

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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## In Review

## Climate bill killed in Senate, Canadian CEO salaries rocketed, immigration cops barred from treatment centres

The Harper government blocked the development of a gold-copper mine on the traditional territory of the **Tsilhqot'in Nation**, but simultaneously announced they were greenlighting another gold project, the Mount Milligan mine in central **British Columbia**, on the traditional territory of the Nakazdli First Nation. The approved mine falls in a sacred area and important watershed, and its development, in the face of resistance, is by no means assured.

Renowned doctor and anti-nuclear activist Helen Caldicott warned that the 16,000 residents of **Port Hope, Ontario**, should be relocated during the "clean-up" of radioactive waste—a result of 50 years of radium and uranium refining at the Cameco refinery.

Documents obtained by *Postmedia News* revealed that **Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade** have collaborated with industry partners to create an international lobbying strategy to promote the tar sands and discourage environmental protection legislation and policies in other countries.

*The Calgary Herald* refused to publish the obituary of leading anti-mining activist **Mariano Abarca** on the one-year anniversary of his death. Abarca, a leading organizer against a barite mine owned by Calgary-based Blackfire Exploration Ltd's, was assassinated in Chicomuselo, Mexico. Former employees of Blackfire have been arrested in relation to Abarca's murder.

About 90 police officers in **Toronto** are facing a yet-to-be-determined penalty for not wearing their ID badges during the G20 summit in June. Chief of Police Bill Blair told CBC, "I believe some officers removed it so they would not be identifiable."

Police raided Camas Bookstore

in **Victoria, BC**, and seized two computers and documents. The Camas Educational Society functions collectively to operate the volunteer-run Camas Books and Infoshop. Police believe an email was sent from the bookstore's computer taking responsibility for vandalizing the mayor's house and car. The email expressed outrage at Mayor Fortin's removal of shelter beds in the city.

A St. Thomas University student went public after being assaulted for entering a women's washroom on campus. The trans-student was punched in the face and called a "faggot." The student is calling for all buildings on the **New Brunswick** campus to be equipped with a gender neutral washroom.

About 200 people marched to **Parliament Hill** on November 20 for Trans Day of Remembrance, commemorating trans-people who have been victimized by violence. Two were arrested during the dropping of a banner, which read "Remember Stonewall," a reference to a New York riot against police led by drag queens.

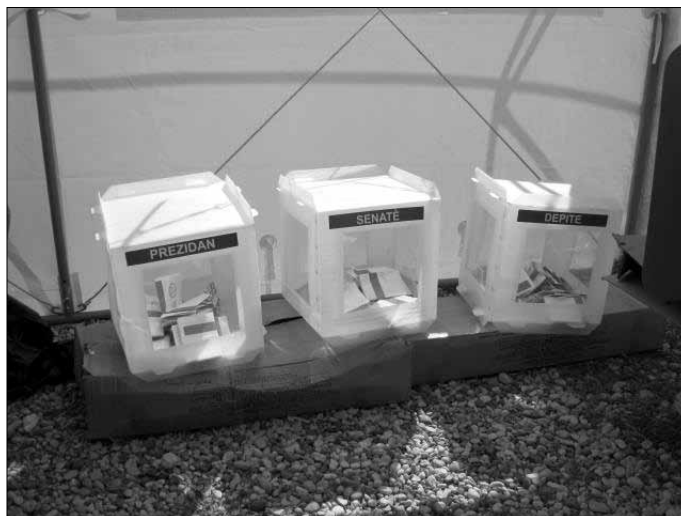
A new report has found that the

rate of abuse in lesbian households is zero per cent. The paper found that not one of the 78 17-year-old daughters and sons of lesbian parents reported having been physically or sexually abused by a parent or other caregiver. This contrasts with 26 per cent of **American adolescents**.

Immigration police were barred from entering **Toronto** women's shelters, drop-in centres, rape crisis centres, group counselling homes and community organizations that treat abused women. "This is just one small step as part of a broader city campaign to make the city safer for women with undocumented or precarious immigrant status," said Fariah Chowdhury, an organizer with Shelter Sanctuary Status.

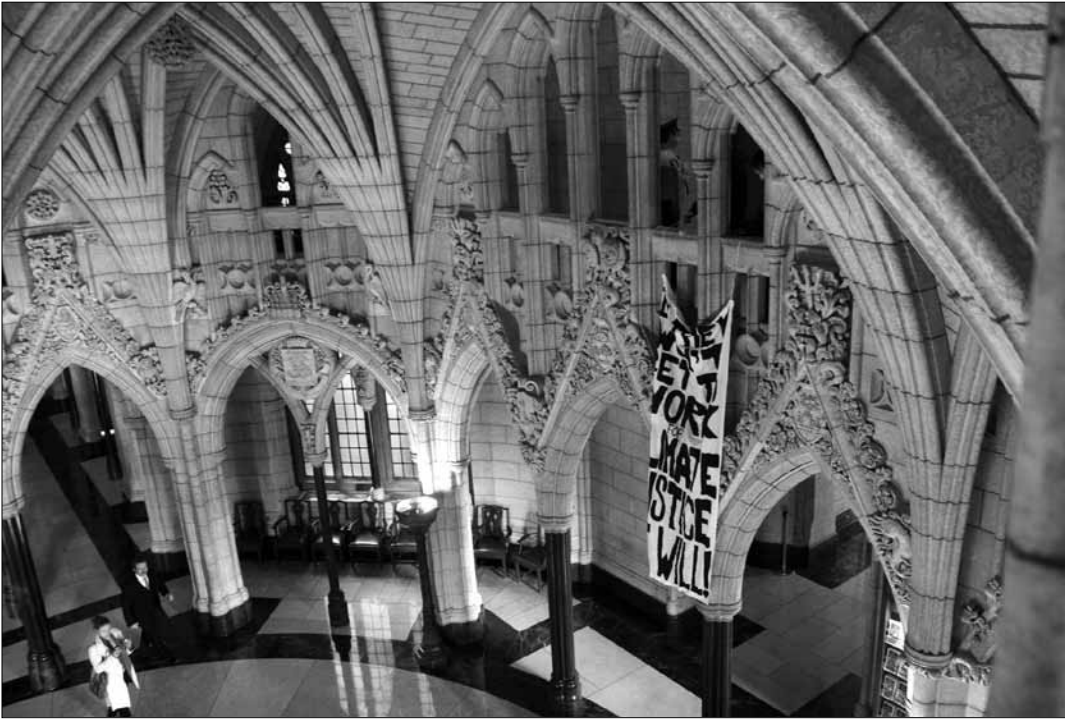
**Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board** denied refugee status to US army deserter Joshua Key, a move that will allow Canada Border Services Agency to pursue his deportation.

Over 130 migrant farm workers from Mexico and the Caribbean were cheated of thousands of dollars in pay after the owner of the **Ontario** farm they worked for filed an intent to get creditor



Haiti held general election in November, but the party widely viewed as being the most popular in the country, Fanmi Lavalas, was banned from the polls. More on page 10.

*Jean Ristil Jean Baptiste*



Following the defeat in the Canadian Senate of Bill C-311, the Climate Change Accountability Act, climate justice activists dropped a banner and held a sit in the rotunda of the House of Commons. The banner read, "If They Won't Get To Work, We Will."  
*Climate Justice Ottawa*

protection. "We came here and worked hard and put money in the farmer's pocket. But now we're going home and our pockets are empty," said farm worker Francis Gibson from Barbados.

**Canadian CEO salaries** rocketed 444 per cent from 1995 to 2007. In 2007, the country's top 10 CEOs made \$330.3 million, up from \$60.7 million in 1995.

Haitian protesters barricaded the streets of **Cap-Haitien** with coffins for three days to express their anger at the United Nations, whose Nepalese peacekeepers caused the cholera outbreak that has left, so far, 2,200 dead.

The day after **Haitian elections**, which excluded the country's most popular party, Fanmi Lavalas, thousands protested the elections' legitimacy, accusing Jules Celestin, the candidate backed by outgoing president Rene Preval, of massive fraud. Meanwhile, Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon called for "calm."

Canada's Immigration Minister

Jason Kenney stated the country will not attend next year's **United Nations conference on racism**, which he has deemed a "hatefest" and "anti-Semitic."

The Canadian government gave qualified endorsement to the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People**. The part of the statement that reads, "Canada can interpret the principles expressed in the Declaration in a manner that is consistent with our Constitution and legal framework" has critics worried that the government aims to impose limitations on the application of the Declaration.

Under pressure from the US and NATO allies, Prime Minister Harper announced that the Canadian military would remain in **Afghanistan** until 2014 to train the local military and police, breaking a government promise to withdraw troops in 2011 and to hold votes in the House of Commons on any decision to extend the mission.

Unelected Conservative senators in **Ottawa** killed Bill C-311, the Climate Change Accountability Act, passed by a majority of elected MPs in Parliament. This marks the first time in 70 years that Senate has killed legislation from the Commons without debate.

Whistle-blower organization **Wikileaks** began its release of over 250,000 diplomatic cables from 274 American embassies. Of these, almost 3,000 concern Canada, though only a handful of those released so far have mentioned the country.

A woman in **Michigan** was granted permission to sue the restaurant where she claims she broke her hand when reaching for toilet paper. Although the Michigan Supreme Court was divided on the case, the majority ruled that a "jury should decide whether the dispenser created an unreasonable risk of harm."

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# Sisters in Spirit Smothered

Conservative  
smoke-and-mirrors  
funding has  
Indigenous groups  
up in arms

by Angela Sterritt



Emily Davidson

VANCOUVER—Ten million dollars set aside by the Harper government to address the crisis of missing or murdered Aboriginal women will be redirected to the Department of Justice and the Ministry of Public Safety.

And that has some groups, like Vancouver's Walk 4 Justice, fuming.

"We have the answers and tools already because we've been working on this issue for a long time," said Gladys Radek, a co-founder of the Indigenous-led campaign.

Radek was jolted into action when her niece, Tamara Chipman, disappeared in 2005 along Highway 16 in northern

British Columbia. She has since organized three walks—the first a 4,000-kilometre march from Vancouver to Ottawa in the summer of 2008—to press the federal government to initiate a public inquiry and deal with the root causes of violence against Indigenous women.

"This funding will do nothing to address the issue," she said. "This is about power and control again."

Eight months after the 2010 budget release of promised funding, Minister for Status of Women Rona Ambrose announced the money will be spent on seven different initiatives, the bulk on a national police

support center for missing persons.

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) quickly expressed their alarm.

"While NWAC is supportive in principle to see the Government of Canada taking steps to address the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, we must undoubtedly express our disappointment with the exclusion of Sisters In Spirit in the ongoing development of public policy in the matter," they stated in a release.

The Conservatives kept Sisters in Spirit—NWAC's research, education and policy initiative that deals with missing and murdered Aboriginal women—in

limbo for eight months, and then gave NWAC only a day's notice before the announcement was finally made.

Status of Women officials made clear to NWAC that any new funding proposals would not permit the use of the Sisters in Spirit name or the continuation of their groundbreaking and growing database.

Since 2005, Sisters in Spirit has been gathering complex statistical information on violence against Aboriginal women. It has shown that more than 582 Aboriginal women have gone missing or been murdered in Canada since roughly 1980. Twenty of the cases have occurred

in the past year, and 226 in the past 10 years. Such information was previously scattered and highly deficient.

Liberal MP and Official Opposition Critic for Status of Women, Anita Neville believes the Conservative government's move was deceptive.

"It was a duplicitous announcement," Neville said. "Ambrose framed it as ten million going towards Aboriginal women but a good deal is going to their own justice systems, not Aboriginal women. Sisters in Spirit was told to shut down, told not to collect stats or advocate, but still they were used as a poster program. It's all smoke and mirrors and it's disrespectful. Ambrose should be ashamed at playing with women's lives this way."

Despite Harper's stated commitment to "take concrete steps to address the issue of missing or murdered Aboriginal women," the details in the announcement are not specific to Aboriginal women.

Instead, the largest portion of the funding will be spent on a generic RCMP missing-persons database and amendments to the criminal code to allow more police freedom around warrants and wire-taps. A much smaller fraction of the funds will go toward what many see as the most critical work: victim, family and healing support, and dealing with the root causes of violence.

"Working with the community and police was a part of Sister in Spirit's comprehensive plan, but the idea that this is the sole focus of this new strategy completely misses the point," said Niki Ashton, an NDP MP. "I doubt it will make a difference for Aboriginal women living on the ground. It's a short-sighted approach and reflects a lack of consultation."

NDP Aboriginal Affairs critic Jean Crowder agrees with Ashton.

"They [the Government of Canada] needed to work with Aboriginal women to see what else would be helpful and what was missing, but the money is going towards the Department of Justice and the Ministry of Public Safety."

"What it needed to do was

build on Sisters in Spirit, [who are] the experts. Money needed to go into helping the families of the murdered and missing women, to help them understand the legal system, and access trauma counseling. But that's not what is happening."

Opposition critics have also accused the Conservatives of pushing through pieces of their tough-on-crime agenda under the cover of this national strategy.

According to the Department of Justice website, the seven initiatives include amendments that would "streamline" the process for securing authorization for wire-taps, potentially avoiding court orders or judge-issued warrants.

While the government claims the change is linked to potential investigations involving Aboriginal women, the initiative is actually a recycled portion of Bill C-31, allowing warrant-less wiretapping. The bill died last year when Harper prorogued Parliament.

Canada's lack of consultation, transparency and relationship-building in this instance illustrates a glaring pattern concerning the Conservative's policies toward Indigenous Peoples.

Upon taking power in 2006, the Stephen Harper government canceled the Kelowna Accord—a \$5.1-billion strategy to improve Aboriginal health and water services, housing, and education. This, despite the reality that over a third of First Nations children live in overcrowded homes, and one in three First Nations people consider their main source of water unsafe to drink.

This move was the first in a series of cuts Harper would make to Aboriginal communities despite the optics of attempted reconciliation with First Peoples.

In 2007, Canada was one of only four countries to vote against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In spite of a recent endorsement, some Aboriginal leaders believe Canada's signature does not reflect a desire to honor Aboriginal people or their rights, but rather a need for good public relations.

And just two years after

Harper's apology to Aboriginal people for the residential school project and its legacy, the Conservatives cut funding to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF). The decision meant the end of significant funding to a Canada-wide network of 134 community-based healing initiatives addressing intergenerational trauma resulting from the schools.

The recent announcement by Minister Ambrose indicates that \$4.65 million will go towards community and school-based programs to deal with cycles of violence and improve the safety of Aboriginal women in Aboriginal communities.

"While this focus on violence within Aboriginal communities is important, I think given the statistics we have seen, we also need to look beyond Aboriginal communities, at for example non-Aboriginal perpetrators who commit murder and acts of violence against Aboriginal women, like Robert Pickton," Crowder said.

According to Amnesty International, Aboriginal women are almost three times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be killed by a stranger. In addition, 60 per cent of women and girls were killed in urban areas, 28 per cent in rural areas, and 13 per cent on-reserve.

There is also recognition within the Aboriginal community and among advocates that those in positions of power in Canadian society, in particular police and justice system officials, have themselves been accused and charged as perpetrators of violence against Aboriginal women.

Some view this as key to understanding Aboriginal women's lack of trust in the justice system and their confidence in police protecting them from violence.

Last month former Attorney General Wally Oppal was hired to look into police investigations of the disappearances and murders of women, many of them Aboriginal, from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and why serial killer Robert Pickton was not charged after an incident in 1997.

Shawn Atleo, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations

(AFN) and Ernie Crey, whose sister's DNA was found on the Pickton farm, issued a statement in October 2010, expressing their views about the Canadian justice system.

"Why were the lives of these and so many other Indigenous women in Canada not adequately supported, and how could our systems treat them, and others, as something to be thrown away, then put to the bottom of the heap in pursuing their murderers and abusers?"

With such mistrust in Canada's justice system amongst First Nations leaders, advocates, and Aboriginal women's groups, why is the Department of Justice now spearheading a campaign to end violence against Aboriginal women?

"Many of the family members are now thinking of reporting crimes less because they feel it won't do anything anyways," said Gladys Radek.

"I feel so sad for the families, the money needed to go towards their needs. They need their Healing Center. But they have been silenced again."

Regardless of the funding allocation, NWAC has made a commitment to the families to continue to hold annual family meetings, work with families to share stories, convene community workshops and develop tools and resources.

According to an NWAC press release addressed to the families of missing and murdered women, "the movement and group of family members and community will remain under the Sisters in Spirit name."

Meanwhile, Radek's group Walk 4 Justice continues their work—spreading awareness, working with family members and communities to advocate for missing and murdered women, and urging the public to take action—with no government funding.

*Angela Sterritt is a writer, artist and broadcast journalist based out of Vancouver BC. She is from the Gitksan Nation.*

# Saskatchewan Uranium, Fallujah's Children

## Report on birth defects and cancers in Iraq points to Canadian uranium

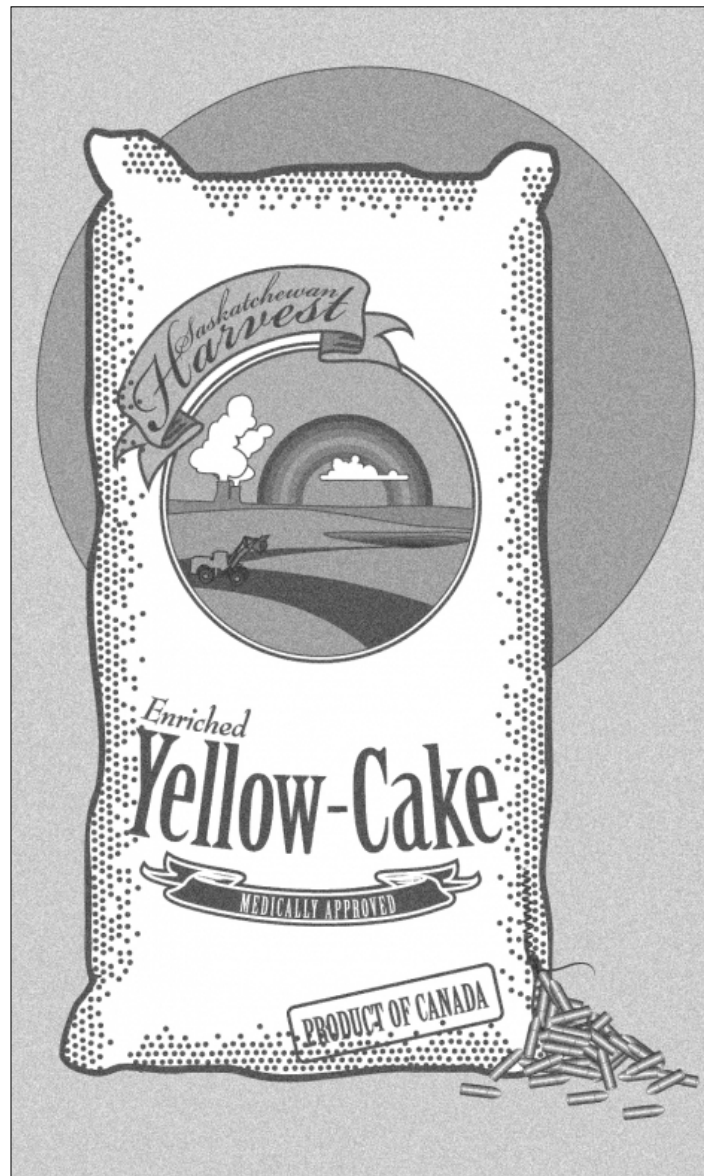
by Garson Hunter  
& Sarah Pedersen

REGINA—Radioactive armaments used by the US army in Iraq have been highlighted in a recent study as a probable cause for the region's increase in birth defects, infant deaths and cancer. Unavoidably, some of the uranium that made these weapons radioactive came from Saskatchewan.

"Cancer, Infant Mortality and Birth Sex-Ratio in Fallujah, Iraq 2005-2009," a report in the July 2010 issue of the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, compared data gathered in Fallujah to data from the Middle East Cancer Registry. The infant death rate in Fallujah during the period of study (2005-2009) was found to be four times the rate in Egypt and Jordan and nine times the rate in Kuwait. Furthermore, the death rate in Fallujah has increased in recent years; and "the results for cancer show some alarming rates in the five-year period. Relative risk based on the Egypt and Jordan cancer rates are significantly higher for all malignancy, leukaemia lymphoma, brain tumours and female breast cancer."

The early appearance of cancer in Fallujah is mentioned in the report to be similar to an Italian Ministry of Defence report noting the early appearance of lymphoma in Italian peacekeepers from Bosnia and Kosovo who were exposed to depleted uranium (DU) weapon contamination and the reported increase in cancer risks in Northern Sweden after the Chernobyl nuclear reactor disaster.

The authors of the report, though cautious in identifying the cause of the high rates of defects, deaths and cancers, concluded by drawing attention to the use of DU in armaments used by invading US forces. The report states their study does not identify the agent(s) causing the increased levels of illness, but they wish to draw attention to presence of DU as one potentially relevant agent.



Shira Ronn

The largest single source of uranium for the US military is Saskatchewan, according to a 2008 article by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).

In fact, Saskatchewan produces more uranium than any other region or country in the world. The Athabasca Basin region of Northern Saskatchewan (with a small area of Alberta) is the world's leading source of high grade uranium.

Uranium mining in Saskatchewan grew in the 1970s as a major government enterprise

when the NDP government of Allan Blakeney proclaimed the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation Act (SMDC-1977). Although the title of the act suggested that mining as a government Crown Corporation would include many minerals, "The major, if not the sole, interest of the government was the exploitation of uranium resources," according to Bill Harding in "The Two Faces of Public Ownership: From the Regina Manifesto to Uranium Mining," a chapter in Jim Harding's book, *Social Policy*

and Social Justice: The NDP Government in Saskatchewan during the Blakeney Years.

Bolstered by *Saskatchewan Uranium Development in the Global Context*, a government report that argued uranium energy was essential to the fate of poor countries, along with government minister Jack Messner's pledge that there would be no uranium development until each operation was assessed as completely safe to health and the environment, exploitation of the resource became a focus of the Blakeney government.

Indications during the 1970s for massive growth in the number of nuclear reactors worldwide—which would providing a bonanza for uranium mining—never materialized. The price of uranium dropped from \$53 per pound in 1977 to \$17.50 in 1982. Under the Progressive Conservative provincial government of Grant Devine in the 1980s and early '90s, uranium mining in Saskatchewan was privatized. The SMDC was combined with federal Crown Corporation Eldorado Nuclear Limited, and renamed Cameco.

Cameco is the world's largest publically traded uranium company and is headquartered in the city of Saskatoon. Cameco's McArthur River mine in Saskatchewan produces 15 per cent of the world's uranium.

For mined uranium to be used as a fuel, it needs to undergo enrichment to separate uranium 235u from uranium 238u—the desired product: depleted uranium (DU). Depleted uranium has a useful property: it is 1.7 times more dense than lead.

Enter the arms industry.

Due to its high density DU is used in armour. Depleted uranium also ignites on impact if the temperature exceeds 600 degrees Celsius—a useful property if one wishes to destroy tanks, guns or buildings.

Depleted uranium is also radioactive. The United Nations World Health Organization has

made several recommendations for when DU is used in military conflict, including monitoring food and water where DU might have entered the food chain, clean-up operations in impact zones where such projectiles remain in the ground, monitoring the activities of children because "their typical hand-to-mouth activity could lead to high DU ingestion from contaminated soil," and disposal of DU in accordance with international recommendations.

### *The largest single source of uranium for the US military is Saskatchewan.*

Not only was the US using Saskatchewan uranium for DU munitions during its occupation of Iraq, but as late as 1990 Canada was itself processing DU which was then being sent to a US weapons manufacturer. A section of the 1970 Treaty in the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) prohibits the sale of Canadian uranium for use in weaponry.

*Due to its high density, depleted uranium is used in armour. DU ignites on impact if the temperature exceeds 600 degrees Celsius—a useful property if one wishes to destroy tanks, guns or buildings.*

According to the CCPA article, "The uranium that's going into the US for enriching becomes part of the depleted uranium stockpile, and that's accessible for weapons."

The CCPA article further highlights that in 1993, the Inter-Church Uranium Committee

released copies of a license from the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission that followed uranium from the Key Lake mine in Saskatchewan (run by Cameco) to the US, back to the Port Hope uranium conversion plant in Ontario (run by Cameco), and finally to Aerojet in the US. Aerojet advertises itself on its webpage as a world leader in the defence and armament markets.

Cameco, like many players in the nuclear industry, has aligned itself as a partner in the health

care industry. The Royal University Hospital (RUH) in Saskatoon recently named its main walkway the "Cameco Skywalk," "named in recognition of Cameco's \$1.5 million donation in 2003 to the RUH Foundation's Royal Care Campaign to create the Cameco Chair in Aboriginal Health," according to the hospital's press release. The company's website boasts involvement in the Nor-

thumberland Hills Hospital, the St. Mary Wellness and Education Centre and the travelling Diabetes Resource Program in Northern Saskatchewan. The city's acute care Saskatoon City Hospital houses the "Cameco MS [multiple sclerosis] Neuroscience Research Centre." During her 2007 visit

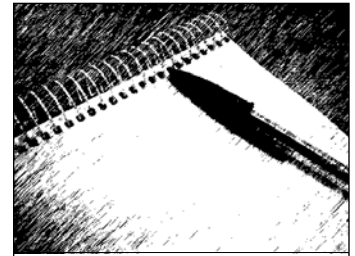
to Saskatchewan, physician, Nobel Peace Prize nominee and renowned proponent of a nuclear-free world, Dr. Helen Caldicott chastised the Saskatchewan medical profession for partnering with what she called the "cancer industry."

Middle East journalist Robert Fisk presents a sickening tale of depleted uranium armaments left lying around southern Iraq after the Gulf war of 1991 and the cancers occurring among the population in his book *The Great War for Civilization: The Conquest of the Middle East*. Fisk also identifies the problem of connecting depleted uranium to cancer: "Unlike bomb fragments with their tell-tale computerized codes, DU munitions—while easy to identify because they left a penetrator 'head' in or near their target—could not be physically linked to the leukaemia's afflicting thousands of Iraqis, other than by a careful analysis of the location of these cancer 'explosions' and interviews with dozens of patients."

Overlooked by most Canadian media, the medical study from Fallujah adds to mounting evidence for a global ban on the production of DU munitions, and to considering their use a war crime.

In fact, last month, Irish parliament passed the Prohibition of Depleted Uranium Weapons Bill through its fifth reading. The DU bill, which drew praise from Senators and had none speak against it, is the second private member's bill ever to pass through Irish Senate.

*Garson Hunter is an Associate Professor of Social Work at the University of Regina and the sponsor of Dr. Caldicott's speaking tour of Saskatchewan. Sarah Pedersen is a social activist in Regina.*



CP Sutcliffe

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At least 22 new provincial-territorial prisons are being built in Canada, and 15 additions will be made to existing facilities.

Caitlin Crawshaw

## Building Prisons, Creating Prisoners

### Harper gets "tough on crime," everyone pays

by Robyn Maynard

MONTREAL—"It's wrong to believe that more time inside is what will make people safe," says James (not his real name), who was recently released from a maximum security prison. "If you want to fight crime, put money into communities, like job opportunities. The best way to fight crime is to fight poverty."

Since Prime Minister Harper took office, Correctional Services Canada (CSC)'s net budget has increased by 54% to \$2.46 billion for 2010–2011; it is predicted to increase further to \$3.12 billion by 2012–2013, according to CSC. Much of this money is for capital expenditures such as construction of new prisons; in 2010, \$329.4

million is set for capital expenditures, and in 2012–2013 that is set to increase to \$466.9 million.

The number of incarcerated people in Canada is expected to soar due to new legislation introduced by the Conservative government.

"These prisons that will be coming online aren't even going to put a dent in the number of prisoners that they're going to be creating [with] this legislation," says prison justice activist Justin Piche, who notes that at least 22 new provincial-territorial prisons are being built in Canada and 15 additions are being made to existing facilities.

The Parliamentary Budget Office predicted in June 2010 that Bill C-25, which lengthens prison-

ers' stays by eliminating the 'two-for-one' credit for time served pre-sentencing, will incur over \$2 billion in construction, operation, and management costs over a five-year period. These costs correlate to the increased cost of housing these prisoners. The proposed Bill S-10, which involves mandatory minimum sentencing of six months for those producing as few as five marijuana plants, would add additional costs and increase the prison population in numbers that Correctional Services Canada says it cannot predict.

"It's like they're using a bigger net because they have to catch more fish. They're trying to pull people back in," says James. "There is no supporting data that this works, but nobody cares

because it's prisoners, and prisoners are seen as second class."

Piche, co-editor of the *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons*, and author of the popular blog *Tracking the Politics of 'Crime' and Punishment in Canada* says the government's changes in legislation, though expensive, are not needed and will not make the streets safer.

This legislation is being introduced despite the fact that Statistics Canada reports that crime rates have been falling steadily since the 1990s.

As the numbers of prisoners is set to rise, the living conditions of prisoners are far below those of the non-incarcerated population. Overcrowding is worsening, according to the Correctional



Investigator of Canada's annual report, and incidents of prisoners facing violence from guards are also increasing. Suicide rates are more than seven times higher than the rest of Canada, HIV transmission rates are ten times higher in prison, and the prevalence of Hepatitis C is 25 times greater. Access to clean needles and condoms is nearly non-existent, creating what many view as a health crisis inside the walls of prisons.

In an interview with Maclean's magazine, the Correctional Investigator of Canada notes that less than three per cent of the budget for prison expansion is to go towards programming inside of prisons.

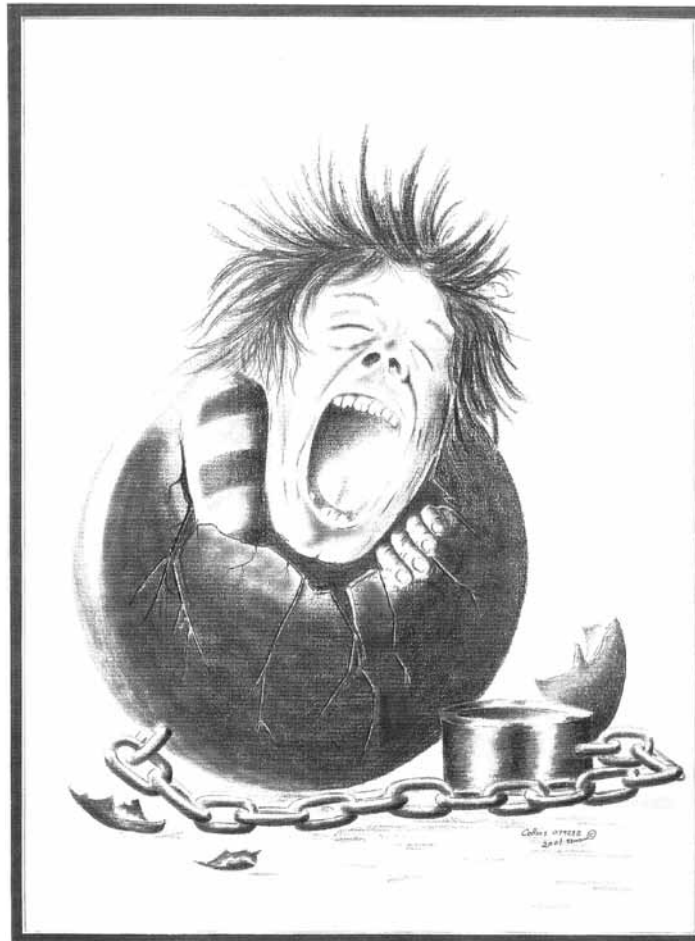
"There used to be so much more in terms of programs, and the ability to learn skills and trades," says James. "They take more and more of that away and we know that it's not coming back."

The Canadian government notes on their Public Safety website that 12 per cent of male and 26 per cent of female offenders have serious mental health problems; and about four out of five offenders arrive at a federal institution with a serious substance abuse problem. This reality, however, is not leading to a corresponding increase in the mental health treatment for prisoners.

James notes that psychotherapy used to be easier to access; but increasingly, guards hold the de facto responsibility for prisoners with mental health issues. "Now guards play the role of the therapists," says James. "Because they're there full time. They [the prison system] save money." The Correctional Investigator of Canada has repeatedly denounced the lack of funding for mental health treatment in prisons.

"It's increasingly recognized that our prisons have become dumping grounds for those suffering from mental illnesses, those who have substance-abuse addictions, and also other marginalized populations, particularly the poor, including aboriginals, who are completely over-represented within our prisons," says Piche.

The increase in spending on prison expansion comes amidst



It is not only poor conditions inside of prisons, or the expansion of prisons, that should be criticized, but the very idea of using incarceration as a solution, says Peter Collins, a prison justice advocate. "At the end of the day, regardless of how pretty or how ugly a prison is, it's still a prison. Deprivation does not work, you simply can't rehabilitate someone inside of a cage".  
Peter Collins

cuts in many other sectors as part of the 'austerity measures' that Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced at the close of the G20 meetings in Toronto. Money for community spending, for Indigenous peoples, and for women's groups have been slashed across the country.

Piche asserts that the over-representation of marginalized populations in prisons, such as people living in poverty or First Nations peoples, "indicates our inability to use appropriate services to address the needs of [these] populations. These populations are over-policed, over-prosecuted, they are sentenced in a disproportionate fashion, and this basically leads to their over-representation in prisons."

Peter Collins, an outspoken prison justice advocate, reflects on the rising costs of the 'prison

industrial complex' in a time of 'fiscal restraint.'

"If you look at the way that they spend on things that they want to spend on, which is the military industrial complex and the prison industrial complex, you can see that they are not really in a time of fiscal restraint, they are in a time of abundant spending. It just depends on what they want to spend it on," says Collins. "If it involves killing people or punishing people, there is a lot of money for that."

Collins, who recently won the Canadian Award for Action on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, is currently serving a life sentence in Bath Penitentiary in Kingston, Ontario.

Furthermore, Piche adds, "It costs more to imprison people than it does to put money into community programs, which

actually address real social ills." Indeed, the Parliamentary Budget Office reports the average cost of an inmate in 2009-2010 to be \$162,373, while community-based organizations across the country are fighting to survive.

To Collins and many others, it is this basic lack of justice that is putting growing numbers of people behind bars for longer and longer stays.

"It is so many people from low economic situations [that are in prisons]," says Collins. When living in poverty children "often do not do as well in school, they're going to school hungry or tired. Some of them have or develop learning disabilities [and struggle with school] and then you have schools operating with their no-tolerance attitudes...and when the kid runs afoul then he's on the street," explains Collins. "What are the kids supposed to do? When do we take some responsibility in society for that kid's opportunity or lack of it?"

Though the Canadian government refers to its prison system as 'rehabilitative,' Collins disagrees. He points out that it is not only poor conditions inside of prisons or the expansion of prisons that should be criticized, but the very idea of using incarceration as a solution: "At the end of the day, regardless of how pretty or how ugly a prison is, it's still a prison. Deprivation does not work, you simply can't rehabilitate someone inside of a cage."

"They treat you like an infant, like a 'bad child,'" agrees James. "They try to hold you in for so long, it harms you."

Piche says these statements are supported by the evidence. "It has been demonstrated in studies about the US system of longer-term incarceration and mandatory minimums that indeed, though much more money is spent, American-style justice and imprisonment systems do not work in reducing or in preventing crime".

Collins sees a deep injustice in a system he says doesn't make the streets any safer but puts public money into locking away economically and racially

# Haiti's Void Vote

No clear winners, many clear losers in Haiti's "selections"

by Wadner Pierre



Polling station in Port-au-Prince, November 29, 2010.

Jean Ristil Jean Baptiste

HAITI—On the eve of presidential and legislative elections in Haiti, skepticism and disenchantment among Haitians was widespread.

"I am not going to vote," said Elause Jacques, a mother of two who runs a cyber cafe with her husband in Port-au-Prince. "I have no candidate."

Jacques' sentiment is shared by many Haitians, who turned away from the polls by the millions in an act of silent protest against the exclusion of Haiti's popular political party, Fanmi Lavalas (FL), and the spending of millions on elections instead of badly needed healthcare and infrastructure.

The backdrop to the elections was grim: more than a million people remain homeless after the January earthquake, and the country is confronted by a cholera epidemic that has already taken 2,200 lives.

FL reiterated its position to boycott the elections, after being excluded by Haiti's Interim Election Commission (CEP), which is hand-picked by the government.

"It [FL] is not supporting any candidate, it doesn't have anybody representing it, and it is not sending anybody to represent it," said the party in a statement. The statement also criticized the United Nations representative in

Haiti, Edmund Mulet, for "having no respect for the Haitian people," and President Rene Preval for running a "ungrateful hypocritical regime which has come to bury the memory of our ancestors."

In the days prior to the vote, many Haitians had not received their electoral IDs.

"As President Aristide said, the November 28 elections will not be elections, but selections," said a unidentified Haitian woman, while waiting for her flight to Haiti from the Fort Lauderdale International Airport in Florida.

Former president Jean Bertrand Aristide, interviewed in mid-November by film-maker Nicolas Rossier in South Africa, where he is living under forced-exile, criticized the Haitian government and some of its international allies for betraying the Haitian people.

"When we say democracy we have to mean what we say," said Aristide, who was deposed in 2004 by the United States, France and Canada. "Unfortunately, this is not the case for Haiti. They talk about democracy but they refuse to organize free and fair democratic elections. It is as if in the US they could organize an election without the Democrats."

Criticism of the exclusion of Fanmi Lavalas has been issued

from some quarters.

In a letter sent to the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, Congresswoman Maxine Water and 45 congress members urged the US government to ensure that the elections in Haiti were fair, free and democratic.

The letter called on the US government to "state unequivocally that it will not provide funding for elections that do not meet these minimum, basic democratic requirements."

The members of Congress recalled a previous CEP decision to exclude Fanmi Lavalas: "A previous CEP, with many of the same members, also excluded Fanmi Lavalas and other parties from Senatorial elections in April 2009. Haitian voters boycotted, and most observers estimated a three-to-six per cent voter turnout."

In a report to the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Republican Senator Richard G. Lugar called on the Haitian government to reform the CEP.

Meanwhile, President Preval appealed to Haitians to vote while reiterating his support for the CEP.

Eleven months after an earthquake ruined the capital and its surrounding areas, the situation remains dire. Several months after

the first cases of cholera were discovered in the Down Central Plateau and Artibonite regions—one of Haiti's few agricultural centres—nearly 2,200 people have died and over 46,000 have been hospitalized. Haitians' already low trust in the United Nations troops took another hit, as mounting evidence indicates Nepalese forces were responsible for spreading the disease.

"Why spend all these millions for these elections while our people are dying from cholera?" said Haitian singer Lord Divers Morsa. "Why don't we spend the money to buy anti-cholera shots or vaccines?"

Others questioned the priorities of President Preval and his support for Jude Celestin, the candidate of INITE or UNITY, Preval's party.

"President Preval is using the state's resources to back up Jude Celestin, his friend," said Maude Salomon. "But he doesn't care for people. Cholera is killing us, but Jude found millions of dollars to campaign."

The international community pledged several millions of dollars to organize the presidential and legislative elections. Yet critics point out that the same countries have disbursed only a fraction of the money that was pledged to rebuild the country after the



Electoral signs in Port-au-Prince, pre-election. The faces of candidates from 15 parties, including Haiti's most popular, Fanmi Lavalas, were missing—banned from running in elections. *Wadner Pierre*

January earthquake.

The names of people who died during the earthquake remained as eligible voters on the CEP's electoral list. This news was disclosed in a meeting in Washington by Chief of the Joint OAS-CARICOM (Organization of American States-Caribbean Community) Electoral Observation Mission in Haiti, Ambassador Colin Granderson. Critics wondered to whom did the CEP attribute the votes of dead Haitians.

In the face of unfair elections and a growing health disaster, the prospects for the struggle for social justice and a state of law are likely to remain uncertain and fragile.

*Wadner Pierre is a Haitian photojournalist who currently resides in New Orleans, Louisiana. In 2007, he won a Project Censored Award for his investigative journalism work on the impact of media and corruption in military policies.*



A ballot box floats in garbage-filled puddles next to the polling station at Building 2004 in the neighbourhood of Delmas. *Wadner Pierre*



Election day in Haiti, November 29, 2010.



UN vehicles blockaded on the road to Delmas, December, 2010.



*Jean Ristil Jean Baptiste*

# Science Fixin'?

## Moratorium halts real-world geo-engineering experiments, for now

by Cameron Fenton

MONTREAL—Covering entire deserts with sun-reflecting plastics. Fertilizing oceans with iron to increase phyto-plankton growth and soak up carbon dioxide. Blasting sulphate aerosols into the stratosphere and installing massive mirrors in space to decrease incoming solar radiation to Earth.

What may seem like stories out of a science fiction novel are actually part of a new wave of “geo-engineering” technologies designed for large-scale scientific manipulation of natural systems. The goal: to slow down global temperature increases and mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.

But a growing tide of critics argue that geo-engineering technology is not only unproven, but may pose a grave threat to the planet. Its allure, according to Diana Bronson of the technology and environmental watchdog organization ETC Group, is that “techno-fixes” appear to offer a silver bullet solution to climate change—while allowing business as usual to continue.

“Geo-engineering is both a set of technologies and a drive political strategy,” said Bronson. “It is a way to let rich countries not take responsibility for their climate debt; it is a way to continue living the way we do in an energy intensive and unsustainable way and it is a way to continue pumping fossil fuels from the ground and into the atmosphere.”

In Japan in October, critics won a victory at the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), an intergovernmental convention of 193 nations. All parties to the CBD announced they would be adopting a “precautionary approach” to geo-engineering, and agreed to prohibit real-world

geo-engineering experiments.

“The agreement basically is a moratorium,” said Bronson. “It was a very hot issue and entered many late nights of negotiations, and the text that came out is a very compromised text. Nevertheless it is a very important step forward. This is the first time that any intergovernmental body has made a decision on geo-engineering.”

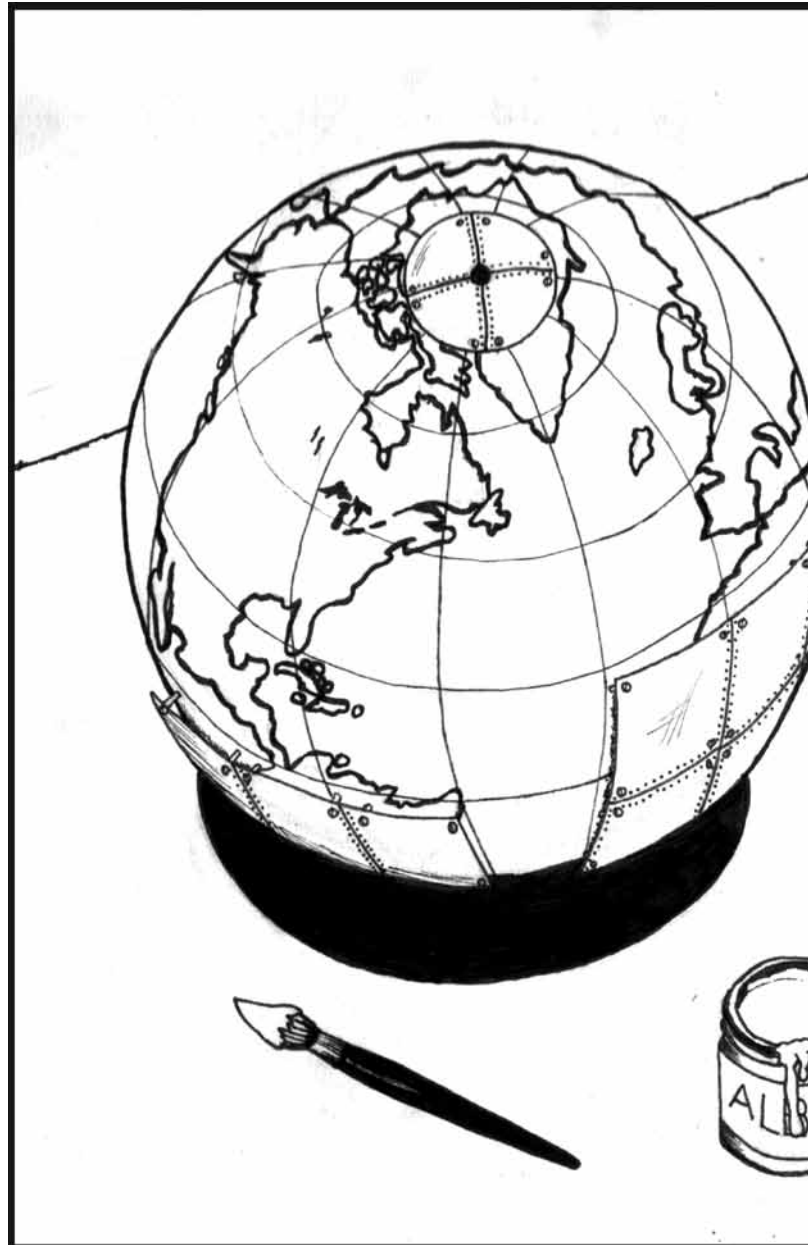
While the CBD moratorium prevents the real-world testing of technologies with potential global implications for life and biodiversity, it does not prevent investment or small-scale research in geo-engineering—and the Canadian government has shown interest in becoming an increasingly larger player.

“I don’t think the Canadian public, or even Parliament, has any idea that the government of Canada has already invested in geo-engineering research,” said Bronson.

The CBD agreement has created a speed bump on the techno-fix superhighway.

“Essentially what the decision [in Nagoya] says is that until we understand the implications of geo-engineering on biodiversity, or until there is a regulatory framework in place to monitor and control such activities, no geo-engineering should take place,” said Jaime Webbe of the Montreal-based Secretariat of CBD.

Geo-engineering is typically divided into two main categories: technologies designed to limit incoming solar radiation to the earth, and technologies designed to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it. Both categories include everything from simple ideas—such as changing the colour of roads to better reflect sunlight—to seemingly more outlandish plans to spray



Climate justice activists say governments are working with a tool box of false solutions to address climate change.

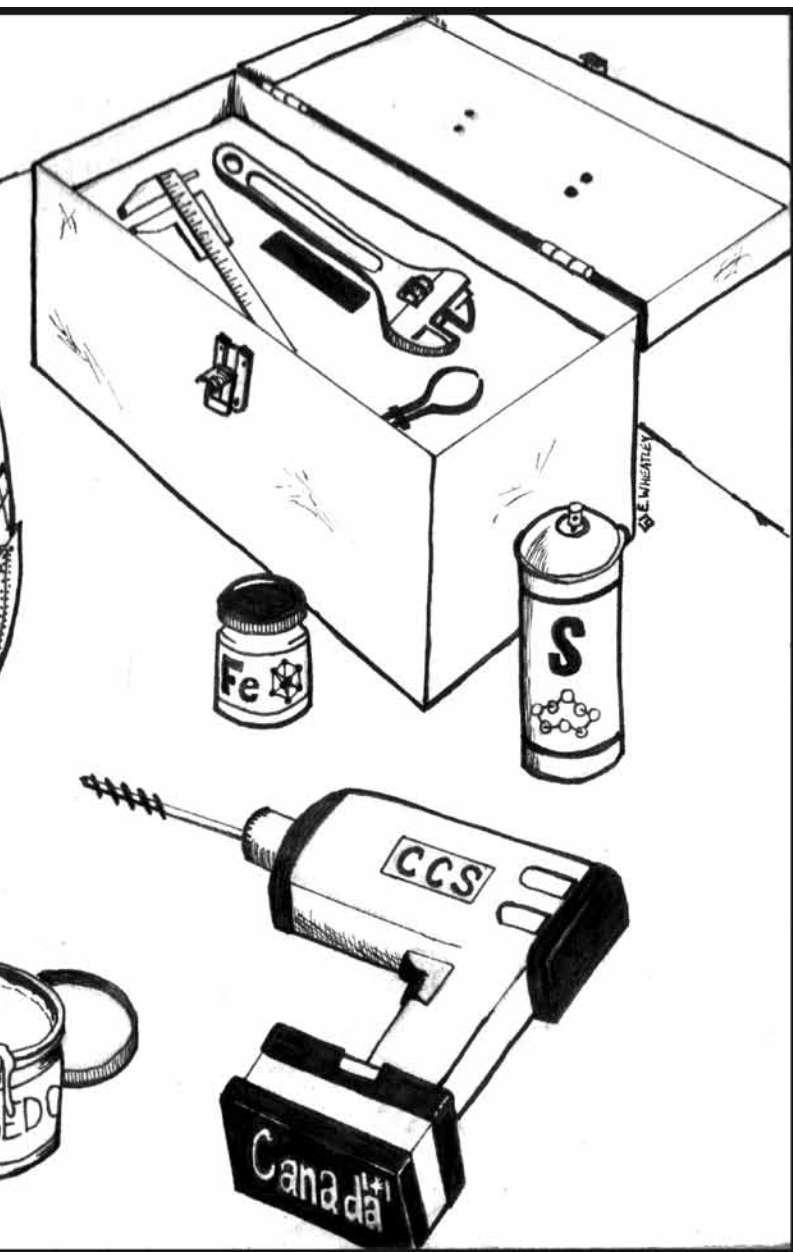
sulfur—a byproduct of extractive industries such as the Alberta tar sands—into the upper atmosphere to emulate volcanic eruptions and limit incoming solar radiation.

Billionaires Bill Gates and Richard Branson have established multi-million-dollar funds to develop these technologies. Gates is the major benefactor of the Fund for Innovative Climate and Energy Resources, a \$4.6 million fund managed in part by University of Calgary scientist David Keith, who researches and advocates geo-engineering.

While Keith agrees the CBD agreement is a positive step

towards the creation of governance structure for how geo-engineering takes place, he, along with other scientists, also view it as a sign that the technology will eventually be implemented.

A major point of contention at the CBD talks in Japan was whether or not to include Carbon Capture and Storage technology (CCS) in the definition of geo-engineering. The final text excluded CCS from the definition—thereby allowing its real world use—with a footnote from Bolivia expressing disagreement and calling for “full consideration by the Conference of the Parties of [CCS] impacts on



ress climate change.

Eryn Wheatley

biodiversity in general.”

“There is a very complex debate that goes on around carbon capture and its relationship to geo-engineering, and it came to a head in Nagoya,” said Bronson. Excluding CCS from the definition of geo-engineering “was a compromise resulting from a number of countries negotiating together and some of those countries—including Canada and Norway—being very insistent that CCS not be included in the definition.”

Henry Lau, spokesperson for Environment Canada, told *The Dominion* he disagreed.

“Carbon Capture and Storage is not a geo-engineering activity, because CCS provides a way to avoid emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere,” he said. “Geo-engineering activities attempt to modify interactions between the Earth’s surface and the atmosphere; CCS methods store carbon dioxide underground.”

Much of the debate turns on the scope of the definition of CCS. Carbon capture includes a broad range of technologies, typically divided into two categories: those designed to capture tailpipe and smokestack emissions, and those designed to remove carbon from

the atmosphere for storage. The latter include everything from tree plantations to artificially fertilizing the ocean to increase its capacity to sequester carbon. It also includes proposals such as constructing artificial trees that attempt to chemically replicate photosynthesis.

“Those [technologies] which pull carbon out of the atmosphere are definitely covered under the moratorium,” Bronson said. “That includes everything like ocean fertilization, synthetic trees and bio-char...but CCS is categorically excluded when it comes to carbon captured at source.”

Canada has invested heavily in this kind of research, development and implementation.

“The government of Canada is supporting Carbon Capture and Storage with substantial investments in large-scale demonstration projects,” said Micheline Joanisse, a spokesperson for Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN). She points to over \$3 billion in funding for projects in Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, including \$466 million for CCS demonstration projects, as well as \$151 million for research and development of new technologies.

A large portion of this funding has gone to the University of Calgary’s Institute for Sustainable Energy, Environment and Economy’s (ISEEE). The ISEEE is a multi-disciplinary research organization, and one of the largest CCS research centres in the world. It is also where David Keith sits as Director of its Energy and Environmental Systems Group.

On its website the ISEEE lists its “collaborators,” including major tar sands corporations such as Suncor, Total, Shell Canada, and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. It also lists the Pembina Institute—the sole NGO, the governments of Canada and Alberta, and the United States Department of Energy.

According to research by ETC group, over the past three years, Keith has received at least \$150,000 in Canadian government funding for CCS technology research, specifically for inventing technologies designed to remove

carbon from the atmosphere. According to a 2010 NRCAN report on the University of Calgary’s funding for Carbon Capture and Storage, NRCAN, through the ISEEE, provided \$50,000 to Keith’s research in 2008-2009.

On December 23, 2009, Keith filed a patent for a device that would involve “carbon dioxide capture systems and methods for the recovery of CO<sub>2</sub> from atmospheric air.” The patent describes how the invention could be implemented for the express purpose of generating environmental offsets, and creating carbon credits.

The same report states that in 2010 the federal government also awarded a \$100,000 grant to Keith, along with Arvinder Pal Singh, Chief Technology Officer at Calgary-based Carbon Engineering, which describes itself as “an independent angel-funded company developing technologies to capture CO<sub>2</sub>.” The grant is to develop CCS technologies for the direct capture of carbon from the atmosphere, technologies that, under the CBD moratorium, cannot be experimented with outside the laboratory.

Environmental critics like Greenpeace look at Canada’s investments in technologies like CCS as little more than a public relations strategy to cover up or distract from Canada’s international reputation as major polluter. They argue that CCS is not a solution and has no real impact on the root causes of climate change.

Low-tech CCS applications, such as bio-char and tree plantations for example, have critics worried about an upcoming “Earth grab.”

Bio-char is a process by which plant materials are burned in a low oxygen environment and buried to sequester carbon. Both bio-char and tree plantations require massive amounts of land, as well as monoculture crops of trees or bio-char. Used on a large scale, critics warn this could lead to the displacement of communities, the destruction of forests and the transformation of land to

*continued on page 20*

# Raising Other People's Kids

## Filipina women denounce exploitation under Live-In Caregiver Program

by Esther Hsieh

VANCOUVER—Jocelyn Vergabera's high cheekbones swell as her lips pull back in a disarming smile. She says her job at Tim Hortons is a big improvement from the years she spent working as a live-in caregiver in Shaughnessy. But while the twinkle in her eye is a sign of her vitality and friendliness, it also masks the torment of a long road towards a better life—one which is far from over.

In the last seven years Vergabera has only seen her children by webcam, and she is worried that she won't recognize them.

"I want to touch them, I want to hug them, I want to make up all that time that I haven't given them. I have looked after other children; I have

kissed and hugged other people's children but not my own," she says.

Vergabera's situation is common for Filipina women coming to Canada under the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP). The LCP, officially established in 1992, issues a temporary work visa valid for up to four years to a qualifying applicant, who is expected to board in her employer's home while working as a live-in caregiver for children, disabled or aging persons. In 2005, Filipina women accounted for 95.6 per cent of the live-in caregivers in Canada. In 2006, 21,489 workers held a work permit under the LCP program.

The way Canada's LCP appears on paper appeals to Filipina migrant workers: it provides for defined working hours (eight hours per day), a good salary (minimum wage), and most importantly, the opportunity to become a landed immigrant after completing two years of work.

But the reality for many of the Filipina women who enter under the LCP includes hours of unpaid overtime, living in constant fear of their employers, and facing years of separation from their own families while they wait for their immigration papers to be processed.

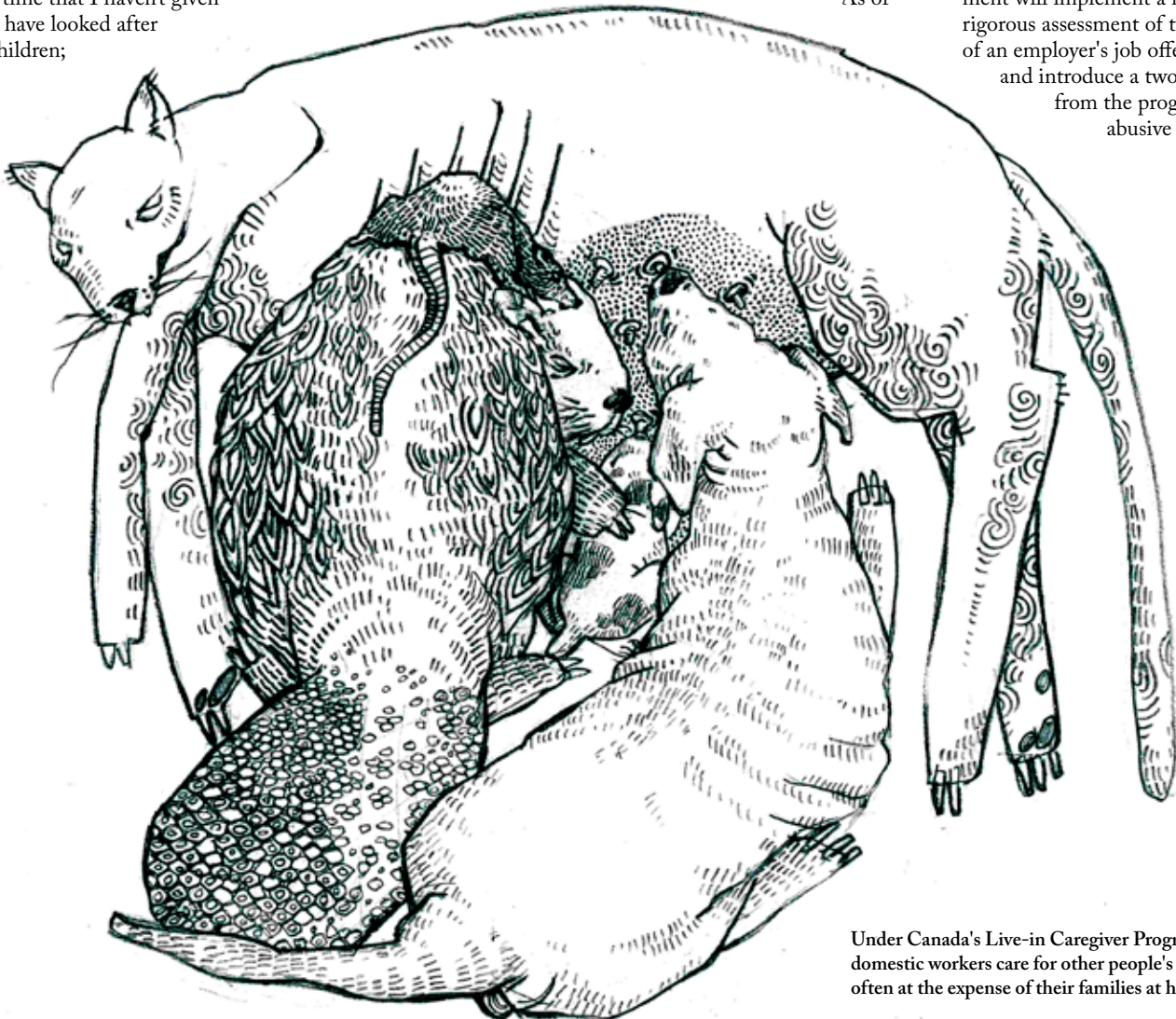
The federal government undertook a review of the LCP in 2008–2009.

As of

April 2010, participants have four years to complete the required 24 months' work as full-time live-in caregivers (previously it was three years), participants can use overtime hours to complete the program in as little as 22 months, and the second medical exam required to apply for permanent residency has been eliminated.

As well, employers are now required to include working hours and wages in their employee contract and they are responsible for paying for their employee's processing fees and airfare to Canada as well as for providing private medical insurance until their employee's provincial coverage is activated.

In April 2011, the government will implement a more rigorous assessment of the validity of an employer's job offer and introduce a two-year ban from the program for abusive employers.



Under Canada's Live-in Caregiver Program, foreign domestic workers care for other people's children, often at the expense of their families at home.

Shira Ron

Advocates at the Philippine Women Centre (PWC) say these changes will not stop the exploitation and are calling on the federal government to scrap the LCP altogether, saying it's a blemish on Canada's human rights record that promotes a cycle of poverty for Filipina migrant workers.

The live-in requirement of the program makes these women vulnerable to exploitation, explains Charlene Sayo, who is the Executive Director of the Philippine Women Centre of BC.

"How do you regulate a private home?" asks Sayo. "They're working in their employer's home where the power relation is well established." This power relation is also recognized by the federal government in their official response to a formal recommendation to make the live-in condition of the LCP optional:

The live-in requirement is a vital component of the LCP. Although there are Canadians qualified to work as caregivers, there is a shortage of those willing to work as live-in caregivers.

Vergabera understands why Canadians find this type of work undesirable.

Her story as a live-in domestic worker started in 1994. Desperate to escape an abusive husband and support her three children, Vergabera left her home in the Philippines to work abroad. She first went to Saudi Arabia as a live-in domestic worker where she was never allowed to leave the house and was paid \$150 per month.

After four years she returned to the Philippines desperate to see her children. "I didn't even recognize them," says Vergabera in a pained voice. However, as much as she wanted to stay with her children she soon realized that the reasons she left had not changed.

Ten months later she went to Taiwan, a more liberal country with a much higher salary. She worked two jobs, was on call 24/7 and never had a day off, but with a monthly salary of \$900 she was able to care for her own children as well as pay for all of her siblings to go to college.

Then one fateful day in Taipei, Vergabera met a fellow Filipina migrant worker who told her about the LCP program in Canada.

The possibility of reuniting her family in Canada was like a dream for Vergabera. Using all of her savings, she paid the \$3500 processing fee to a Philippines-based agent to handle her paperwork.

### *In the last seven years, Vergabera has only seen her children by webcam.*

Sayo says this money exchange is one of the reasons the Canadian government is not motivated to eliminate the LCP, despite the documented systemic exploitation it creates. Through the LCP, the government is attempting to solve the childcare crisis in the private sector instead of investing in universal child and elderly care; something that would benefit all Canadians, instead of just those who can afford a live-in caregiver. Not only do these women pay agency and application fees to come to Canada, they're often well-educated and equipped with skills Canada didn't invest in.

When Vergabera arrived in Canada she was surprised to discover she would be keeping only \$900 out of the promised \$1,400 monthly salary after room, board and taxes were deducted. Worse yet, when she described her living circumstances, they were not that different from those in Saudi Arabia. Her employer was an affluent family in Shaughnessy who forced her to work unpaid overtime, forbade her to have a TV in her room and rarely let her leave the house, which they kept alarmed.

Vergabera knew her employer was violating her rights, but she didn't feel that she could fight back. "As a live-in you can't assert yourself because you don't want to screw up your application," she explains. "You swallow it, the bad words and unpaid overtime."

After so many years of sacrifice, she wasn't willing to jeopardize her chance to reunite her family in Canada by standing up for her rights.

The employer-specific work permit issued under the LCP is another condition that makes these women vulnerable to exploitation. If an employee wants to seek a new employer, she has to apply for a new work permit, which can take many months to

process. She often doesn't have savings to tide her over while she waits, because all her money has been sent back to the Philippines to support her family. Time spent waiting also eats into her four-year time limit for completing her 24 months' work as a live-in caregiver, and it just extends the time she's separated from her family.

For this reason the PWC is also advocating that in the short-term the LCP change its employer-specific work permit to an open one, as well as grant landed status upon arrival. "Give them a fair start in Canada, don't let them come in on losing ground, these women are already vulnerable to begin with," says Sayo.

With the dream of reuniting her family, Vergabera bit her tongue and persevered with her employer. In 2008 she completed her mandatory two years' work as a live-in caregiver and applied to become a landed immigrant. She has been waiting since. According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the normal processing time is 16 months, but Vergabera says she has peers who have waited up to 10 years to be processed.

And while Vergabera's dream

of a family reunion is shared by many women in the LCP, UBC professor Dr. Geraldine Pratt cautions that it can be a difficult process.

Pratt's research found that for women in the LCP it takes five to six years to bring their families to Canada. Re-establishing relationships after years of separation is complicated, especially when a family is struggling to survive and the children are trying to adapt to a new culture. This stress is reflected in a high drop-out rate for Filipino children, which Dr. Pratt says is worrying for a community that values education highly.

"The Filipino community has the highest educational level of any immigrant group, and what we may see is a radical downward educational and social mobility," explains Pratt.

This is compounded by the fact that the LCP de-skills its participants. About eighty percent of Filipina women in the LCP have postsecondary education; many are trained as registered nurses, midwives and teachers. But most end up trapped in a cycle of survival and never manage to leave entry-level jobs in the service or health sectors.

Since completing her work requirement for the LCP, Vergabera has found a new job at Tim Hortons. Even though she's still struggling, she's much happier now that her rights in the workplace are respected.

In the meantime, she is anxiously waiting for the day she can hug her children again, which she hopes will be next year. They are adults now, and she's warned them that living in Canada can be a tough experience. Despite their professional degrees, she knows that they'll probably also be serving coffee, fighting to survive. But at least they'll be fighting together.

*Esther Hsieh is a Vancouver-based freelance journalist. The article was originally published by the Vancouver Media Co-op.*



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# State of Pennsylvania Kept Tabs on Ontario Activists

## Paranoia pays for US firm

by Tim Groves

TORONTO—Reports by a private intelligence gathering company—reports that contained information on activist groups across the US and G20 activists in Southern Ontario—has led to a scandal in Pennsylvania, including a high-level resignation.

The Institute of Terrorism Research and Response (ITRR) is a private company hired to write “intelligence bulletins” for the Pennsylvania Department of Homeland Security.

In September, news agency ProPublica revealed that the ITRR had been monitoring the activities of groups opposed to hydraulic fracturing, an oil and gas drilling process also known as “fracking.” The implication that these groups may be criminal or terrorist organizations soon caused high ranking officials to condemn ITRR.

By October, the Governor of Pennsylvania said he was “appalled” and “deeply embarrassed” by the \$125,000 contract with ITRR; an official in the state police called the contents of the bulletins “unsubstantiated gossip,” and the director of Pennsylvania Homeland Security was forced to resign.

The Pennsylvania Department of Homeland Security received several reports a week from ITRR, and then passed the information on to law enforcement, governments and businesses in the state. Soon after the scandal erupted the contract was terminated. ITRR still has numerous unnamed corporate clients.

Although many of the US groups monitored by the ITRR do not engage in property destruction, this and other criminal acts did take place at the G20 protests. It is not clear why Pennsylvania law enforcement needed updates on G20 activists in Ontario, but on several occasions they claimed protests in Toronto would inspire violence in Pennsylvania.



Private firms profit from G20 spying.

Caitlin Crawshaw

One report linked rallies in Philadelphia calling for the freeing of political prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal, who is on death row, with G20 protests in Toronto.

“The G20 riots, vandalism, street protests and property destruction in Toronto have invigorated certain anarchist and left-wing radical elements. Therefore, protests on behalf of Mumia...are likely to draw a broad, dangerous cross-section of opportunistic activists,” one report states.

One of the more tangible recommendations stemming from the group’s reports on the G20 was to review security procedures at RBC branches in Pennsylvania, due to the campaign by Rainforest Action Network (RAN) targeting RBC for their financial support of the Alberta tar sands. In describing RAN, a non-violent group, they asserted that the group used “extremely aggressive tactics.”

Between March and August

2010, ITRR wrote a total of 32 reports that mention the G20 protests in Toronto. The contents of the reports seem to be based on public information that anyone who had an internet connection could easily acquire, but they add comments that emphasized the danger, risk and threats posed by G20 activists.

“There is a huge industry making lots and lots of money off of paranoia,” read an editorial in the *Pennsylvania York Daily Record*, referring to the ITRR. “Paranoia is providing a very good living to a lot of people these days. It drives our public discourse. It drives our politics. It is, it could be argued, the dominant force in this country today.”

“Fear has been the state’s tool to make us alienate ourselves from each other so that we cannot build the world we truly want to see—together,” said Maryam Adrangi, a spokesperson for the Community Solidarity Network, a Toronto-

based group that is responding to the police actions during and after the G20 Summit.

She believes demonizing G20 activists has also been undertaken by groups at home.

“Painting activists as terrorists or violent gives them a base on which to justify more repression, suspension of civil rights, and increased security spending.

“We see in corporate media that over 1,100 violent protesters were put in the detention centre, when the reality is that over 1,100 people who were concerned about austerity measures and the implications it will have on people’s ability to live with dignity and self-determination were put in jail,” said Adrangi. “Which then raises the question: who really are the criminals?”

*Tim Groves is an investigative journalist in Toronto. This article was originally published by the Toronto Media Co-op.*



# Media Co-op Investor: November

## Getting (radio)active with Cameco and piping mad for TransCanada

by Geordie Gwalgen Dent

TORONTO—Welcome to Media Co-op Investor!

Media Co-op Investor aims to help the public understand the stock market, how it works and the major companies that benefit from it.

In each installment (every two weeks online) the Toronto Media Co-op (TMC) examines an element or term in the stock market as well as the TMC's simulated investments. We also shed light on large Canadian companies and why their share prices have gone up or down.

The week of November 22, we tracked the largest Canadian mining and energy stocks. We had theoretically bought about \$1,000 worth of stocks in each company on September 15.

How we did that week: Amazing! All our stocks are doing well, but while consumer stocks are up a paltry 1.8 per cent and financials are only slightly better with an increase of 2.5 per cent, our mining and energy stocks are up a whopping 7.5 per cent! Interest rates on a term deposit at my bank meanwhile would be less than one per cent. So we're raking in lots of theoretical dollars.

Sadly, the fact this is happening is actually a really bad sign.

The US government has been pushing hard for Germany, Japan and China to increase domestic demand (have their populations buy more and save less) in the hopes they will start buying US exports and help revive the US manufacturing sector which has been hollowed out over the last

30 years. Meanwhile, the US government agreed at the G20 in Toronto, along with the other nations, to rein in their spending and enact austerity budgets with the hope that all the debt being created will someday be paid back.

Surprise, surprise: Germany, Japan and China are still exporting like mad; the US government just spent another \$600 billion printing money to lower the value of the US dollar (trying to get those exports up again); and all the high-fivein' measures that were agreed to in Toronto have unravelled at the G20 meeting in South Korea, rendering the Toronto G20 even more useless than it was originally.

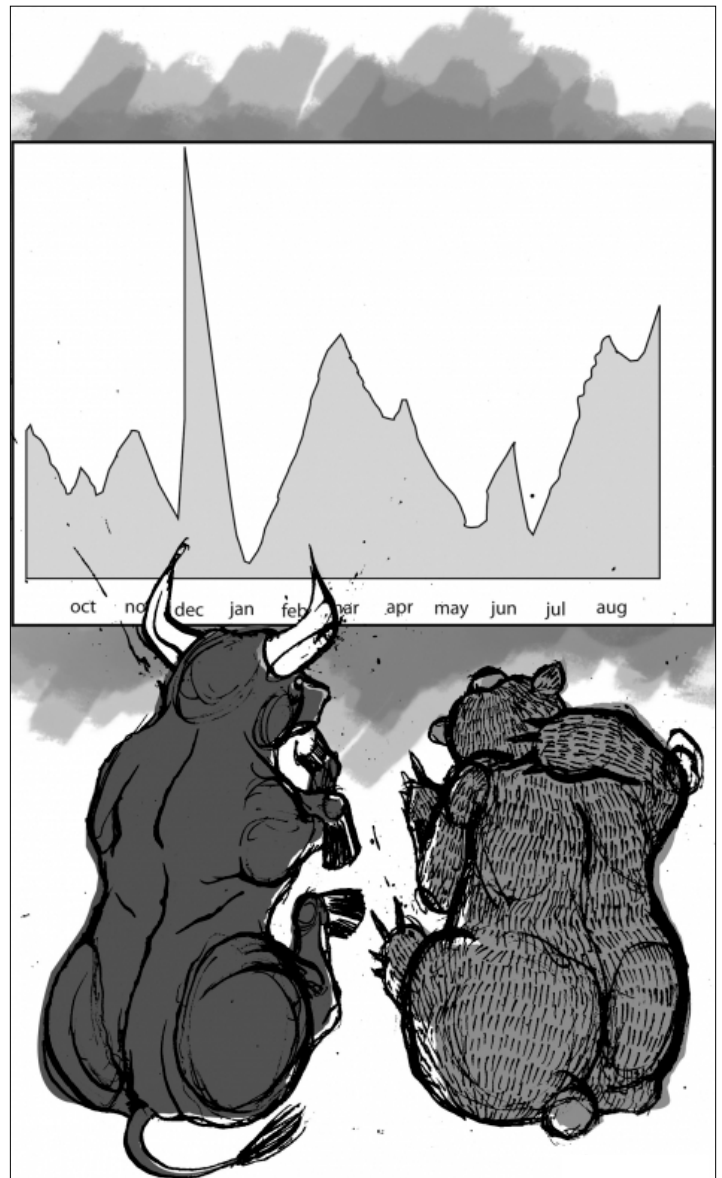
Back in Canada, the Potash Corp. takeover bid we talked about in September was finally squashed. The Canadian government also sold two per cent of the original 11.7 per cent of shares in General Motors it bought as part of the company's bail out, as the company returned to the stock market. They sold the stock for \$1 billion; they paid \$9.5 billion for the whole stake last year.

What better time to discuss Cameco Corporation than right after anti-nuclear activist Dr. Helen Caldicott declared Port Hope, Ontario, a "tragedy" due to the low-level radioactive contamination that the town deals with?

Cameco is the worlds largest publicly traded uranium company and the second largest producer of uranium in the world.

Like Potash Corp, the company is a cash cow that owes its free-marketeering to the Saskatchewan government, which founded it, and to the First Nations who own the resources the company exploits, according to Treaties 4 and 6.

Started as a crown corporation in Saskatchewan in 1988,



Media Co-op Investor: exploring bull to bear, and everything in between.

Ryan James Terry

Cameco was privatized completely in 2002.

It has major mines in Saskatchewan, the US and Kazakhstan, while much of its uranium is refined in Ontario in Blind River and, you guessed it, Port Hope.

As expected of most companies involved in nuclear activities, Cameco has had to deal

with its fair share of controversy. In 2007, Port Hope operations were shut down when contaminated soil was found. The same year, the head of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC), the nuclear industry regulator, said the CNSC lost

continued on page 21



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# Hemp Wanted

## Formerly illegal material promises dizzying array of green energy uses

by Miles Howe

HALIFAX—Wanda Beattie, president and CEO of Atlantic Healing Hemp, paces the floor of her flagship store in Berwick, Nova Scotia. She is a woman on a mission. The shelves around her are lined with hemp salves, hemp balms, cold-pressed hemp seed oil and vacuum-sealed bags of crushed hemp seeds. The hemp is top quality and Canadian grown, but it's definitely not local—and that's something Beattie would like to change.

"At the moment I'm bringing in hemp oil in large quantities from Winnipeg," she says. "That's the hemp heartland. There was an attempt to grow hemp in Nova Scotia, back in 2000, but it wasn't feasible because there wasn't a market for the product. There was some amateur processing being done, but nothing of any scale."

Beattie's mission: to resurrect the deep-seeded relationship between Nova Scotia soil and hemp.

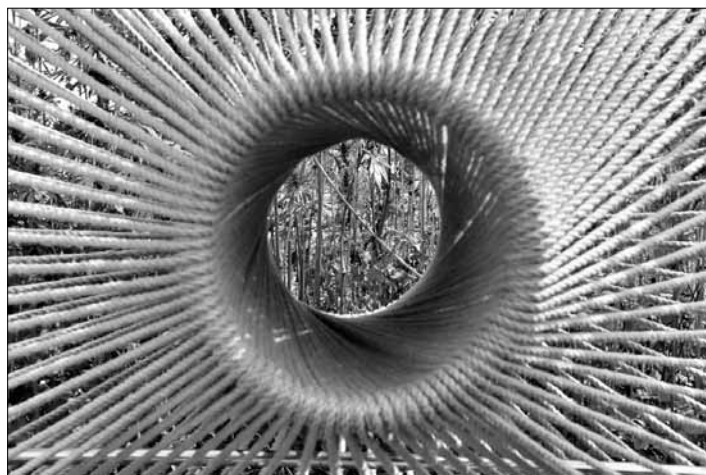
Port Royal, Nova Scotia, was the site of North America's first recorded hemp crop, in 1606.

But by 2009, Saskatchewan had 5,090 acres licensed for hemp and Manitoba had 6,015 acres. Nova Scotia had none.

"The issue is not related to soil," says Beattie. "There is wonderful soil here in the Annapolis Valley. You can grow hemp here. Top quality hemp. In 2000, Nova Scotia farmers proved it could be done. There's simply not enough of a market."

The hemp plant has had many uses. Christopher Columbus swore by hemp sails. Hemp rope, even 50-year-old hemp rope, is still highly sought after for its water-resistant qualities. Anything oil, lumber or cotton can do, hemp can do better. The seeds can be eaten or pressed into oil. Both methods of ingestion are extremely healthy.

As Beattie will tell you, hemp seeds contain all the essential fatty acids. Her hemp cream also goes on smooth after a shave.



Hemp stalk can be processed into cheap, high-quality products, including durable, waterproof cord. There are currently no hemp stalk processing facilities in Canada. *SnapKracklePop*

Re-education is a large part of Beattie's campaign to get hemp back into the Nova Scotia diet and consciousness. She and her husband Brian offer weekly, one-hour information sessions out of the Berwick store. She also offers free presentations to Nova Scotia groups and businesses.

"People in the area just don't know about the benefits of hemp. We grew up in a generation that didn't hear anything about hemp. Consumers are looking at our products now, and they know they have a value, because they have been used for thousands of years. Younger people are using hemp as a preventative, incorporating it into their diets to stay healthy." Others use hemp to treat sciatic nerve pain, eczema, psoriasis, arthritis, acid reflux, and to lower cholesterol.

Hemp was banned in Canada and the US in 1938. Jack Herer, in his book *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*, highlights the link between DuPont's patenting, that same year, of the processes of making plastics out of petroleum and paper out of wood pulp, and the continent-wide ban on growing hemp. In 1998, amid growing interest in textile alternatives, Health Canada lifted its ban.

Hemp requires a relatively small up-front investment for processing infrastructure. Compared to oil, pulp and cotton,

hemp is of higher quality and is much cheaper. Hemp is therefore a logical alternative to many of the products the Western diet currently consumes at an alarming rate.

Travis Truso is the owner of Hemp Haven in Regina, Saskatchewan. He has been in the hemp selling business for six years, and he is the main contact for the Saskatchewan Hemp Association.

"I've talked to 100 farmers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and only one of them even baled his stalk," says Truso. "The rest just burned their stalks or cultivated them back into the soil. Ninety-nine per cent of farmers are just selling their hemp seed. There is zero industry in Canada for fibre and stalk."

The fibre and stalk of the hemp plant is where so many of its benefits are found. When processed, the fibres and hurd (stalk centre) can produce a multitude of products.

"There are quite a few encouraging things going on in Canada with hemp right now," says Truso. "Motive is a car company out of Alberta. They just created an electric car, and the body of the car is made out of hemp composite. The car has been reviewed really positively, and they want to commercially launch it by 2013."

"I see hemp fibre board as

being a very promising industry with lots of room to grow," he says. "Right now the government annually subsidizes the lumber industry with \$1 billion of taxpayers' money. You cannot produce paper from lumber for the price we buy it at in the store. The entire industry is subsidized. And once you cut a forest down, your next crop isn't ready for 100 years. Why have we built a society that takes trees for paper? It's insane."

Truso argues that when it comes to textiles, hemp doesn't just compete with cotton, it's far superior.

"The absurdity of growing cotton for textiles... Pests love it, and the only way it could have evolved was through intensive labour. Cotton needed slave labour to evolve. And then the product is just a short, brittle piece of fibre that wears out in a year. Hemp makes the strongest fibre, and it doesn't wear out, it wears in. Levis jeans were originally made from hemp."

Truso also points to hemp's potential energy efficiency.

"Henry Ford grew hemp, and his first diesel engine ran off hemp oil at 90 per cent cleaner and 60 per cent more efficient than fuel oil. It's got the most biomass per crop, per acre, of anything grown."

Hemp is also one of the greenest crops grown. "All the farmers that currently grow hemp in Saskatchewan do so keeping organic practices in mind," says Truso. "They are growing it in rotation with wheat, rye and grain crops. Hemp pulls an enormous amount of toxins out of the soil, and I've got it from a representative from Health Canada who says that if hemp were grown in three consecutive years on the same land, that land would be free of other weeds. You can virtually drop the seed in the soil, come back in 120 days, and combine your yield."

Canadian law, however, makes it hard to be a hemp farmer. "Hemp is the only legal crop in Canada that requires a license to grow. You have to go through so much paper work. You need to

have a criminal check, and you need to have your crops tested for THC content twice yearly. For a lot of farmers, the hassle is just too much."

Processing the stalk, on an industrial scale, requires a processing plant. Such a plant would cost several million dollars, which so far has been a prohibitive sum for investors. Various levels of Canadian government have had several opportunities to build a Canadian hemp processing plant, and each time they failed to seal the deal.

Truso talks about one that got away.

"In Craik, Saskatchewan, a company called Natural Alternative Technologies (NAT)

*"Once you cut a forest down, your next crop isn't ready for 100 years. Why have we built a society that takes trees for paper? It's insane."*

—Travis Truso, Saskatchewan Hemp Association

approached the town with the idea of building a hemp processing plant. That was in 2004. At that point we had a New Democratic government in Saskatchewan, and they were for it. They offered up half the capital for the plant if NAT could raise the rest.

"From 2004 to 2008, NAT developed its technology, and raised its capital. In 2008 Saskatchewan elected the Saskatchewan Party, which is a far right party. In their first week of being in office they cancelled their contract with NAT. Since then NAT has gone bankrupt, and has sold its technology to Haines Underwear."

Despite growing almost 20,000 acres of hemp, Canada remains without a plant to process it. Canadian hemp stalks, for lack of a buyer, are burned. Hemp-stalk products, among them hemp

textiles, are largely imported from China.

"Almost every Canadian designer that's manufacturing hemp clothing is getting their yarn from China," says Truso. "The floor of my store is made from hemp fibre board. It's twice as strong as plywood and will last twice as long. I bought it imported from China."

Without government assistance, and without a processing plant, hemp farmers across Saskatchewan are still growing over 5,000 acres of hemp. Only the seeds are being harvested.

"There are no government subsidies for hemp seed," says Truso. "The farmers need to go out on their own, and find all of their

own contracts. At the end of the year, a lot of them still have 50 to 100,000 pounds of hemp seed left over."

Truso says any initiative for processing stalk will have to come from the grassroots. "A company called Hill Agra in Ontario has invented a portable fibre extractor that can fit behind any tractor. The base model sells for \$80,000. Several have been sold to Europe, and quite a few to China, but so far none in Canada. In the spring this extractor would decorticate your fibre and your hurds [process the stalk]. You'd be ready to stamp fibre boards. You'd be ready to mix hemp concrete."

"And," he adds, "hemp is still illegal to grow in America, so you'd have a huge market for your product. You'd be creating a groundbreaking industry."

*Miles Howe hails from Ottawa, Ontario, and currently calls Halifax home. He has a Masters degree in Sociology, plays a wicked harmonica, and bakes a mean banana cake. This article was originally published by the Halifax Media Co-op.*

## Good Work its Own Reward?

### Report finds high turnover, low pay and educated workforce in non-profit sector

by Ben Sichel

HALIFAX—Workers in Nova Scotia's non-profit sector are poorly paid, highly educated, and frequently leaving their jobs, according to a new study conducted for the Federation of Community Organizations and Phoenix Youth Programs.

Sixty per cent of non-profit workers – of whom eighty-seven per cent are women – earn less than \$40,000 a year, and ninety-four per cent earn less than \$60,000 "at all levels," according to Miia Suokonautio, Director of Programming at Phoenix Youth Programs and Co-chair of the study.

As well, three quarters of non-profit employees in the province hold at least one university degree, compared to forty-five per cent nationally.

"Where there may be a public perception that...good will is enough" to work in the non-profit sector, says Suokonautio, "the complexity, and the level of service delivery and community involvement required from non-profits actually has more and more people having university degrees."

While many do not think of the United Way, home care services for seniors, the Boys' and Girls' Clubs and Environmental NGOs as an employment sector, non-profits actually employ more Nova Scotians than traditional sectors like manufacturing or construction, says the report.

As well, the non-profit sector is key to community health and vitality, says Suokonautio.

"When you think of the community without the little league team, or without the home

support services for seniors, or without the programs for immigrants and newcomers to help them settle, without services for homeless adults, you start to see a significantly impoverished Nova Scotia," she says.

"And in rural Nova Scotia, what we heard from our research is that in some communities it's really the lifeblood."

Low pay and instability of funding were directly related to another common problem in the non-profit sector: high employee turnover rates. Sixty per cent of current non-profit employees have been in their positions less than two years, according to the report.

This phenomenon has a highly unsettling effect on those receiving services, says Suokonautio.

"If every two years you had to change your family doctor...the impact is huge," she says.

Suokonautio adds that Nova Scotians should be aware of the excellent value they get from investing in the non-profit sector. "We do things that the market would never do because there's no financial incentive, and we do things cheaper than if the government were to do it," she says.

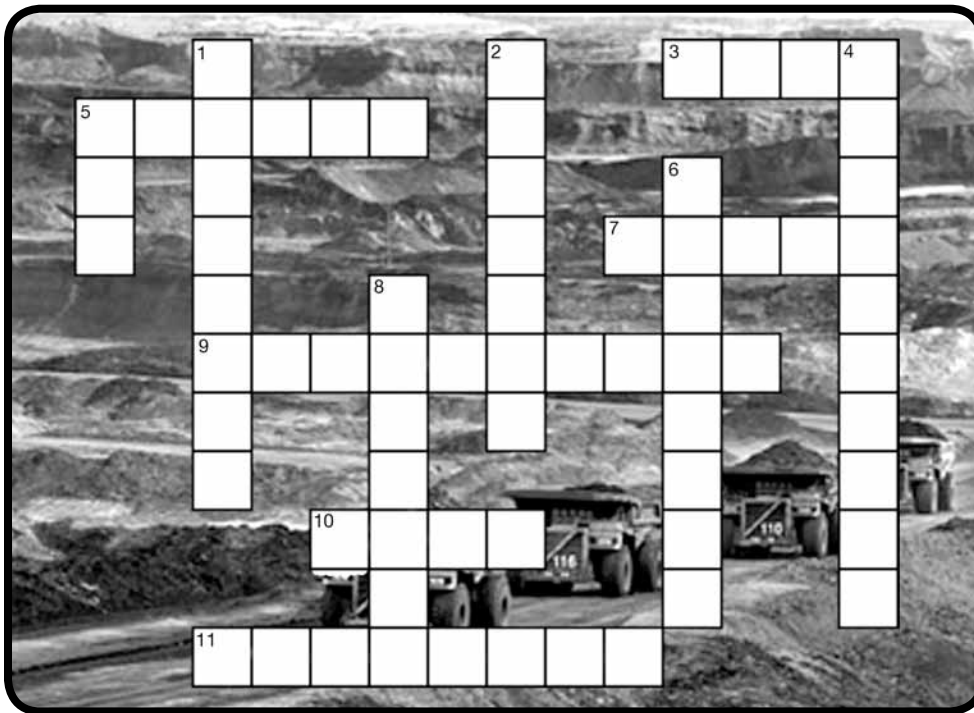
"We know that the provincial government is facing cuts," she says. However, "cuts to some places will actually mean more costs, so it doesn't necessarily make sense to cut up front...if you cut some of the essential services...the cost for justice, the cost for health care, are likely to go up."

*Ben Sichel is a member of the Halifax Media Co-op, where this article was originally published.*



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Roban Chaldovich

**ACROSS**

- 3. Barrick CEO
- 5. 1988 Canada-US FTA broker, went on to sit on board of Canwest, Quebecor, Shell and TransCanada
- 7. "hogwash" Minister of State for Mining
- 9. Canadian-Iranian blogger who'll spend nine years in jail for it
- 10. Mi'kmaq who died in cop custody in BC
- 11. Indigenous Mexicans who ordered Majestic's concessions cancelled

**DOWN**

- 1. Chief Technology Officer at Calgary-based Carbon Engineering
- 2. Indigenous people of Chile
- 4. Pipeline that would send tar sands oil to Texas
- 5. Biggest mining company
- 6. First Nations host to Mt. Milligan
- 8. Freedom Flotilla boat

*answers right*

**"Geo-engineering," from page 13**

to produce biomass rather than food. Additionally, these sorts of solutions create an incentive for the genetic engineering of crops to be used for fuel and carbon storage. Similar trends have happened around biodiesel and tree plantations for biomass power production.

In Canada, a bio-char proposal has been submitted as part of the Alberta Offset Scheme, the government of Alberta's carbon-trade-based plan for emissions reductions. According to a report from the United Kingdom-based Biofuel Watch, Keith Driver, one of the Alberta Offset System's chief advisors, has been tapped to draft the International Bio-char Initiative's first set of standards.

In many ways, the debate over geo-engineering boils down to a debate between two models of dealing with climate change: continuing with business as usual, and transforming an unsustainable system of production and consumption.

As tar sands development continues, the Canadian government appears to be betting on business as usual. "I would not be surprised to see millions more dollars in the coming years poured into these 'climate technologies,'" said Bronson. "[These technologies] are more a distraction from emissions reduction than anything else."

*Cameron Fenton is a former intern and Membership Coordinator with The Dominion and a community organizer in Montreal.*

**"Prisons, prisoners," from page 9**

marginalized people, while others walk free. "There are different ways that we can see criminals. If you look at the tar sands—the way that they're pumping toxins into the Athabasca river and poisoning everybody downstream, and the air—how is that not criminal?" asks Collins. Collins has faced severe repercussions and the denial of his parole as a direct consequence of speaking out from inside prison, yet he continues to do so.

"There is a punishment for speaking out. But I think that there is punishment for shutting up as well. At the end of the day, if you know that something should be said and you don't say it, you're going to pay some price in terms of your integrity, your dignity. So you've got to make the choice of where you want to pay your toll."

*Robyn Maynard is a movement writer, radio journalist, and activist based in Montreal. She co-hosts No One Is Illegal Radio and is involved in various grassroots campaigns for migrant justice, and against police violence and impunity.*

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**Crossword Answers**

**ACROSS**

- 3. MUNK
- 5. BURNES
- 7. HAWES
- 9. DERAKHSHAN
- 10. PAUL
- 11. WIXARIKA

**DOWN**

- 1. ARVINDER
- 2. MAPUCHE
- 4. KEYSTONE XL
- 5. BHP
- 6. NAKAZDILI
- 8. MARMARA



*micromacromicro*

## *Ai Ai Ai* The slow-moving, smiling, brown-throated sloth

by **Tim McSorley**

**T**he brown-throated three-toed sloth inhabits the upper branches of the tropical forests of Central and Latin America. Spending up to three days in a single tree before moving on to the next, this long-limbed critter feeds on leaves, twigs and fruit. Brown-throated sloths can sleep up to 20 hours per day and move at a maximum speed of about 0.3 miles per hour. Their slow movement and low metabolism means they can take up to a month to digest just one meal.

Its incredibly slow movement makes it easy prey, especially on the ground. But lengthy arms with long, sharp claws provide a significant defense from larger animals. In the rainy season, its long, wiry brown and grey fur develops patches of green algae, which helps it camouflage itself among the foliage.

The most common of the four species of three-toed sloths, the brown-throated sloth is distinguished by brown fur around its throat and on its chest, a "mask" of black fur around the eyes and, on males, an orange or yellow patch of fur between their shoulder blades. Like other sloths they can turn their heads 90 degrees, and their mouths naturally take the shape of a smile. While they are mammals, they also have the

reptilian characteristic of having a body temperature that fluctuates as the external temperature goes up or down. Weighing 0.2 to 0.25 kilograms at birth, adults grow to the size of a cat—about four kilograms.

The brown-throated sloth is a primarily solitary animal, coupling only to mate. To attract males, the female makes an "ai" cry, which many say sounds like a woman screaming. It is also very similar to the sound both male and female sloths make when they are in danger. This noise has led the animal to also be referred to as the "ai" by the Guarani people of South America.

While the sloth moves with difficulty on the ground, it still descends from its perch in the humid canopy once every week. The terrestrial trek is made in order to dig a small hole into which it defecates, covering the hole with leaves. It is a precarious venture for the sloth, as it might need to descend 30 metres to reach the ground, putting it at the mercy of jaguars and other carnivores.

While its habitat has suffered from deforestation and fragmentation, its wide habitat (from Honduras in the north to parts of southern Brazil) and adaptability have allowed the brown-throated sloth to thrive.

## BACK TALK

**Dirty Green**

**I**mmigration to Canada is driven by the violent and massive displacement and dispossession caused by economic policies (tar sands, free trade and corporate rights deals) pursued by Canadian corporations and government reps ("Greenwashing Hate" by Cameron Fenton, Issue 73: December, 2010). These are the same destructive economic policies that are causing the high carbon emissions in Canada that people are rightly concerned about. Knowing this, how can we justify restricting people from moving here? The article does a great service in warning people to be aware of attempts by corporate and government elites to co-opt concern for the environment in order to pursue immigration and related policies aimed at maintaining the status quo of oppression and injustice.

—*John Barber*

**O**ur emissions would be even higher (eight to 10 per cent, by my calculation) if goods made in China and consumed here were added into the mix. They should be, and China gets a bad rap for their emissions growth which is significantly generated by exports, thereby letting Western nations off the hook.

—*John Meyer*

**A letter**

**F**or two days in Seoul, the leaders of the G20 gave us the impression that they were in disagreement. But don't get it wrong! Most of them did agree -- thick as thieves -- on everything that really matters:

- leaving the destiny of our world in the hands of rich people, banks and big corporations;
- despoiling poor countries

with a sophisticated set of economic, political and military measures to subdue them, stop their march towards democracy and justice and reduce their populations to poverty and obedience;

- maintaining democracy in its embryonic state in rich countries and doing everything to stop it in the poorest countries through private control of information and entertainment for the rich, and by force and intimidation for the poor;

- at all cost, preventing the sharing of powers that would lead to real democracy, and thus to equality and justice.

I can already hear someone asking: "But what can we do?" We can start talking with our friends and colleagues about things that matters for us: justice, fairness, democracy, equality.

—*Bruno Marquis*

**Painfully cute**

**D**amn this baby hedgehog for being so cute ("Hoglet," Issue 59: April 2009). I can't stand it. I should be working right now but I am addicted to the little open-mouth face of this animal.

—*Anonymous*

**O**h yeah? Check out this cuteness ("Squirreling the Days Away" by Maya Rolbin-Ghanie, Issue 73: December 2010):

*cutecutepics.com*

—*Alia*

Heather Meek

# Social. *hmeek 2010*

Sigh... I'm bored. I don't want to stay home, but I don't wanna go outside...





# Excluded but not Silenced

## Indigenous Peoples at COP16

Images & text by Allan Cedillo Lissner



Since the conclusion of the COP16 United Nations Climate Negotiations, Indigenous peoples from around the world (including Clayton Thomas-Muller, pictured above, of the Pukatawagan in Northern Manitoba) have been expressing their outrage and disgust at the agreements that have emerged from the talks. Already suffering the immediate impacts of climate change, Indigenous peoples were silenced and excluded from the negotiations. As was exposed in the recent Wikileaks climate scandal, the Cancun Agreements were not the result of an informed and open consensus process, but the consequence of an ongoing US diplomatic offensive of backroom deals, arm-twisting and bribery.

Hector Rodriguez (middle), posing defiantly in front of riot police, was among the thousands of indigenous peoples, small farmers, women, environmental groups and other activists who took action to make their voices heard throughout the two week conference. “The market will not protect our rights,” read a statement by the Indigenous Environmental Network, which represents front-line Indigenous communities. “Approaches based



on carbon offsetting, like REDD [Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation], will permit polluters to continue poisoning land, water, air, and our bodies ... [and] will only encourage the buying and selling of our human and environmental rights.”

A large and colourful Bolivian contingent (top) was leading the push for the Cochabamba People’s Agreement as the way forward. The agreement was reached during an international People’s Assembly held in Bolivia earlier this year and is held up as a model for representing the vision of everyday people from all corners of the globe who are creating solutions to climate change from the ground up. It also calls for a global framework that respects human rights and the Rights of Mother Earth.

Led by members of La Via Campesina, an international farmers movement, and the Indigenous Peoples Caucus, thousands marched through the searing heat to demand real climate solutions. Their message was loud and clear to those who would listen: “The communities on the frontlines of the problem—those who face the daily impacts of the



climate crisis—are also on the frontlines of the solutions.”

“Current models of consumption, production and trade have caused massive environmental destruction,” according to a statement by La Via Campesina. “Indigenous peoples and peasant farmers, men and women, are the main victims. [We] need a change in economic and development paradigms. Human beings do not own nature, but rather form part of all that lives.”

COP16 shut the doors on Indigenous peoples and impacted communities, while welcoming profit-driven business, industry, and speculators with open arms. Yet hope is presented through the alliances built among Indigenous and social movements from North and South, as seen when Casey Camp-Horinek (pictured above, right) of the Ponca Nation of Oklahoma, and other Indigenous peoples from the north were invited to participate in a Mayan ceremony.

*Allan Cedillo Lissner is an independent photojournalist based in Toronto, Canada.*