic government in 1954 and lasted through the 1980s) were no worse than the union-busting tactics employed by CPIL-IPS and the other transnational agents of privatization.



Canada Post is accused of union-busting in Guatemala.

Dulcie Meatheringham

The final step of CPIL's union-busting was to terminate every worker, after which the public postal service was restructured as a private company and renamed Correos. Some former workers, who did not have a history of union activism and who signed a contract promising not to join or organize a union, were rehired by Correos. However, to further ensure no union infiltration of the workplace, these workers were again terminated after they provided sufficient training to their own replacements.

Guatemalan labour federation officials state that wage increases and other perks promised to the new Correos workers never materialized and that the company defaulted on its payments to the national social security fund, which left these unorganized workers without healthcare and other benefits.

The World Bank's privatization scheme had a profoundly devastating effect on Guatemalan society. The United Nations reports the proportion of the Guatemalan population engaged in economic activity fell six per cent during the period

of privatization, from 27.6 per cent in 1995, to 21.6 per cent in 1999. At the same time, union representation in Guatemala fell from five per cent of the workforce to 2.5 per cent.

Approximately 65 per cent of the terminated postal workers were women. In Guatemala's highly gender-divided society, these women had a particularly difficult time finding new work. The most accessible 'women's' jobs are domestic servants, maquila workers, home-industry workers, or street vendors. Former postal workers could not hope to find wages and work conditions comparable to their old jobs and many never found employment.

Many former workers had to remove their children from school so they could work to supplement the family income. According to a UN report, Guatemalan children spend, on average, only 1.3 years in school. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions reports that 821,875 Guatemalan children between seven and 14 years of age were active in the informal economy in 2001, and the International Labour Organization reports that in

2002, 937,530 children worked as domestics in 'conditions of modern slavery.' According to the US State Department, child domestics work 13 to 16 hours a day for an average monthly salary of \$51 (US). Many of these child workers suffer psychological mistreatment, violence and sexual abuse.

The unions of Guatemala, as part of a broad coalition of social justice organizations, played a key role in bringing about the peace negotiations that ended Guatemala's 36-year civil war in 1996. Ironically though, the end of the war also made Guatemala an attractive target for transnational companies intent on union-busting and siphoning off national wealth. The negotiated peace accords outlined basic human rights with specific provisions for women, Indigenous People and workers. However, a failure to ratify the peace accords after their signing in 1996—largely due to organized right-wing resistance—led to unfulfilled promises for social progress. This also gave corporations the ability to violate the intent of the peace accords without technically violating laws not yet in place.

Regardless of the failure to implement the peace accords to establish expanded workers' rights, Guatemala is a signatory to the major international labour agreements and has a national labour code comparable to most states, including Canada. It is not lax laws or some peculiar cultural traits of Latin Americans that allow abuse by transnational corporations such as CPIL; it is the complicity between states and corporations that allow such abuse to occur.

Proponents of privatization claim that overall service and security has improved since the privatization of the Guatemalan postal service. Former postal workers recognize that the

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Like Weeds in a Garden

Genocide, international law and Canada's "Indian problem"

by Pierre Loiselle

Not all of the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (CPPCG) made it into the Canadian Criminal Code. The following parts of Article Two, which define the crime of genocide, were omitted when the Convention was ratified and became law in 1952: "Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group" and, "forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." Dr. Roland Chrisjohn, director of the Department of Native Studies at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, says that the omissions are not a coincidence. The original two omissions correspond directly to Canada's official policy of abducting Native children and keeping them in residential schools, where many were subject to gruesome and well-documented abuse and torture.

"Modern genocide is an element of social engineering, meant to bring out a social order conforming to the design of the perfect society," wrote Zygmunt Bauman in his 1989 book *Modernity and the Holocaust*. "This is a gardener's vision... Some gardeners hate the weeds that spoil their design... Some others are quite unemotional about them: just a problem to be solved, an extra job to be done."

As Chrisjohn explains, the glitch in Canada's garden begins with the problem that, according to European law, title to most of the land in Canada still belongs to its original inhabitants.

Canada's solution to what was once casually referred to as its "Indian problem" has been a strategy of social engineering known as assimilation which began with the 1857 'Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes of the Province;' its modern-day equivalent is the Indian



Canada's solution to what was once casually referred to as its "Indian problem" has been a strategy of social engineering known as assimilation.

General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada

Act. Serving as head of the Department of Indian Affairs during the development of the residential school system, Sir Duncan Campbell Scott summarized the agenda of Canadian policy towards Native people: "Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian problem."

The Genocide Convention

Rafael Lemkin, who coined the word genocide and was responsible for drafting the CPPCG, explained in 1945 that "the term does not necessarily signify mass killings... More often it refers to a co-ordinated plan aimed at destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups so that these groups wither and die like plants that have suffered a blight.

"The end may be accomplished by the forced disintegration of political and social institutions, of the culture of the people, of their language, their national feelings and their religion," Lemkin wrote in *Genocide—A Modern Crime*.

The CPPCG went through two drafts before it was

approved by the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948. Earlier versions of the Convention included means to establish an international court and many definitions reflecting the substance of genocide, including a provision that condemned forcible citizenship. These parts were removed in the final draft. According to Canada's representative at the UN, the Canadian stance was that, "a more limited interpretation of the term 'genocide' would be preferable." Objections primarily from Canada and the US eviscerated the final version of the Convention.

In his book *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada*, Chrisjohn writes that even in its watered-down form, Canada is in violation of the CPPCG. Residential schools were run from the 1800s to the 1990s where children were removed, by force of law, from their communities and sent to institutions run by the churches.

In the words of Scott, residential schools were designed to "take the Indian out of the Indian."

Chrisjohn explains that under the CPPCG, residential

schools were clearly genocidal according to Article Two, which defines genocide as: "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

"a) Killing members of the group; b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

"I could argue all five, but the fifth one is a slam dunk," says Chrisjohn. "There is absolutely no way Canada can deny that they legislated the transference of children from their parents to the church authorities."

On May 21, 1952, when Canada's Parliament ratified the Convention, bringing it into the Canadian Criminal Code, they omitted sections b) and e) of Article Two. A further amendment in 1985 removed section d). Around this time, accounts of the involuntary sterilization of Native women had begun to surface.

"They left out three-fifths of International law," says Chrisjohn, "that specifically would make in Canadian law what they were doing to First Nations people, from 1948 until the present day, the crime of genocide."

"It's not a coincidence. This is all too convenient."

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

At first glance, a new international agreement seemed to bring about a means of holding those who commit genocide accountable.

"In the International

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Mine Your Own Business

Should Canadian mining companies operating abroad abide by Canadian law?

by Hillary Bain Lindsay

“There are places and times where there simply shouldn’t be mines,” says Lucio Cuenca, director of the Latin American Observatory for Environmental Conflicts. One of those places, he says, is in the Huasco Valley in Chile.

Water is a scarce resource in the Huasco Valley and tens of thousands of farmers depend on run-off from nearby glaciers to irrigate their crops. This fact, however, did not deter Barrick Gold, a Canadian mining company, from proposing in 2005 to break up and move two of the glaciers to make way for an open-pit mine on the ancestral land of the Diaguita People.

Under Canadian law, there is nothing to stop Barrick Gold from doing this, says Catherine Coumans, research co-ordinator at MiningWatch Canada. “When companies go abroad, there are no standards here in Canada that they need to adhere to,” she says. “Even if there are serious complaints, there is no link back, there are no penalties. There’s a complete policy vacuum.”

In theory, the countries in which Canadian companies are operating should be able to regulate mining activities, but as Coumans points out, this doesn’t always happen in Canada, let alone in developing countries. Many countries don’t have the regulatory regimes to deal with large-scale mining, she says, where others simply don’t have the resources to enforce regulation, or lack the political will to do so.

Countries in the south often have their hands tied when it comes to foreign investment, adds Tamara Herman, a collective member of Alcan’t In India, a solidarity group opposing the establishment of a bauxite mine and alumina plant in Kashipur, India—the mine is being backed



Canada’s Barrick Gold wants to build a mine in Chile. Local people don’t want the mine. Should Canada step in?

Claudio Berho

in part by ALCAN, a Canada-based multinational. “Indebted countries are forced to turn to the World Bank and IMF who impose policies in return for providing debt relief,” says Herman. “Policies often take the form of ‘structural adjustment programs’ that may require the privatization of state-owned sectors and resources.”

Mining is often one of these sectors, continues Herman. “Many communities located on lucrative resources in southern countries have found themselves with little or no control over their lands and their livelihoods.”

Despite popular resistance to Barrick’s mine, the Chilean government “has obviously decided what side it’s on,” says Jamie Kneen, communications and outreach co-ordinator for MiningWatch Canada. The Chilean National Environmental Commission has given the project the go-ahead.

Opponents to the mine have achieved a significant victory, in that Barrick is no longer allowed to move the glaciers, but the fact that an open-pit mine will be located at the source of several rivers still raises serious objections among those whose lives and livelihoods depend on the water source. “Because of the mine’s characteristics and where it will be developed, it is

incompatible with community life in the valley,” says Cuenca. “The project will affect glaciers and has already done so [due to Barrick’s exploratory work] and the project will pollute water sources. In this area of Chile, water is a scarce resource.”

Construction of the mine is now on hold, largely due to a massive grassroots campaign led by Chilean farmers, indigenous people and environmentalists, but Barrick has indicated that the mine will still go ahead, says Kneen, and there’s no formal mechanism to stop or appeal its construction from here, in Canada.

Coumans is hoping that a series of government round tables that is making its way across Canada will change that.

The round tables are examining mechanisms and tools to improve the environmental and human rights record of Canadian extractive industries operating in developing countries. The federal government, industry and civil society are participating in the process and Coumans is hoping it will result in mandatory environmental and human rights standards for Canadian companies operating overseas. So far, however, “there’s no concrete commitment beyond talk.”

Even the talk has its limita-

tions, adds Coumans. To begin with, the round tables are not open to the public. “That’s a battle we fought and lost as civil society very early on,” says Coumans, who is also sitting on the advisory board for the round tables. “Both government and industry were adamant that they did not want a process that media could be sitting-in on. They wanted people to be able to speak freely.”

In addition, the public sessions—where members of the public can speak on the issues being covered during the round tables—are not open to the media.

Not surprisingly, the round tables have received little media attention.

Although much of the public is not aware the round tables are taking place—and even if they were, they wouldn’t be allowed to attend the closed-door sessions—Canadian taxpayers are implicated in Canadian mining overseas. “These companies receive all sorts of [government] support services and financial support when they go abroad,” says Coumans.

Canadian tax dollars subsidize mining work overseas in several ways, from Export Development Canada’s support for projects, to Canadian Pension Plan investments, to tax breaks.

“It is clear that Canadian mining corporations profit from immense government support,” says Herman, “and the round tables can be perceived as an opportunity for solidarity movements, NGOs and other groups working on mining issues to organize together, lay the issues on the table and try to get some media attention.”

That said, Herman doesn’t think participating in the round tables is worth the effort, having “no interest in legitimizing a flawed process.”

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Canada's Quiet Free Trade Agreement

Few Canadians have heard of CA4TA

by Cyril Mychalejko

In June, Canada's international trade minister, David L. Emerson, gave a speech in Ottawa to Canada's business, government, and academic elite to celebrate International Trade Day.

"I have no reservations about saying that we have not been aggressive enough and focused enough on ensuring that Canada keeps up with the rapid, almost competitive, expansion of bilateral free trade agreements," said Emerson. "Canada is the only major trading nation that has not negotiated a single free trade agreement in the past five years."

One of the agreements the Canadian government is trying to finalize is the Central America Four Free Trade Agreement (CA4TA) with Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Talks were suspended in February 2004 over a failure to resolve a few issues of contention, though one Canadian Trade official said the talks were "very well advanced." Canada is now informally talking with these Central American countries to resolve a few remaining issues, he said, one of them concerning market access for exports.

"My assumption is that it is an opportunity for governments to work out differences so that in official meetings they can just rubber stamp the deal and send it through," said Nadja Drost, co-ordinator of the Americas Policy Group.

A point of contention with Drost and about 150 civil society groups throughout the hemisphere is the refusal to release a draft of the agreement.

The Canadian Trade official, who wished to withhold his name, said that the Canadian government wanted to release the draft but that it would be inappropriate to do so unilaterally since consensus on



Graffiti in Guatemala City: We don't want the Free Trade Agreement/We want revolution/Education/Media.

detritus

the issue couldn't be released. Drost countered by pointing out that it was the Canadian government who convinced the countries of the hemisphere to release a draft of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) in 2001.

"Now they are saying that they can't get four small Central American countries to do it," she added.

As it stands, the text won't be released until the deal is signed and submitted to parliament for ratification. Although the economic impacts of the deal may not be profound, there are concerns about sovereignty, human rights and democracy based on experiences from past deals like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"I think transparency is a major, major issue," said Drost. "I think the public would feel a lot more assured if they knew their concerns about democracy and human rights were being addressed."

Because of the secrecy behind the details of the deal, critics are using NAFTA and the United States' narrowly passed Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) as refer-

ences for their concerns. Both trade agreements were attacked for failing to promote and enforce human rights, as well as for undermining democracy with unbalanced investor rights provisions.

The investor rights provisions of free trade were first introduced in Chapter 11 of NAFTA. It essentially allows corporations to sue local, state or federal governments for labour, environmental or other public interest laws which they deem unfairly impeding their ability to maximize profits.

For example, the Canadian government was fined for entering an international agreement that prompted it to close its borders to toxic substances. Under Chapter 11, Canada was ordered to pay US company S.D. Meyers \$4.8 million for "lost business opportunities." Thus far, tens of millions of dollars have been awarded to corporations, while billions of dollars worth of claims are still pending.

The Canadian government, in 2004, responded to some of civil society's concerns about NAFTA's Chapter 11 by revising its negotiation template for Foreign Investment Protection

Agreements (FIPA). Although some issues are addressed, according to a policy review commissioned by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation and written by the editor of *Investment Treaty News*, the reforms fall short.

For example, the template restricts host countries from requiring foreign companies to purchase some supplies locally. These requirements would bolster local economic development, but might ultimately inhibit companies from maximizing profits.

Free trade critics are also concerned with the lack of provisions to address and redress weak labour and human rights laws in the Central American countries.

The Canadian Association of Labour Lawyers (CALL), an association of over 350 progressive lawyers that has worked to promote legally enforceable rights for workers in the Americas, has "serious reservations that the proposed CA4TA will benefit workers in Central America or Canada." It uses past trade agreements, such as NAFTA and CAFTA, to point out historical deficiencies in the area of workers' rights when it comes to international trade.

Under CAFTA, Central American countries are only obligated to enforce domestic labour laws. This is problematic, considering various reports by the US State Department, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), and other human rights organizations which point out not only inadequacies with current laws but also institutional failures in enforcing these laws. In the Central American countries included in CA4TA, child labour is pervasive, worker blacklists are made, foreign companies have closed their doors after being informed that workers wanted to form a

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Online: The following articles can be read in their complete form on the Dominion web site: www.dominionpaper.ca/fp

The Logic of “Humanitarian Intervention” in Sudan

Neocolonial tool serving geopolitical interests

by **Brendan Stone**

In a recent appearance at McMaster University, former Haitian minister of defense Patrick Elie was asked by a member of the World Federalists NGO to support Canada’s new “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P) doctrine. The “R2P” doctrine, developed by Michael Ignatieff, among others, is that other

countries should intervene in the politics of a sovereign country if they perceive instability or a human rights crisis.

Elie, who spoke at McMaster University early in March, acknowledged the need to protect people whose human rights come under attack. But since the “R2P” doctrine is coming largely from the developed Western nations, many of which are violating

human rights at this very moment, Elie asked, “Who is protecting the rights of the people of Iraq, killed by the bombs of those who would grant themselves the “responsibility to protect?”

In asking this question, Elie pointed out the dissonance between countries which are waging illegal wars on the one hand, and painting themselves as “responsible” for the “protection”

of those in the “failed states” of the third world.

Do the terms “humanitarian intervention” or “responsibility to protect,” invoke soldiers from Ethiopia coming to the US to arrest George Bush for war crimes and the highest rate of imprisonment in the world? Implicit in the doctrine is that white colonial powers will be the ones doing the “protecting”. ...

Lebanon Solidarité

The Québec-Lebanon solidarity movement is strong and growing

by **Dave Johnson**

Merely two days after the initial Israeli attack on Lebanon on July 24, protests were staged in front of the Israeli Consulate in Montreal. The Montreal-based solidarity group Tadamon! was one of the first to

call for demonstrations after the conflict began, joined by other groups such as Palestinians and Jews United (PAJU).

Stephen Harper’s oft-cited suggestion that Israel’s response to the kidnapping of two soldiers by the Lebanese group Hezbollah was “measured”—the

response included the complete destruction of civilian neighbourhoods and bombing of infrastructure such as bridges and power plants—elicited widespread and immediate condemnation; polls suggested that fully two-thirds of Quebecers disagreed with the Conservative

position. One protest sign at a Quebec City rally read, “Killing children is not ‘measured.’”

The gatherings grew significantly as the war raged on, with upwards of 60,000 taking to the streets of Montreal on August 6. ...

An Indian Act

A response to an attempt of genocide

by **Stewart Steinhauer**

Artist Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun publicly protested after his painting ‘Red Man Watching White Men Trying To Fix A Hole In The Sky’ was purchased by the National Art Gallery to be shown in

their ‘Indian Room.’ He didn’t want his work to be associated with the notional concept of ‘Indians.’ Earlier in his career, he had been charged with desecrating an official document when he showed, in one of his professional exhibitions, a photographic series of himself

firing a high-powered rifle into a target-mounted official copy of Canada’s ‘Indian Act.’ The photographic series was titled ‘An Indian Act.’

Indian. There is no such word in any language indigenous to Turtle Island. In fact, there’s no such word in any language

indigenous to India. Back when Columbus made his historic voyage, the nation we now call India was called Hindustan, and the people there, because of their all-day-every-day spiritual practice, were characterized by the Spaniards as living in God, “in dios.” ...

Canada “Heading Toward Disaster” in Afghanistan

Prominent Afghan MP says Canada needs to end support for fundamentalist warlords

by **Dru Oja Jay**

Afghanistan’s youngest and arguably most famous member of parliament began an address to McGill students last week

by saying that she was “deeply impressed with the sympathy expressed by Canadians” for the situation of the Afghan people.

The kind words for Canada’s involvement, however, ended

there.

Malalai Joya is famous worldwide for standing up during the Constitutional Loya Jirga and speaking out against appointing fundamentalist warlords to head

planning groups. The men Joya told the assembly, should be tried for their crimes and violations of human rights instead of being appointed to positions of power. ...

Government of Canada

In January of 2003, Liberal Minister Denis Paradis organized a gathering of US, French and OAS officials to discuss the future of Haiti. According to a *l'Actualité* report published one year before the coup, a consensus was reached that "Aristide must go".

Canada's federal government is FOCAL's principle benefactor.

CIDA

The Canadian International Development Agency is the primary vessel for delivering over \$200 million in funding to the Haitian "interim government" and "civil society organizations" since the 2004 coup.

Over 50 per cent of Alternatives' budget comes from CIDA.

Alternatives

In 2005, François L'Écuyer, who was then in charge of Alternatives' Haiti file, told the *Dominion* that all 15 groups that Alternatives works with in Haiti are actively anti-Aristide. Alternatives' newspaper, which is directly sponsored by CIDA and reaches 50,000 Quebec residents, covered events in Haiti extensively, but did not discuss Canada's role in the coup or human rights violations under the Canada-backed 'interim government'.

In 2004-05 NCHR received \$100,000 every six months from CIDA.

NCHR

The National Coalition for Haitian Rights (now RNDDH) is a "human rights group" that has been widely-discredited for fabricating evidence to justify the imprisonment of constitutional Prime Minister Yvon Neptune, who has since been released. Immediately after the coup, Yolene Gilles, second in charge of NCHR, went on elite-owned radio to name wanted Lavalas "bandits," contributing to a climate of anti-Lavalas terror.

Paramilitary Groups

The coup was precipitated by a well-funded military campaign. Armed groups went from city to city, killing hundreds, burning police stations, and terrorizing activists and politicians tied to the elected government. Key leaders were trained by American military, and were armed with new rifles.

FOCAL

Nominally an NGO, the Canadian Centre for the Americas has played a key role in crafting Canadian policy in Haiti. Limited information available about this secretive organization suggests a UN trusteeship of Haiti and an expanded Canadian role. A document acquired by the *Dominion* urges the Canadian government to support a "privatization programme".

Once adopted, policy first drafted by FOCAL is implemented by CIDA.

Most of R&D's annual budget comes directly from Parliament.

Over \$100 million in Canadian aid went to the interim gov'n't. Canada pressured the Caribbean Community to recognize the unelected government.

"There are no political prisoners in Haiti."
-Prime Minister Paul Martin to journalists in Haiti, November 14, 2004

Rights & Democracy

Before the coup, Canada's human rights watchdog was reliably critical of the government, but fell silent after the coup. Human rights violations of human rights were rampant. R&D made Danielle Manigault seven chosen by the U.S. interim Prime Minister. \$415,000 civil society program.

Interim Deputy Justice Minister Phillippe Vixar was appointed to his position and paid by CIDA.

The day the insurrection began, former Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew met with Paul Arcelin, right hand man the leader of principle paramilitary groups, and self-described intellectual author of the armed attacks.

An R&D report labeled the G-184 as "prominent civil society movement".

Several members of the G-184 received CIDA funding.

Groups

Refer to Alternatives' regular reports over...

"I believe... image, would... the job... kinds o... -FOC...

CANADA

HAI

ve the United States has, right now, such a bad
the work would proceed much better, and it
be a better investment, for NED if FOCAL does
because Canada, Canadians don't elicit these
of feelings of rejection that Americans do now."
AL board member **Beatrice Rangel** †

Canadian Foundation
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Democracy

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Coup of 184

ferred to as the "civil society opposition"
ristide's government, the G-184 called
lar demonstrations calling for the
throw of the elected government.

Rangel used
NED connections to
procure a \$94,516
grant for FOCAL. †

FOCAL board member Alan
Stoga has long-standing ties to
Henry Kissinger, who was integral
to the founding of the NED.

R&D shares a
database of "democracy
projects" with the NED.
The NED lists R&D as a
"counterpart institution,"
and notes that the NED
was consulted during the
establishment of R&D.

"[IRI's] leader in Haiti, Stanley Lucas, an avowed
Aristide opponent from the Haitian elite,
counseled the opposition to stand firm, and not
work with Mr. Aristide, as a way to cripple his
government and drive him from power."
—*New York Times*, January 29, 2006

"Interim Government"

After US and Canadian troops forced Aristide
and the constitutional government from
office, a new government was appointed by
a seven-person council, which was set up by
the US government. Under its rule, hundreds
were illegally imprisoned, and thousands
were killed and forced into hiding.

IRI effectively created
the G-184 and was a
major financier of most of
its member groups.

† Quoted in Anthony Fenton's
forthcoming article in
Canadian Dimension.

NED

In the words of National Endowment for
Democracy founder Allen Weinstein, "A lot
of what we do today was done covertly 25
years ago by the CIA." Millions of dollars were
disbursed to Haitian groups and political
parties for the purpose of "democracy
promotion," channeled through intermediary
groups. Almost all of the groups funded
were virulently anti-Aristide, and much of
the funding was disbursed through the IRI.
The NED, along with USAID and the "Office
of Transition Initiatives," disburse hundreds
of millions every year to political parties
and "civil society" organizations worldwide,
though nearly always indirectly.

The NED is one of IRI's primary donors.

IRI

The International Republican Institute is a
branch of the Republican Party dedicated
to "democracy promotion" abroad. With a
budget of over \$90 million—mainly in grants
from the US government and the NED—IRI
funds find their way to political parties in
Haiti and around the world, it runs political
training programs, and even organized
candidates' debates in Haiti's last election.

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY?

In the case of Haiti, the Canadian government and
Canadian NGOs worked closely in line with organizations
implementing a US-initiated coup against a democratically
elected government. This diagram reveals a glimpse of the
network of "democracy promotion" that is active around the
world. The IRI's Stanley Lucas, for example, now works in
Afghanistan. Information about "democracy promotion" is
extremely limited, but has been thoroughly documented by
a few persistent journalists.

Recommended reading:

William Robinson's *Promoting Polyarchy & A Faustian
Bargain*, William Blum's *Killing Hope*, Edward Herman and
Ed Broadhead's *Demonstration Elections*, Eva Golinger's *The
Chavez Code*.

MAY 21 & JULY 9, 2000

Haiti holds the first and second rounds of Local and Parliamentary elections. Fanmi Lavalas, the party of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, wins overwhelmingly. The Organization of American States (OAS) initially proclaims the elections "a great success for the Haitian population." Most international election observers reach the same conclusions. Some opposition parties, with little base amongst Haiti's poor, contest the results of these elections, claiming fraud. Their accusations centre around eight Senatorial seats, which they claim should have gone to a run-off vote. From this point onwards, the political opposition, united under the US government-funded Democratic Convergence (DC), calls for

NOVEMBER 26, 2000

Aristide is elected president during Presidential elections with 92 per cent of the popular vote. DC boycotts the election.

JUNE 8, 2001

Seven of the eight disputed Senators step down, following pressure from Aristide. The DC maintains its insistence that Aristide resign and that it lead a non-elected "transition" government.

SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

The OAS adopts resolutions 806 and 822, effectively requiring the Aristide government to give the un-elected Democratic Convergence a veto on aid disbursements.

JANUARY 31, 2003

Canadian Secretary of State for

the return of the Haiti's hated military, disbanded by Aristide in 1995.

JULY 2003

Haiti uses more than 90 per cent of its foreign reserves to pay \$32 million in debt service to its international creditors, requiring Aristide's government to end fuel subsidies and slash spending on health and education programs.

DECEMBER 2003

Relatively small protests demand Aristide be removed. Organizing groups are supported and funded by the US-funded Haiti Democracy Project.

FEBRUARY 5, 2004

A rebel force composed of members of the deposed

speculation about working with members of Haiti's former military.

FEBRUARY 26, 2004

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham calls for Aristide to step down; US Secretary of State Colin Powell makes the same demand.

FEBRUARY 29, 2004

President Aristide is escorted by armed US Marines to the airport. Canadian Forces personnel are observed "securing the airport" by international journalists. Aristide later claims he was kidnapped by the Marines, an account corroborated by several eyewitnesses. Both Aristide and his wife are taken to the Central African Republic where they are held for several days;

No Time for Democracy Six years of Canada in Haiti

Canada's involvement in Haiti since the 2004 coup d'état has been characterized by uncritical support of repression of poor Haitians, support for partisan and elite "civil society" organizations, and complicity in electoral fraud. Not by accident, Canada's official role in Haiti is couched in terms like "humanitarian assistance." This timeline, although far from comprehensive, outlines some of the key aspects of Canada's involvement in Haiti from the year 2000 to the present. **by Stuart Neatby**



2002: Wilson House at Meech Lake, where the Ottawa Initiative took place.



2004: Canadian Forces helicopter flying above Haiti's Presidential Palace.

Photos this page: Government of Canada

the complete annulment of the May elections, despite the fact that by all accounts Lavalas was the clear winner.

SUMMER 2000

United States suspends all aid to the government of Haiti as a result of the "flawed" May elections. Subsequent to this, international aid donors, including Canada and the European Union, withhold over \$400 million in aid and loans to Haiti, a country whose annual budget in 2001 was \$361 million. Canadian and international "aid" continues to find its way exclusively to partisan anti-Aristide non-governmental organizations and political parties.

Latin America and La Francophonie Denis Paradis convenes a meeting of the "Ottawa Initiative on Haiti" at the Meech Lake Resort. The invitees of the meeting include Canadian officials, US Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere Otto Reich, OAS President Luigi Einaudi, and officials from throughout Latin America. No Haitian representatives are present. In an interview conducted with the Quebec magazine *L'Actualité*, Paradis confides that the consensus within the meeting was that "Aristide should go." Paradis also says that military occupation might be necessary after an international intervention and that delegates contemplated bringing about

military crosses into Haiti, taking control of northern Haitian cities and begins moving towards the capital. Pierre Pettigrew meets Paul Arcelin, paramilitary boss Guy Phillippe's "political lieutenant," in Montreal.

FEBRUARY 7, 2004

100,000 Haitians protest in Port-au-Prince, calling for the government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide to fulfill his five-year mandate.

FEBRUARY 11, 2004

18 days before the coup. Internal government memos reveal that Canadian officials planned to invoke the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine to justify taking control in Haiti. Memos also seem to indicate

Canadian, US, and French governments authorize a "stabilization" force to be deployed in Haiti. Canada contributes 550 troops. An unelected "interim government" is imposed.

MARCH-MAY 2004

Haitian police and ex-military members, often with the direct support of Canadian, US, and French troops, jail and murder Lavalas supporters and residents of poor neighbourhoods. A report issued by the National Lawyers Guild finds that the morgue in Port-au-Prince receives 1000 bodies during the month of March 2004 alone.

SUMMER 2004

Canada takes over the leadership of the UN Civil Police Force

in Haiti, mandated to provide training and logistical support to the Haitian National Police (HNP), as well as oversee its vetting of new officers. Canada contributes 100 RCMP officers, and the UN CIVPOL will be lead by Canadian personnel throughout the next two years, when members of the ex-military become integrated into key command positions of the HNP. Canada's 550 troops withdraw from the country in August.

NOVEMBER 15, 2004

During a visit to Haiti, Paul Martin claims "There are no political prisoners in Haiti." At the time, the Catholic Peace and Justice Commission estimated that there were 700 political prisoners in the capital alone.

upcoming Presidential and Parliamentary elections. Canada will spend \$30 million on the 2006 elections, much of which will go to the Haitian government's electoral body, the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP).

JULY 6, 2005

More than 300 heavily-armed United Nations peacekeeping troops carry out a major military operation in Cité Soleil, a densely populated residential neighbourhood. Twenty-three civilians are killed, including several children.

DECEMBER 20, 2005

RCMP member Mark Bourque is killed in Cité Soleil.

FEBRUARY 7, 2006

Haiti holds Presidential

Thousands of ballots, most bearing a mark for Preval, are found by Haitian television reporters within a dumpsite, some still smoldering from failed attempts to burn them. During protests in the capital, MINUSTAH soldiers shoot into crowds of protestors, killing one. Protestors storm the Hotel Montana, the luxury hotel where the vote tabulation is taking place under UN supervision. Once inside, protestors hold a peaceful occupation of the hotel, some taking the opportunity to swim in the hotel's heated pool.

FEBRUARY 16, 2006

Rene Preval is declared the winner of the presidential election following negotiations between the CEP, his 'Lespwa'

the visit quiet, and Canadian media scarcely report it.

MAY 14, 2006

Rene Preval is inaugurated as president of Haiti amid a break-out at the National Penitentiary of prisoners, most of whom have not been charged with any crime. Prisoners later claim that 10 are killed after MINUSTAH forces fire at unarmed detainees inside the prison

JUNE 2006

Several high-profile political prisoners are released from prison, including So Ann Auguste and Yvon Neptune. Most of these individuals had remained in prison for two years. More than 4000 prisoners who have not been charged or tried remain in



2005: RCMP officer in Port-au-Prince.



2005: Bodies in Port-au-Prince



2005: RCMP officer training Haitian National Police recruits.



2006: Released political prisoners.



2006: Protesters occupy hotel.

Photos this page: Haiti Information Project

JANUARY 2005

A Canadian UN Civil Police Commander interviewed by human rights investigators claims that all he has done in Haiti has been to "engage in daily guerrilla warfare."

FEBRUARY-JUNE 2005

Violence and targeted killings against suspected Lavalas supporters continue; following the killing of nine demonstrators on April 27 during a peaceful pro-Lavalas march, Canadian spokesperson Dan Moskaluk defends the actions of the HNP.

JUNE 16, 2005

Canada announces that Elections Canada will oversee election monitoring for

elections. These elections are preceded by a campaign of voter discouragement within poor urban and rural areas, largely coordinated by the MINUSTAH Election Security Team, lead by Canadian Col. Barry Macleod. Despite this, turn-out is high, and exit polls give Rene Preval, former President and favoured candidate amongst Haiti's poor, a lead with more than 60 per cent of the vote.

FEBRUARY 13, 2006

Despite initial vote counts that show Preval above the 50 per cent mark, the CEP reduces Preval's total to 48.7 per cent. Protests flood Haiti's streets as poor voters cry foul; Preval declares that "massive fraud and gross errors" occurred.

party, and international governments. A deal is brokered in which 85,000 blank ballots are not counted in the final tally.

MARCH 10-12, 2006

Despite the outcome of the February elections, the Harper government welcomes outgoing Haitian President Gerard Latortue in a state visit to Canada. Protesters, who accuse Latortue of human rights abuses, dog Latortue during visits in Ottawa and Montreal.

MAY 1, 2006

Rene Preval makes a state visit to Canada. Canada bars entry into the country to several officials accompanying him. The Harper government keeps

Haiti's jails.

SEPTEMBER 2, 2006

The British Medical Journal the *Lancet* releases the results of a survey of human rights abuses within Haiti's capital during the 22 months following the 2004 coup. The study reveals that during this time period there were 35,000 rapes and 8000 murders. The vast majority of the politically-motivated murders, 4000 in total, are attributed to forces aligned with the interim government, such as the Canadian-trained Haitian National Police, and members of the former military. A significant number of physical threats and threats of sexual violence are attributed to MINUSTAH soldiers, including Canadian personnel.

Warfighters, Not Missionaries

The origins of the three-block war

by Jon Elmer

[Based on an excerpt from the forthcoming book, *The Afghanistan Adventure: Canada's foreign policy for the 21st century* by Jon Elmer and Anthony Fenton]

Notwithstanding the massive historical record of brutal colonial interventions justified as “for the good of the natives,” Canada’s politicians and pundits wax daily about Canada’s unique effort to liberate the schoolgirls of Afghanistan. This missionary rhetoric stands in stark contrast to the jargon that pervades the pronouncements of Canada’s foreign policy establishment – including not only the military, but also Foreign Affairs and the Canadian International Development Agency.

The posture of the establishment’s policymakers and planners betrays an aggressive, military-borne doctrine rooted in advancing

Canadian “interests” on a global scale. The implementation of the “three-block war” doctrine is an illustrative example of Canada’s intentions. Simply put, the three-block war is an urban warfare doctrine that identifies three separate but often simultaneous spheres of enforcing military control in a city—warfighting, policing and facilitating aid.

Canada’s top soldier, General Rick Hillier, has stated that “We have to be experts on what is called in general terms the three-block war in order to have an effect across the world.” As he explained to a Senate Committee, the entire structure of the Canadian Forces (CF) is training in the three-block war “every hour of every day.”

While Hillier is surely the loudest, he is not the only one discussing it. Throughout policy documents, reports and speeches, the three-block war names the operational thrust that the CF—indeed, the whole

of the foreign policy establishment—are implementing for the 21st century.

The doctrine did not begin in Afghanistan (see Haiti); but, as Michael Ignatieff acknowledged during the parliamentary debate on the extension of the mission in the spring of 2006, the significance of the Afghanistan operation is that it is a test of the “paradigm shift” from “peacekeeping” to “peace enforcement.”

What is the “three-block war”?

The term ‘three-block war’ was coined by then-head of the US Marine Corps, General Charles C. Krulak, in a revealing and instructive speech at the National Press Club in Washington in the fall of 1997. In setting the stage for the introduction of the new doctrine, Krulak drew on a lesson from imperial Rome: adapt or be defeated.

Krulak’s speech was crafted

around a tale of woe suffered by the mighty Roman infantry under the commander of Caesar Augustus’s expeditionary forces, Publius Quintilius Varus, in 9 AD. After being roundly defeated by the under-armed militias of the indigenous Germanic tribes, Varus was said to have retreated while despondently muttering “ne cras, ne cras”—not like yesterday, not like yesterday.

“[O]ur enemies will not allow us to fight the son of Desert Storm,” said Krulak, “but they will try to draw us into the stepchild of Chechnya.” With this phrase, Krulak ushered in the ‘fourth generation’ of warfare, bidding adieu to the ‘manoeuvre’ warfare doctrine that defined WWII and the Cold War posture, ie. formal state militaries fighting in enormous mechanized battalions.

The Russian wars on Chechnya, particularly in the capital, Grozny, were among the bloodiest urban fights since WWII, characterized by almost total destruction of the human and physical landscape. The fighting is house to house. Gone are the frontlines and the uniforms; the battlefield is the city. The enemy is ostensibly the entire population.

And, as Krulak said to Ted Koppel on ABC’s *Nightline* in 1999: “There is absolutely no environment more lethal than fighting building to building.”

Said Krulak: “Throughout modern history, we have consciously skirted fighting in urban areas. It is a very difficult and dangerous place to fight. It is one that we want to avoid. But by 2010, over 70 per cent of the world’s population will live in urban slums and in cities, most of them within 300 miles of a coastline. It is here where our enemies will challenge us. The urban areas will become the center of gravity of our foes, and cities, as I’m sure you realize, have the potential to



Canadian soldiers guarding prisoners in Afghanistan.

illustration by Sylvia Nickerson

negate much of our technological advantage.”

This, however, is the landscape of the 21st century battlefield. Barely halfway into the first decade of the century, there have already been two major wars unleashed by the US centred on the three-block model, and when Israel's wars in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as the month-long war in Lebanon in the summer of 2006 are added to the mix, the “stepchild” of Chechnya is Gaza, Jenin, Kandahar and Fallujah.

“The three-block war in microcosm”

Iraq's Fallujah is “the three-block war in microcosm,” Lt. Col. Brennan Byrne told the *Marine Corps Times*. Byrne led Marines into Fallujah in the landmark aggression in 2004, only days after four mercenaries from the Blackwater private security firm were killed there, their charred bodies notoriously hung from a bridge.

In large swathes of Fallujah, a city of 300,000, the fighting was essentially block-by-block, backed by a massive aerial bombardment from jet fighters and helicopter gunships. Thousands were killed, more than 150,000 displaced and 50 per cent of the city's buildings, including more than 39,000 homes, were damaged or destroyed according to US officials. “Fallujah has been a return to full-up Marine Corps smash-mouth combat,” Byrne said.

In a story published during the second major invasion of Fallujah in November 2004, the *Times of London* told a remarkable tale of the operative doctrine in stark relief. It is therefore worth quoting at length:

Between burnt-out apartments and minarets shot through by tank shells, a lone Iraqi man marched resolutely down Fallujah's deserted main street, a pair of white long johns held aloft on a stick instead of a white flag. Under his arm he bore a rare treasure: a boxed TV dinner with the alluring brand name

in English: My Kind of Chicken. Kemal Muhammad Saleh, an unexpectedly cheerful 44-year-old man... [who] relies on handouts by the US and Iraqi forces to survive in his devastated city... In the distance the occasional cloud of smoke rises from an incoming US artillery shell. This is what US military doctrine terms a three-block war—troops can be fighting a deadly foe in one part of town, patrolling another and rebuilding the safer areas. Colonel Mike Olivier, of the Marines civil affairs team, put the US strategy in more blunt terms. “This is the way the Americans work: first we blow the f*** out of your house, then we pay you to rebuild it. Look at World War II, look at Najaf [Iraq]. We'll give them money, we'll give them jobs and we'll make capitalists of all of them,” he grinned.

Despite multiple massive offensives into Fallujah, the US has not been—by any measure—able to control Fallujah, or indeed, almost anywhere in the whole of Iraq. The same is true for large parts of Afghanistan. Both wars—for which victory has already been claimed—are continuing to worsen. In light of these failures, the US armed forces set about writing a counterinsurgency manual for its soldiers in order to bring the war doctrine up to speed with the operational realities in Iraq and Afghanistan. So strong was the military's avoidance of fighting insurgents or guerrillas in urban settings, that this is the first field manual on urban counterinsurgency in a generation. A final draft of the field manual—FM 3-24—was leaked in June of 2006

Marine Corp commander James Mattis—with leadership experience in southern Afghanistan and Iraq, including leading the Fallujah assault—was tapped to oversee the penning of the manual, along with army general David Petraeus. Mattis, known as “Mad Dog”, is an architect of the three-block war strategy. Mattis made headlines in February 2005 when he told a public audience during a recruiting speech: “It's a lot of fun to

fight 'em, it's a hell of a hoot, it's fun to shoot some people. I'll be right up front with you, I like brawlin', and one thing we have to do is make certain we're advertising, recruiting, selecting the right kind of people to go into this fight so you're not out there with people who have any misunderstanding what this is all about. You go into Afghanistan, you've got guys who slapped women around for five years 'cause they didn't wear a veil. Guys like that ain't got no manhood left anyway, so it's a helluva lot of fun to shoot 'em. It's a good fight. But as much emotional satisfaction—for all the emotional satisfaction you get from really whacking somebody like that, the main effort, ladies and gentlemen, is to diminish the conditions that drive people to sign up for these kinds of insurgencies.”

In his more refined pronouncements, Mattis has been a leading figure in the transformation of the Marines, from boot camp to doctrine. His model is the three-block war; it is the urban battlefield. As Mattis said in an influential paper published in the journal of the US Naval Institute: “Look at combat in the ‘contested zones’ of urban and other complex terrain. We need to create the same sort of dominance we currently hold in the Global Commons to our ground forces in these contested zones.”

In short, Mattis argues that if the US is to maintain its dominance in the coming era, it will have to micromanage hostile urban environments. This is reflected throughout the counterinsurgency manual, which is clear in its repeated references to the doctrine as proactive, management warfare; warfare of choice. The three-block war doctrine is a model for domination, first and foremost; it is a warfighting doctrine with the express purpose of cementing US dominance in the world for the next generation and beyond.

The counterinsurgency Field Manual is thorough and serious, and stands in sharp

contrast to the political rhetoric of the War on Terror. The two hundred fifty page manual makes very little use of the term or the concept of ‘terrorism’, noting in the first sentence that rather than random violence, the uprisings that forces will face are “political in nature” and deeply rooted in the social fabric of what the military would euphemistically term the ‘contested zone’, namely: the community.

The objective is not to deal with individual threats; it is to construct doctrine to deal with wars of imposition and conquest in the new environment.

Canadian planners tend to focus attention on the two other blocks of the three-block war in order to cement the political message that they are trying to advance within the peacekeeper mythology. The goal, according to the doctrine, is to set the ‘development’ aspects to the tune of the combat element. A *Maclean's* embed last year described a pre-battle pep-talk in which Lt Col Ian Hope sent CF into battle by calling them Canada's “developmental warriors.”

The political messaging of the Afghanistan mission centres around a “hearts and minds” campaign. Rhetorically, the three-block war doctrine is well-suited to Canada's aggressive shift. It maintains the “peacekeeping” and “clothing refugees” missionary elements that have been so deeply entrenched in the national consciousness. Emerging as it is from the era of the peacekeeper mythology, Canadian opinion-makers would prefer this to be the face of the Canadian Forces until it can be determined that the Canadian populace is behind the warfighting component.

The corporate press has been happy to oblige. In the spring of 2006 as the fighting in Afghanistan reached the fiercest levels since 2001, *Maclean's* ran a feature under the title “Canada's Kandahar balancing act,” and illustrated the piece with “the other side of Canada's

Genetically Modified Diplomacy

Canada's international biotech agenda

by Yuill Herbert

According to several observers, Canada's diplomatic manoeuvres at the UN and WTO could weaken international environmental law and accelerate the spread of unpopular genetically-modified organisms around the world.

In 2003, Canada, along with the US and Argentina, initiated proceedings at the World Trade Organization (WTO) to challenge the European Community's (EC) ban on Genetically-Modified Organisms (GMOs). On September 29 of this year, the WTO declared the EC's GMO regulations illegal and instructed it to modify its laws accordingly.

"Although politicians claim that environmental law and trade law support each other, this ruling demonstrates that in the hands of the WTO, environmental law is in fact made subservient to trade laws," said Duncan Currie, international law expert and author of a Greenpeace assessment of the WTO case. Canada was the first industrialized country to ratify the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity, which was first agreed to at the UN Earth Summit in 1992 and reaffirmed in 2002. The Convention includes the Biosafety Protocol, which regulates the movement of GMOs across borders.

"The [WTO] ruling contradicts what heads of state agreed at the UN World Summit," said Currie.

The WTO ruled that the precautionary principle, a mainstay of international environmental law, was too controversial and unsettled a concept to be a general principle of law. The precautionary principle states that if the potential consequences of an action are severe or irreversible, in the absence of full scientific certainty, the burden of proof falls on those who would advocate taking the



Critics argue that government is being influenced by large biotech corporations and regulatory norms in the US.

Jessica Bray

action.

"If taken as precedent," writes Canadian law firm McCarthy Tétrault, "this position could affect the regulation of many other industries." McCarthy Tétrault gives the example of the EC's draft rules for testing the effects of certain industrial chemicals for public health consequences. "If those rules incorporate the precautionary principle, any resulting restrictions could be challenged for not being based on hard scientific evidence."

"This ruling is important," says Howard Minigh, former vice-president of DuPont and president of Brussels-based CropLife International, which represents biotech companies. "Regulations based on political expediency and excessive precaution encouraged by propaganda from anti-biotech groups" put producers of farm goods at a disadvantage, he says.

The Canadian government claims that its domestic GMO testing system is foolproof and that Canadian-approved GMO products are safe. A review of decisions by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency shows that all 61 applications for GMO animal-feed products were approved. Agriculture Canada has also approved 89 GMO food

products for human consumption.

Are Canada's regulations for GMOs safe? GMOs are not labeled, and thus difficult to test, but according to Dr. Joe Cummins, "there has been a large increase in food allergy and food-related illness after the GM foods were spread around North American markets."

"In Canada," said Cummins, who is a member of the UK-based Independent Science Panel and an emeritus professor of genetics at the University of Western Ontario, "most processed foods contain GM corn, soy or canola products."

"Even though it is not possible to do good science of the unlabelled foods, laboratory animal studies showed a range of adverse effects from allergy, inflammation or pre-cancerous lesion of the digestive system. Such studies are ignored by the Canadian government but they are well documented."

A 2004 report by the Polaris Institute looked at the 58 recommendations to protect public health by the Royal Society's 2001 Expert Panel on the Future of Food Biotechnology. The report found that while some progress has been made, there is still a great deal

that needs to be done before Canadians have a precautionary regulatory system to protect their families and the environment from the risks of GMOs.

"It appears to me that the government has been unduly influenced by large biotech corporations and the regulatory norms in place south of the border," said Dr. Peter Andree, author of the Polaris report. "As a result, in general I think it is fair to say that Canadian regulators do not recognize the potential severity of the risks of products of biotechnology, or the value of a more precautionary response to those risks."

In the meantime, the Canadian government is campaigning to open the world market to GMOs, including the 'Terminator' gene. Terminator seeds are genetically engineered to result in crops that don't grow viable seeds. Farmers who use the Terminator seeds cannot save seeds from their crops and are forced to buy new seeds. There is currently an international moratorium on the use and marketing of Terminator seeds.

"Terminator seeds are a weapon of mass destruction and an assault on our food sovereignty," said Viviana Figueroa of the Ocumazo Indigenous community in Argentina on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity.

"Terminator [technology] directly threatens our life, our culture and our identity as Indigenous peoples."

In 2005, a leaked report obtained by the ETC Group indicated that Canadian diplomats were heading to a Convention on Biodiversity meeting with instruction to "block consensus" in order to help lift the moratorium.

The Canadian government was swamped with letters of protest from around the world

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Will Eliminating Subsidies Help Poor Farmers?

How corporate control of markets goes missing in discussions of “free trade”

by Dru Oja Jay

When discussion turns to the plight of the farmers of the world, especially in the Third World, the narrative is remarkably consistent. The story is one of rich countries—in Europe and north of the Rio Grande—that subsidize their farmers. These farmers are able to produce foodstuffs for artificially low prices, with prices driven lower still by their established scale and ability to invest in advanced technology. Poor countries, notably those in Africa and the Caribbean, are devastated when their markets are flooded with cheap rice, corn and other food products from rich countries.

WTO critic Joseph Stiglitz, CBC journalist Michael Enright, former Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew and the Third World Network agree on the best course of action. So do the editorial boards of the *Guardian*, the *Globe and Mail*, much of the progressive press and the financial press. There is a near-consensus about the solution. To help Third World farmers, Europe, the US and Canada fulfill their part of the bargain at the WTO and remove subsidies for their farmers and reduce tariffs that deny Third World farmers access to their markets.

The only things standing in the way of prosperity for a billion poor farmers, this diverse chorus tells us, are the entrenched interests of farmers in rich countries and their hold on governments that refuse to open up their markets to foreign competition.

According to Darrin Qualman, director of research at Canada's National Farmer's Union (NFU), there's a problem: the narrative is a distraction and removing subsidies will do very little to help poor farmers.

“It's all just wrong. It's the wrong talk about the wrong topics,” says Qualman. “The one



Cargill-owned grain elevators on Lake Erie. *amerune*

thing they're not discussing at the WTO is what's causing the farm income crisis—corporate power taking out profits and impoverishing farmers.”

Qualman says that one of the basic problems with the narrative is the central “mantra” that “market access” will help farmers in the majority world. A picture-perfect case study for why this is not the case can be found close by.

“Canada is probably one of the most successful countries in the world in terms of gaining market access—I can't imagine that there are many countries in the world that have been as successful at getting access.”

“The net result has been the worst farm-income crisis in Canadian history.”

Instead, Qualman says that all available data point to trade liberalization as being wildly enriching for those who have consolidated control over markets, but devastating to small-scale farmers. Farms are told to become more “efficient” in order to compete, while transnational agribusiness takes in huge profits by squeezing farmers and controlling distribution and retail channels.

As a general trend, Qualman says that “farm income around the world is inversely proportional to trade volumes and the number of trade agreements we sign.”

“The WTO guys would say that it's directly proportional... They're just lying. All the data from the last 20 years says they're wrong.”

It's not that poor farmers aren't being put out of business by subsidized crops. This, Qualman explains, is a natural side effect of putting a billion farmers into competition with each other by removing the ability of governments to regulate what enters their borders.

“Dumping shouldn't happen, but the problem isn't subsidies. You have to give poor countries the power to say no to these products.” This means addressing the source of those policies: often the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which use their leverage over poor countries to impose “free trade” policies.

Agribusiness has “merged and merged” at the transnational level, consolidating power and resulting in massive profits, while “the system has been altered such that all the farmers have been brought into competition with each other.” Qualman says that the results are entirely predictable: “We have been put in a race to the

bottom triggered by the dissolution of barriers.”

Grain and oil seed farming provide the quintessential example. “Cargill [a US-based crop nutrient producer and distributor] will play canola farmers in Canada against soy farmers in Brazil, against palm oil producers in Indonesia.” Because each region's farmers can be threatened with the threat of lower-priced product

“They're just lying. All the data from the last 20 years says they're wrong.”

from their counterparts, the result is a massive power imbalance between farmers and distributors, with a predictable effect on profits: farmers are struggling to get by, while the consolidated agribusiness multinationals are showing record profits year after year.

In the abstract, Qualman agrees with the premise of the “free trade” crowd.

“Farmers would love to see the market distortions taken out, but we need to start with the highest-profit links in the chain”—the corporations deriving record profits from consolidating power over markets, not farmers in the First World, the majority world, who are losing money every year. “The WTO wants to just focus on one link.”

“If they want to help farmers, we need to talk about breaking up cartels and breaking up the power of these near-monopoly agribusiness corporations.”

In the end, the problem for farmers isn't about having better data or a more convincing argument to petition the government. Currently, “the government is largely hostile to the family farm and the needs

Minerals, Gas and Spin-offs

CIDA's resource regulation projects in Bolivia

by Dawn Paley

With the election of Evo Morales and his party to parliament in late 2005, the political landscape in Bolivia shifted drastically. The move to nationalize hydrocarbon resources on May 1, 2006, took many by surprise, representing a clean break from the way politics had traditionally been done in the Andean country.

Bolivia is part of a new trend in Latin America today, where governments are making links with each other and trying to make the exploitation of their resources work for their citizens rather than for large corporations. This new context is vital for those wishing to understand the Canadian government's role in Bolivia, particularly through the work of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Bolivia is one of nine "countries of focus" identified by CIDA, and a recipient of one of their largest bilateral country programs. CIDA's Programming Framework for Bolivia (FCP) includes a minimum bilateral budget of \$50 million, plus an additional \$14 million to be shared between counterpart funds and multilateral partners including the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.

From the bilateral budget, 50 per cent is shared between healthcare, gender, environment, project management, and water and sanitation. The remaining \$25 million is devoted to "the modernization of the state," which is further divided into three branches: civil service and public sector reform, funding of the human rights Ombudsman's office, and "the third and most established component... the formulation and effective enforcement of regulatory frameworks in the energy and mineral resources sectors."



Tin miner from Siglo XX, Department of Potosi, Bolivia. Dawn Paley

Looking through the lens of regulation in the mineral and energy sectors is one way (albeit limited) of analyzing CIDA's work in Bolivia, a lens that is crucial to understanding an important element of Canada's taxpayer-funded 'development' happening in Bolivia.

Mining and Development

From the outset, CIDA's development assistance to Bolivia has been closely linked with resource extraction. The very first Canadian aid to Bolivia was in 1967, when the government granted \$1,620,000 in loans to the Bolivian government for the purchase of mining equipment.

It is difficult to know exactly how CIDA funds aimed towards the mining sector have affected policy in Bolivia. Not only would it be nearly impossible to trace the outcome of CIDA donations to multilateral partners involved in mining regulation, but accessing information from Bolivia is also difficult. As doctoral candidate Alejandra Roncallo noted at a 2002 conference sponsored by York University, that because of Bolivia's secrecy laws, which were adopted in 1996, no information regarding the role of the Canadian government in designing Bolivia's new mining regulations is available.

What is clear, however, is that the policy changes that

brought COMIBOL (formerly the state-owned mining corporation) to its knees in 1985 ushered in waves of foreign investment that have often had severe economic and social repercussions for Bolivians.

One example of this is the "Christmas Massacre." Seven Bolivians were killed and 30 wounded in 1996 when 800 to 900 members of Bolivian police and military forces intervened in a conflict between Canadian-owned Da Capo Resources/Vista Gold Corporation and community members in Amayapampa, Bolivia.

Referencing the Christmas Massacre, Pedro Gomez Rocabado, a former miner now working with mining communities, noted in 2002 that the Bolivian government had "an unwillingness to uphold the law or enforce agreements that might infringe on investors' interests, thereby maintaining a development model that prioritizes corporate accumulation of wealth while abandoning Bolivians to their continuing impoverishment."

Hydrocarbons and Development

According to the 1996 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, Canada has been affecting hydrocarbon policy in Bolivia since 1989, when CIDA, Petro-Canada and the Bolivian government began

working together to "modernize [Bolivia's] public oil and gas industry through the Bolivia Oil and Gas Project." The same report goes on to explain benefits of the project that included the following: "22 Canadian firms received spin-off benefits from the Bolivian Oil and Gas Project; [and] approximately \$20 million in related commercial spin-offs in South America for Canadian firms since April 1995."

In their recent book *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance*, authors Linda Farthing and Benjamin Kohl explain that, "an increasingly important component of development assistance includes 'institutional capacity building'—creating the environment needed for markets to operate." One concrete example of 'institutional capacity building' sponsored by CIDA is the ongoing \$8.25 million Hydrocarbon Regulatory Assistance Project, initially granted to PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and recently reassigned to IBM.

Referencing the Hydrocarbon Regulatory Assistance Project, Farthing and Kohl state that, "rather than working for the interests of Bolivia, 'assistance' was designed by the international agency (in this case bilateral) to serve the interests of either international corporations or those based in their own countries." They go on to quote a now-unavailable CIDA report from 2004 that "clearly demonstrates that the generosity of the Canadian government provided about an 800 per cent return to Canadian businesses."

As the Bolivian government moves forward with a new energy agenda, breaking with the privatization-centred energy policies of the last 20 years, CIDA continues to finance energy sector projects that many argue have questionable value to most Bolivians.

Canadian Aid or Corporate Raid?

Canada's "development" agency in South Asia

by Harsha Walia

Though not largely discussed, South Asia is a major hub of global economic interests with a massive concentration of Canadian finance capital, foreign aid and development agencies.

"The most significant Canadian interests in South Asia are financial capital through investment, banking, and development aid," says Dr. Hari Sharma, professor emeritus at Simon Fraser University's department of sociology and anthropology, and author of the seminal book *Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia*.

"Development aid through CIDA has been known to be a form of economic raid, particularly because it operates through a politically ideological framework," continues Sharma. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is Canada's lead development agency.

Much of Canadian foreign development aid has been termed "phantom aid"—aid that does not improve the lives it is intended to—and includes spending on overpriced technical assistance and tied aid. Canadian corporate lobbies advocate tied aid because it is foreign aid that must be spent in the donor country, therefore providing an indirect subsidy to domestic corporations.

According to Action Aid, phantom aid accounts for over 50 per cent of Canada's aid spending and 47 per cent of Canadian phantom aid is tied to spending in Canada. Critics argue that tied aid is part of the larger objective of neoliberalization and private sector development. In fact, one of CIDA's top five priorities states that, "Poverty reduction requires strong efforts to address the needs of the private sector in developing countries."

Bangladesh has been one



King Gyanendra of Nepal: beneficiary of Canadian aid?

of Canada's largest aid recipients over the last three decades. According to CIDA's Country Development Programming Framework 2003–2008 for Bangladesh, private sector development is a major program objective. As part of a multilateral global effort, Canada pushed for Bangladesh to set up Export Processing Zones in 1978, which are regulated by the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority. This allows sweatshops to operate outside the realm of national labour laws. A CIDA-funded Local Enterprise Investment Centre facilitates local private enterprise by partnerships with foreign business, giving corporations from other countries access to the growing garment industry, exporting \$5 billion worth of goods annually.

According to a New Age report in June 2006, Bangladesh's apparel sector employs 2.5 million, 80 per cent of whom are women, in more than 5,000 factories. Amirul Haq Amir, co-ordinator of the Bangladesh Garment Workers Unity Council, says that garment workers are paid "between US\$14 to US\$16 per month, the lowest salary in the world."

From May–July 2006, around 4,000 garment factories

in Dhaka, Bangladesh, went on strike, resulting in major unrest and the death of at least one person by police gunfire. Since 2003, the Maquila Solidarity Network has been pressuring the Retail Council of Canada to ensure that the factories they use in Bangladesh are safe and healthy workplaces.

In others parts of the world, CIDA has come under fire for supporting governments who align with Western government and business interests. For example a July 2006 *Maclean's* Business report outlines CIDA's involvement in creating Colombian mining laws beneficial to Canadian companies, while in Haiti, CIDA has been criticized for political destabilization by funding agencies opposed to Aristide.

A similar situation has evolved in Nepal. Since 1964, Canada has contributed more than \$213 million in development assistance to Nepal, including \$10.4 million in 2004–05. Although the CIDA website boasts of "neutrality" in the civil war, it lays blame for poverty and underdevelopment on the "Maoist insurgency." CIDA's 2004 Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment acknowledges, "CIDA will need to monitor whether its projects

become Maoist targets because of linkages with government programs." The "government" of Nepal is King Gyanendra who first dismissed the elected government in 2002 and then proceeded to seize complete control after a royal coup in 2005. This small Himalayan country is war-struck with US M-16s, assault rifles, and over US \$10 million to the Royal Nepal Army. According to Amnesty International, such "assistance has enabled an increase in grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law" in Nepal.

Afghanistan has been the single largest recipient of Canadian bilateral aid, with almost \$1 billion allocated from 2001–2011. At the same time, one of the most visible manifestations of the Canadian presence in South Asia is Canada's increased military involvement in Afghanistan. There are those who see this as a contradiction and others as a convenient coincidence. As written by J.W. Smith in *The World's Wasted Wealth*, "Politics is the control of the economy... It is the military power of the more developed countries that permits them to dictate the terms of trade and maintain unequal relationships." Former US President Woodrow Wilson recognized this: "Since trade ignores national boundaries and the manufacturer insists on having the world as a market, the flag of his nation must follow him, and the doors of the nations which are closed against him must be battered down."

Canadian exports to Afghanistan have increased over 100-fold in the past five years, growing from \$167,000 to over \$19 million, according to Industry Canada statistics. Canadian corporations such as Bell Helicopters and CAE (one of Canada's largest defence contractors) have profited

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Canada's Debt to Afghanistan

Canadians need to “undo the damage”

by Dru Oja Jay

In the midst of a public debate about Canadian troops in Afghanistan, an San Diego-based author is delivering a stark message about what the majority of Afghani people want, but aren't getting from occupying forces: disarmament, justice and reparations.

Sonali Kolhatkar, co-director of the US-based Afghan Women's Mission, and author of the forthcoming book *Bleeding Afghanistan: Washington, warlords, and the propaganda of silence*, was the messenger.

“Afghanistan,” Kolhatkar told a crowd at Montreal's Sala Rosa, “is a broken country,” that has “endured decades of continuous war.” Much of that war, said Kolhatkar, was funded by “billions and billions of dollars” from the US, which trained, funded and armed the fundamentalist Mujahideen to fight against Soviet forces. After the Soviets left, the well-equipped warlords fought amongst each other, brutalizing populations with killings, rape and oppression of women. This violence was simply “formalized” by the Taliban when they seized power in 1996 with promises of a reprieve from war and corruption, said Kolhatkar. While the autocratic Islamist regime provided some stability, it also systematized the oppression of women in Afghanistan.

“The rapes of Afghan women, the forced marriages, all of that started under [what is today known as] the Northern Alliance.”

“The Taliban institutionalized into law, in a more organized fashion what the Northern Alliance and the Mujahideen had already begun. What the Taliban did was the same, but with less killing. [The two] are ideological twins,” said Kolhatkar.

The Northern Alliance, of course, was a key ally in the US-



A Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan. Critics say that PRTs have made all aid workers potential targets, and many agencies have left the country. *Combat Camera*

led 2002 invasion of Afghanistan, receiving additional millions in arms and financing from the US government.

Today, Kolhatkar told the *Dominion*, many of the feared warlords occupy high offices in Afghanistan's government and benefit from US and Canadian aid.

What nearly all Afghans agree on, said Kolhatkar, is that democracy and security cannot be achieved without disarmament. “Survey after survey shows that they want disarmament.”

“This is something people brought up over and over again [during Kolhatkar's recent visit]. ‘We want pens not guns, pens not guns.’”

There is a UN program, known as Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), but Kolhatkar says it is “very underfunded, very selective and not at all comprehensive.”

“People want absolute and complete disarmament,” she said.

The International Crisis Group, a research NGO, reported in February that the central government and its

international supporters have, to some extent, been complicit in the maintenance of power by militia commanders. The US-led coalition has relied on militia commanders in its military operations against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, empowering its local allies militarily and economically and helping them to resist central government control.

Kolhatkar proposed that the US and its allies need to reverse this policy. However, she insists that disarmament is only the first step towards reconstruction.

“Many people identify as victims of war crimes and they want some sort of war crimes tribunal,” said Kolhatkar. “Not,” she added, “of the kind that the US has carried out in the former Yugoslavia or in Iraq, but something that is led by Afghans, that is created by Afghans, but that simply needs some sort of foreign support.”

“If you have justice and take these men to court, you might also have to indict [US presidents] Carter and Reagan and the men who supported these warlords.

“[A war crimes tribunal]

is something that Canada, the UN and NATO could at least support,” she added.

Kolhatkar also criticized one-sided North American media coverage of Afghanistan, saying that few journalists venture outside of Kabul, where the country's minimal wealth is heavily concentrated and where warlords are not in control. She also cited the little-known case of Malalai Joya, an Afghan woman, who interrupted the loya jirga (a constitutional forum) to point out the Mujahideen warlords in attendance and their responsibility for the civil war that destroyed what was left of Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion. For this, and subsequent acts of bravery, she has been the victim of four assassination attempts and countless demeaning insults and death threats, but she has also received enormous grassroots support. Now a member of parliament, she often says she does not expect to live out the year. The Canadian- and US-backed Karzai administration removed funding to her security detail in March, but the North American press ignored her story in favour of a man sentenced to death for converting to Christianity, said Kolhatkar.

What can be done?

“This is a crucial moment for Canadians to be questioning the war, but I don't think it's as simple as ‘troops out now,’” said Kolhatkar. Most Afghans, she said, believe that if troops leave, the result will be deadly: “The warlords that we armed will plunge the country into another war and tear the country apart, piece by piece.”

However, Kolhatkar believes that the conflicting messages coming from Canadian commanders—alternately, “our job is to kill people” and “winning hearts and minds”—are damaging, and their actions are making things

Canada's Drift on Israel

From abstention to unconditional support

by Justin Podur

In December 2004, under the Martin Liberal government, Canada changed its voting pattern at the United Nations. Previously, Canada had abstained from several votes requiring Israel to comply with its obligations under international law and withdraw from the territories it occupied in 1967. The Ambassador at the time, Allan Rock, said that the “value added” of the committees trying to put Palestinian rights on the agenda at the UN was “questionable.” Canada began to vote against these resolutions.

Well before this, in October 2003, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food found that 22 per cent of children in Gaza were starving as a direct result of Israel's siege policy; Gaza had long been surrounded by electric fences, its population of 1.25 million imprisoned, and its economy shut down. Unemployment was nearly total; poverty was at 75 per cent. The UN Special Rapporteur's findings were confirmed by the World Bank and by USAID. All understood that the starvation was a direct result of the closures. By 2006, the World Food Program was reporting that 51 per cent of Palestinians—2 million people—were malnourished.

In addition to the starvation and siege, Israeli warships, snipers and planes continued to attack Palestinians in Gaza and in the West Bank.

Between the October 2003 report of the UN and the December 2004 decision by the Martin government, there had passed over a year of unabated starvation and siege. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society's figures, Israel had killed over 1,000 Palestinians in this same period.

Since Canada changed its voting pattern in 2004, three key events occurred that changed



Allan Rock at the United Nations.

DFAIT

the Canada-Israel relationship even further.

First, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon implemented his ‘unilateral disengagement plan.’ Under this plan, Israeli settlers who lived in Israeli-only colonies in Gaza were evacuated. Billed as a peace manoeuvre and a painful sacrifice for the colonists, the “disengagement” did not give the Palestinians of Gaza any freedom of movement, nor did it prevent Israel from continuing its shelling, bombing, siege and starvation.

Second, the Martin government fell and was replaced by the Harper Tories. Like their counterparts in the US, they sought to distinguish themselves from the Liberals by more aggressively supporting Israel's violence against the Palestinians. Because the Liberals had already come so far so fast in the same direction, the Tories had to shift the spectrum even further.

Third, Palestinians held a democratic election. The result of this fair election was the party that prioritized resistance (Hamas) defeated the party (Fatah) that had been roped into a perpetual “dialogue” with a state that simultaneously starved, bombed and imprisoned its people. The response of Canada, under Harper, to this democratic result was to cut aid to the starving and besieged Palestinians. Harper was following senior advisor to Ariel Sharon,

Dov Weisglass, who announced a plan to “put Palestinians on a diet.” In addition to putting Palestinians on a diet, Israel maintained a campaign of escalating massacres, including the major massacre of an entire family of seven on a beach in Gaza on June 9, another major massacre on June 13 (11 people), another on June 20 (three children), and yet another on June 21 (a pregnant woman and her brother).

A central issue for Hamas is the Palestinian prisoners. Some 9,000, including 400 children and 100 women, are locked up in Israeli prisons. Among those who have been tried (at least 1,000 have never been charged for any crime), many were convicted on confessions extracted by torture conducted by their Israeli captors. Israel forces periodically kidnap Palestinians in different parts of the Palestinian territory. Such a kidnapping precipitated the ongoing crisis in the region. On June 24, Israeli commandos kidnapped two Palestinian civilians. On June 25, Palestinians attacked a military outpost, killing two soldiers, losing two of their own, and taking a tank gunner prisoner. Hamas said it would release the tank gunner in exchange for the 400 children and 100 women being held in prison.

When Israel instead launched air raids, destroyed Gaza's power plant, and invaded the area with thousands of troops, Harper said he thought Israel's response, “under the circumstances,” was “measured.”

On July 12, the Lebanese group Hezbollah captured several Israeli soldiers on the Israel-Lebanon border. Hezbollah, like Hamas, sought a prisoner exchange. Some analysts have said that the operation may have been intended to take some of the military pressure off of Gaza, since the ‘international

community’ had remained silent, called for ‘restraint’ like Kofi Annan, or, like Harper, endorsed the Gaza invasion.

Israel responded by invading Lebanon, destroying its airports, roads, factories and homes, displacing over a million people, and killing over 1,000, including eight Canadian citizens and a Canadian UN monitor. In the Palestinian territories, Israel killed about 55 Palestinians in June and 162 in July. Hezbollah used rockets to attack Israeli military installations and towns, killing dozens of Israeli civilians, though most of the Israeli dead in the war were soldiers. Most of the Lebanese dead, by contrast, were civilians—a high proportion of whom were children. Harper's Foreign Minister, Peter MacKay, assessed this situation as follows: Hezbollah were ‘cold-blooded killers’ and a ‘cancer on Lebanon.’

A long-standing campaign by groups like the Canadian Council of Chief Executives calling for a Canadian foreign policy more closely aligned with that of the United States began to bear fruit with the Martin Liberal government, and is rapidly finding its completion in Stephen Harper's administration. Canada's continuous drift towards unambiguous support for Israeli actions in the Occupied Territories reflects the pressure put on politicians for a pro-US foreign policy in general and a pro-Israel foreign policy in particular.

This drift in Canada's foreign policy is unlikely to stop, barring the effective mobilization of forces that will oppose it. Recent polls suggest that Canada's “neutrality” in the region is valued by its citizenry; whether a position that actively opposes war crimes and policies of economic strangulation is similarly popular is not known, as the question is usually not asked.

“Hezbollah,” from page 6 »

the omission as “inexplicable and, given their [Hezbollah’s] murderous ideology, unconscionable.”

B’nai Brith responded the next day, on November 29, with a press conference in which they announced a lawsuit against the government, brought on the grounds that the government was failing to protect Canadians by refusing to ban Hezbollah.

The following day, November 30, the *National Post* picked up a story from the *Washington Times* claiming that, at a Beirut rally, Nasrallah had condoned and encouraged suicide bombing. Nasrallah was alleged to have said: “Suicide bombings should be exported outside Palestine”; and “I encourage Palestinians to take suicide bombings worldwide, don’t be shy about it.”

Two weeks later, after going to Beirut to investigate, CBC journalist Neil MacDonald exposed the story as a fabrication.

MacDonald traced the story to journalist Paul Martin. Martin had previously been accused of writing a false report about Palestinian militants under an alias in the same journal, the Christian-right *Washington Times*. MacDonald said that Martin, when challenged, “came up with three quotes [attributed to Nasrallah], one of which, to be charitable, was a gross mistranslation, and the other two were never even uttered.” Martin named his source for the quotes as Lebanese ultra-nationalist and pro-Israel Walid Phares, currently a Senior Fellow at

the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD), whose board and advisors is composed of well-known neo-con Zionists. Phares has also contributed policy briefs to the publication of Daniel Pipes’s think tank, the Middle East Forum.

MacDonald reported on CBC on December 11 that, “Ottawa now knows that the Nasrallah quotes in the *Washington Times* about exporting suicide attacks were almost certainly never uttered.”

However, the alleged comments by Nasrallah had already received enough attention to force the government’s hand; a special Cabinet committee meeting was held the evening of December 10, 2002, in which it was decided to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. The *Canada Gazette*, official newspaper of the government, reported, “The change has been made on the basis of the close connection between the organization as a whole and the Hezbollah External Security Organization, and the recent statement by Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary general of Hezbollah, encouraging suicide bombings.”

Curiously, the decision came the same day as the high-profile arrest of “terrorist suspect” Mohamed Harkat under a security certificate, a top news story across the country which heightened public fear about terrorism. The security certificate was signed by Immigration Minister Denis Coderre on the recommendation of CSIS.

The decision to arrest Harkat at this particular time may well have been taken independently of any other considerations. However, the timing of the arrest does not appear to have been linked to any exigencies in Harkat’s own case.

The political significance of labelling Hezbollah a terrorist organization is extensive: it is an act of tangible alignment with the apartheid state of Israel and its American backers, both regionally and in Lebanese internal politics; it is a stand against the right of Palestinian self-determination and the Palestinian right of return; and it is an affirmation of the double-standard under which Israel’s habitual disregard for international humanitarian law is tolerated. In Canada, the designation helps obviate the possibility of meaningful discussion about the causes of oppression and war in the region—witness the media storm around the visit by three members of Parliament to Lebanon in the aftermath of the Israeli assault, and around the participation of Quebec politicians in Montreal’s August rally against the attack on Lebanon. It also eviscerates the political potential of the large Lebanese diaspora community in Canada by threatening them with the terrorist label should they dare question the official line themselves.

No revision of the decision appears to have been made in light of the exposure of the *Washington Times* story.

“Canada Post,” from p. 11 »

service was in need of improvement, but they add it was government security officers who were most responsible for delaying, opening and stealing mail during the war years.

With all of Correos’ profits, as well as guaranteed consultancy fees flowing to an unidentifiable group of investors in IPS, a company registered in the Bahamas, it may not be clear who specifically is benefiting from the privatization of Guatemala’s postal service, but we know who isn’t—the people of Guatemala and Canada.

In 2004, the Guatemalan government renewed the initial concession awarded in 1997 to Canada Post International Ltd. and its faceless offshore partner International Postal Services for another 10 years. Since 1990, Canada Post’s international wing has undertaken 180 projects, including a similar privatization scheme in Lebanon.

Michael Skinner is a labour activist, musician and educator. Since 2000, he has been on education leave from his job as a letter carrier with Canada Post to pursue studies as a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at York University.

This article is based on original research in Guatemala and interviews conducted with former Guatemalan postal workers, union leaders, labour federation leaders, social activists, Guatemalan government officials and United Nations officials. Canada Post officials have thus far declined to comment.

“Somalia Affair,” from page 4 »

Canadian identity mean in terms of self? “A Canadian knows herself or himself as... a modest, self-deprecating individual who is able to gently teach Third World Others about civility.” At bottom, she argues, this is a fundamentally colonial mindset that renders “any sort of personhood” of those being taught “inconceivable.” At home, Canada’s mythology

covers over 200 years of remarkably frank attempts to eliminate the existence of the country’s original inhabitants, a fact that in part explains the sophistication and deep-rootedness of the mythology in the relatively new context of “peacekeeping.”

Dark Threats and White Knights offers an in-depth and subtle analysis of the mentality of a nation that wants

to “weep and to collectively remember, but...not to probe too deeply into the difference between looking on and direct suffering.” In essence, Razack provides an extensive inventory of the colonial mindset that the Canadian public has not yet recognized or begun to address.

The book’s concluding sentence enjoins us to “look critically at who we are.” To bring

Razack’s injunction to bear on ongoing Canadian interventions abroad means to insist, first of all, that Canada’s identity—as a peacekeeper, as well-meaning, or as nice—not be allowed to supersede what Canada is in fact doing abroad. Only by holding mythology at bay can we begin to form a critical understanding of ourselves.

“Like Weeds,” from page 12 »

Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)... there is provision for establishing International Criminal Courts in which Crimes Against Humanity could be brought to an impartial judge,” Chrisjohn explains, referring to the Covenant passed in 1966 that came into force in 1976. The Covenant affirmed that participating countries could not “derogate in any way from any obligation assumed under the provisions of the [CPPCG].”

“Canada couldn’t allow that

to happen, so in the Covenant there is a little provision...” says Chrisjohn. “That is, minority populations of a country are considered citizens of the country and when the country does something to its own citizenry, that’s considered an internal matter...So a citizen cannot sue his own country in international court.”

“In 1960, with nobody having asked for it, Indians were declared to be citizens of Canada. It wasn’t an act of generosity. They were already

“According to Canada’s representative at the UN, the Canadian stance was that ‘a more limited interpretation of the term “genocide” would be preferable.”

working on the [ICCPR] and they wanted to make sure that the Indians wouldn’t be able to go to an international court

and bring a charge against the Canadian government.”

“All Canadians were made ‘genociders’ by their government,” states Chrisjohn pointing to Article Three of the CPPCG that also defines complicity in genocide as a crime. “You have a responsibility as a citizen of the world to know what your government is up to and resist [their] unlawful actions,” he says. “The crime of genocide is being covered up. Now it’s a double crime.”

“CIDA in South Asia,” from page 25 »

immensely: Bell won a \$1 billion contract with the US military to supply helicopters, while CAE won a \$20 million contract to supply combat simulation technology.

In May 2006, CIDA launched the “Confidence in Government” initiative in the Shah Wali Kot district of Afghanistan. In a May 22 *Globe and Mail* article, Lieutenant-Colonel Tom Doucette, commander of Canada’s provincial reconstruction team, stated that this initiative “is a useful counterinsurgency tool.”

Much of the rhetoric surrounding Canada’s military presence in Afghanistan has been focused on the need to ‘liberate’ Afghan women. However, Sonali Kolhatkar, co-director of the Afghan Women’s Mission, recently wrote that, “despite the best efforts of the

Bush and Blair administrations to convince the world that the 2001 war ‘liberated’ women in Afghanistan and that they continue to work in the interests of Afghan women, grassroots women activists reveal a very different picture. With the Taliban regime ousted, Afghan women have not experienced better times.”

The CIDA-funded Women’s Rights in Afghanistan Fund, established by Rights and Democracy (created by the Canadian Parliament in 1988) provides grants to grassroots women’s organizations in Afghanistan. A “non-partisan” Afghanistan background on the website of the Fund highlights only the historic abuse of women by the Taliban and characterizes the current period as one of “ongoing conflict” without any mention of foreign

forces in the country.

Gender governance programs are also funded by CIDA in Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Leila Ahmed’s *Women and Gender in Islam* documents the co-optation of feminism by imperial and colonizing forces, revealing the contradictions of humanitarian interventions. “Whether in the hands of patriarchal men or feminists,” she writes, “the ideas of western feminism essentially functioned to morally justify the attack on native societies and to support the notion of comprehensive superiority of Europe.”

Vijay Prashad, an associate professor at Trinity College, has characterized one of the dominant manifestations of imperialism as the manufacturing of strategically placed NGOs. “The NGO”, he writes,

“becomes an arm of the international bureaucracy that ends up, consciously or unconsciously, doing the work of imperialism.” Other CIDA funded NGOs in South Asia include South Asia Partnership, Sri Lanka Canada Development Fund, Aga Khan Foundation, World Vision, Oxfam and Shastri Institute.

“Canadians need to realize what Canadian companies and Canadian development agencies and NGOs are doing in South Asia,” says Sharma. “CIDA-funded agencies and NGOs, as a whole, uphold corporate interests and serve the overall objective of pacification within an institutionalized neoliberal framework. This is an issue that all Canadians should be gravely concerned with and deal with.”

“Three Block War,” from page 21 »

rather menacing military firepower.” The magazine chose a picture of Master Corporal Elizabeth Churchill cradling an Afghan baby.

The generals put more clarity to the issue. As Major-General Stuart Beare said during Senate committee testimony, Canadian Forces are “not necessarily trying to win hearts and minds here. That’s a pretty tall order. You’re trying to create tolerance of the international forces.”

In short, says Hillier, CF must “be combat-ready and be able to conduct operations to survive. If you want to deter people from threatening your mission, you have to be seen as capable and seen as too big a bully to take on. If all those things fail and you cannot deter violence, you have to be able to fight and win. That is fundamental to everything we do.”

It was precisely in articulating the three-block war doctrine during a cross-country speaking

tour with Bill Graham that Rick Hillier ripped a page from General Mattis’s playbook and made Canadian headlines with his comment that Canadian Forces were fighting “detestable murderers and scumbags” in Afghanistan, in defence of Canada’s interests. “We’re not the public service of Canada,” he said. “We’re not just another department. We are the Canadian Forces, and our job is to be able to kill people.”

Afghanistan is not a

random act of Canadian policy; it is the entire foreign policy apparatus acting on a well-articulated plan. Despite the well-crafted mythology of the peacekeeper, Canada’s intervention in Afghanistan is important not because it is a departure from the past but because it is, in the words of the country’s top soldier, a “glimpse of the future.”

“Roundtables,” from page 13 »

“The danger is that the round tables will be labelled ‘public participation’ and ‘democracy,’ when absolutely nothing will change for the communities on the ground,” says Herman, who thinks it’s quite likely that business as usual will resume once the round tables end. “This has been the case for many so-called ‘consultations’ on trade and investment-related issues in the past.”

The problem, says Herman, is that government and industry have too much control over the process and outcome. “Those lacking power and money should have the same amount of direct control as those with power and money,” she says. Herman would consider participating in the round tables, “if we knew that our input into the process would actually have a tangible impact on the public funding of corporations inflicting devastation in the south and the work—or existence—of our export credit agency.” At this point, she believes that government and industry have too much to lose to allow a “real democratic process” to take place.

Mining is big business in Canada. Canada is one of a handful of countries leading the world in mineral extraction, says Coumans. “Over 60 per cent of the money that is made internationally for mining is raised here.” Mining, she says, “is becoming the face of Canada.”

Over the years, that face has become marred by well-documented human rights violations and environmental disasters. According to the Globe and Mail, the top bureaucrat at the Department of Natural Resources was warned two years ago that Canadian mining companies with overseas operations could “seriously embarrass Canada” if they didn’t take steps to reduce the risk of a major environmental accident.

The federal government has failed to put any legislation in place since then, but Coumans is hoping for some positive changes to come out of the round tables. One outcome she is pushing for is mandatory regulations for Canadian mining companies operating overseas rather than voluntary ones. Gordon Peeling, president and

CEO of the Mining Association of Canada, who is also participating in the round tables, would prefer voluntary measures. “We would like to see incentives to encourage companies to do the right thing. We think you

“If democracy at the local and international levels was really flourishing, then resource-extraction would not be profitable for corporations.”

get more with honey than with vinegar,” he says.

For Herman, the debate between mandatory and voluntary measures is insignificant when compared to the changes that need to be made to the larger system; changes that still aren’t being discussed. “The changes that need to be made are not small. We are talking about people having control over their lands and resources, which in itself threatens the very existence of the international capitalist structures that permit devastating resource-extraction

activities,” she says. “If there were no lands to mine cheaply, if people couldn’t be displaced without consent, if democracy at the local and international levels was really flourishing, then resource-extraction would not be profitable for corporations.”

Communities in the Huasco Valley don’t want a “green” mine, or compensation for polluted waters, says Cuenca. They don’t want Barrick to mine. Period. So far, grassroots resistance has delayed the project for almost a year and a half. Cuenca says he’ll see the round table process through before he judges whether or not the Canadian government is ready to pick up the slack.

In the meantime, he is thankful that the round tables have opened up some debate about the operations of Canadian mining companies in countries like his. “It shows that there’s recognition that there’s a problem,” says Cuenca. “Canadian society needs to realize that what their companies are doing overseas is a problem that all Canadians need to deal with.”

“CA4,” from page 14 »

union, and worker wages are a fraction of what Canadian workers make. According to the ICFTU, in Honduras, Francisco Cruz Galeano, the regional coordinator of the General Confederation of Workers (CGT), was shot over 20 times and killed.

As of now, Canadian citizens will not learn how

CA4TA affects human rights issues until the deal is finalized and submitted to Parliament for approval. The text will then be available for public, media and government scrutiny. But any amendments proposed to address potential shortcomings would have to be reviewed by the Central American partner governments.

Pressure will undoubtedly be put on members of Parliament to pass the agreement as is so that Canada doesn’t fall further behind in the race to secure new free trade agreements—something Canada’s trade minister has already said needs to be remedied. The same approach was used in the United States to push through CAFTA,

which was ratified by a mere two votes, despite widespread opposition by civil society in the United States, as well as Central America.

Cyril Mychalejko is assistant editor of UpsideDownWorld.org, an online magazine uncovering politics and activism in Latin America.

“Dust in Eyes,” from page 5 »

that feminist support for the Canadian military deployment in Afghanistan “feeds into Islamophobia” because it is based on the paternalistic “Orientalist assumption that Muslim women are victims (not agents) who need their Western sisters to help them,” says Bahramitash. Instead of attempting to define Afghan women’s needs, Bahramitash says that

Canadian feminists need to pressure their own government to “change its mandate from military deployment to peace-keeping” and to re-allocate the resources it currently expends on the war to reconstruction, human security and decommissioning of weapons. In this, she echoes the concrete demands of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan

“To assume that the struggles for women’s rights are fundamentally different is a major problem.”

(RAWA), which has been mobilizing Afghan women in resistance to war and occupation

since 1977.

Ultimately, Bahramitash suggests, Canadian feminists need to relate to Afghan women as “agents of transformation” of their own conditions. After all, as RAWA puts it, “Real emancipation of women can be realized only by themselves.” To claim otherwise, they say, is just “throwing dust into the eyes of the world.”

“Genetically Modified Diplomacy,” from page 22 »

and references to the Terminator were deleted in the official text after strong objections from other countries.

“This is a momentous day for the 1.4 billion poor people worldwide who depend on farmer-saved seeds,” Francisca Rodriguez of La Via Campesina, a global network of peasant farmers, said of the decision.

In spite of the international outcry, Pat Mooney of ETC Group noted that Canada continued to support Termina-

tor technology at the last Biodiversity Convention meeting in Curitiba, Brazil, in 2006, but in a “low-key way.”

“In the end,” continues Mooney, “efforts by Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the USA were blocked by the EU and developing countries and the Convention on Biodiversity ultimately strengthened its moratorium against Terminator.”

“We nevertheless have the impression that Canada will

continue to push for Terminator both in trees and crops.”

Canada is also using its international aid program to spread biotech.

Through the Canadian International Development Agency, Canada is developing a Biosciences centre for East and Central Africa (BECA), as one of four “agricultural centres of excellence” being developed around Africa, with an estimated cost of over \$30 million. The United States is expected to

build a centre in North Africa, the UK will build one in South Africa; and France, one in West Africa.

“It is clear from the information we have gathered,” said Mooney, “that BECA is being built to promote agricultural biotechnology.”

The WTO decision will open up new markets for Canadian biotech, an industry with annual revenues of \$5 billion and an annual research expenditure of \$3 billion.

“Farming Subsidies,” from page 23 »

of rural communities,” so the problem is one of political clout. To oppose a global system that is stacked against them, farmers must organize globally.

“Farmers used to organize provincially, then they saw

that the policy was made at the national level,” says Qualman. “Now if you look at where policy is happening, you would say that farmers need to organize planet-wide.”

This is a task of mammoth

proportions, but the process has already begun, albeit slowly. The NFU is a member of La Via Campesina, an international network dedicated to “uniting farmers toward common goals.” Many Via Campesina members

are currently dedicating their energy to fighting policies imposed by the World Bank and IMF on farmers, particularly in Asia and Latin America.

“Canada’s Debt,” from page 26 »

worse. Military “Provincial Reconstruction Teams” (PRTs), she said, are an extremely ineffective and expensive way to rebuild infrastructure. Additionally, Kolhatkar said the existence of PRTs has made all aid workers potential targets for Taliban attacks, as they are no longer distinguishable from the military. She cites the case of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), which pulled out of Afghanistan after maintaining a constant presence for over two decades and three wars. MSF said that the situation is now too dangerous for its workers.

The fact that US-funded warlords are as powerful as ever “does not justify our war fighting, or really even our presence, but the damage has been done.”

“Canadians need to call for an undoing of the damage,” she said.

In addition to disarmament and justice for warlords and criminals, Kolhatkar said that the US, Canada and their allies must pay reparations to the people of Afghanistan.

“We need to pour just as many billions of dollars into

rebuilding the country as we put into destroying it.” Kolhatkar said that Afghans need “no-strings-attached reparations, not loans.”

In Afghanistan, Canada’s annual military budget is roughly four times as large as

“Ultimately, the Afghan people know best how

to rebuild their country.

They don’t need our expertise, they don’t need our advice, but they need money.”

its aid budget.

The aid money that is being spent in Afghanistan either “goes into the warlords’ pockets, because they’re the ones in charge,” or it goes to expensive and often misguided Western firms or NGOs.

Kolhatkar cited one instance where a foreign NGO used aid money to dig 100 wells in the Farah province. The only problem: “within a

year, the wells dried up.” The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), a group that Kolhatkar works closely with, later went in to speak to farmers, who had begun fighting over scarce water resources. They realized that the best solution was to build a canal that would divert the water equitably through all of the villages.

“They built a canal with funds from donors in the US, through the Afghan Women’s Mission,” said Kolhatkar. “I visited that canal last year, and now the area is getting enough water to irrigate farms that feed 35,000 people.

“Ultimately, the Afghan people know best how to rebuild their country. They don’t need our expertise, they don’t need our advice, but they need money.

“It’s really crucial for us to figure out how we can best support grassroots organizations in Afghanistan that are doing the hard work of rebuilding.”

According to Kolhatkar, there are hundreds of groups, experts and local councils that

are struggling to build schools and hospitals, provide education (especially to women), resist warlords and find alternative work for farmers who are forced to grow opium poppies to feed their families.

For now, she said, the situation remains grave for the majority of Afghans who live outside of Kabul, with literacy rates between four and 10 per cent, debilitating poverty, insecurity, rule by feuding warlords and war-ravaged infrastructure.

“There is a sense that the war is over, that we just need to mop up the insurgents and that women are liberated and on their way to freedom.

“Because media coverage has gone down, donations have literally plummeted and groups have been forced to close down schools, orphanages and literacy projects,” she said.

The solution, Kolhatkar told a few hundred Montrealers, is not for Canada to withdraw, but to begin to take responsibility for its actions and rebuild the country that has suffered so much at the hands of foreign powers.

Did the CIA leave Haiti?

by Isabel Macdonald

A day after President Aristide was kidnapped by US agents, a new Haitian "interim President" was sworn in at a press conference chaired by the US Ambassador to Haiti, completing the final stroke of the second coup d'etat against Haiti's democratically elected President. Unlike the 1991 coup, which was led by military thugs on the CIA's payroll, who became an embarrassment to many in Washington due to the excesses of their brutal war against Aristide's supporters (torture, assassinations, and terror wrought by the CIA-financed and instigated death squads) this time around the coup makers were slick, justifying the illegal coup as (in the words of the US and Canadian governments) a "constitutional transfer of power", allegedly to prevent a humanitarian crisis.

However, was the 2004 coup also carried out with the backing of the American spy agency that has such a long history of covertly waging war on Aristide and his supporters? Two years later, questions remain as to the CIA's role in the 2004 coup.

1 US Ambassador "Interim President"
James Foley Alexandre Boniface



2 The Eminence Ambassador
Grise Foley



4 WHO'S THE GUY IN THE GREY SUIT WHO'S MOVING FOLEY AND THE US' "CHIEF OF MISSION" LUIS MORENO AROUND?

NOBODY'S SEEN HIM BEFORE...BUT HE DID GIVE HIS NAME TO SOME OTHER JOURNALISTS

Port-au-Prince. March 1. '04

Aristide's Prime Minister, Yvon Neptune



HELLO, US EMBASSY...NO, I HAVE NO RECORD OF THAT PERSON.

