

Lower Island NEWS

An independent democratic socialist newspaper serving the Lower Vancouver Island area for 31 years

Now on the web at www.lowerislandnews.com

August 2015

Volume 32 Issue #3

Victoria, BC

Mulcair's Rally for Victoria has full house



NDP supporters fill every seat in the Victoria Conference Centre, with the overflow lining the walls, to listen to a campaign style speech by Tom Mulcair, Official Opposition Leader. Mulcair was in Victoria May 9 to talk about a “New Era” of relations with Indigenous communities in Canada.

Mulcair to launch “New Era” of relations with Indigenous communities in Canada

MONTREAL — Official Opposition Leader Tom Mulcair announced July 7 that an NDP government will usher in a new era of relations with Indigenous communities in Canada.

In an address to the Assembly of First Nations annual general assembly, Mulcair stressed how the NDP will seek to reduce poverty, improve educational outcomes and increase opportunities for First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities across Canada.

“It’s time for a new era that embraces a true Nation-to-Nation relationship, built on respect and, above all, makes meaningful progress when it comes to bringing about change,” said Mulcair. “A new era starts with listening and an understanding that ‘meaningful consultation and accommodation’ isn’t just a catch phrase.”

Under the leadership of Tom Mulcair, an NDP government will create a cabinet-level committee, chaired by the prime min-

ister, to ensure federal government decisions respect treaty rights, inherent rights and Canada’s international obligations, he said.

“Over the last several years, there is nothing I have dedicated more of my time to than establishing a Nation-to-Nation relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Crown,” added Mulcair. “To get different results, we need a different approach and that starts with listening.”

After too many decades of inaction and empty promises by Liberal and Conservative governments, the NDP will make progress on important issues such as First Nations education, he noted.

An NDP government will also call a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women, as well as act upon the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission—beginning with its most pressing recommendations—in consultation with Indigenous communities.



Mulcair chats with a young member of the crowd.

Photo by Diane Walsh

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement #40008124
Return to:
Lower Island News
Box 311-2750 Quadra Street
Victoria, BC V8T 4E8

Inside this issue

21st Century activism.....	2	Heads must roll.....	12
70 years after the bomb.....	3	Americanizing our justice system.....	13
Editorial and op/ed	4	Forced marriage a form of abuse.....	14
Letters to the editor.....	5	Behind the mass exodus.....	15
On the home front.....	6	Shooting ourselves in the foot.....	16
Riding an Orange Wave.....	7	First Nations Elders Gathering.....	17
Federal news.....	8 and 9	A long uphill journey.....	18
MLAs at work.....	10	Calendar of coming events.....	19
Strategic voting.....	11	Directory.....	20

Opinion:

21st Century Activism

By Starla Anderson

My email inbox has an appeal from half a dozen activist groups a week—appeals to sign petitions and appeals for donations. I'm on mailing lists for SumOfUs.org, Change.org, Ecojustice, the Dogwood Initiative, and a few other organizations.

In the last six months, I've saved 156 of these appeals in a file I call Activist Organizations; I've signed some petitions and filed others away for future consideration. But I feel uncomfortable when I sign these petitions, because I don't know anything about the people who lead these organizations, and I worry that if I were to donate to them I would be marked as someone to harass for more donations.

This is particularly troublesome for me because as a retired person I have a fixed income and what little discretionary spending I have I want to give to the political party that I have the most faith in—the New Democratic Party. But even the ongoing appeals from the NDP are troubling to me because I know that when I donate to the party, more donations will be sought.

And the frustration is that I want to support all of these activist groups as well as the NDP, but it's not possible, so the temptation is to unsubscribe from the mailing list of every group that is asking for my support.

These feelings then obscure my reasons for activism—to effect social and political change that will help to make the world more equitable and more just, and to lobby for policies that will sustain a habitable Earth.

Canadians like me who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s were influenced by reports of the activism of that era: notably, the anti-war movement, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the aboriginal rights movement, and the environmental movement.

The power of witnessing protests and demonstrations through the lens of a television camera was especially gripping. When shown footage of the Ohio National Guard killing and wounding demonstrating Kent State University students on May 4, 1970, viewers knew that American aggression in Vietnam had to be brought to an end.

The deaths of four students and serious injuries to nine others was a turning point for public opinion and the numbers of anti-war protestors multiplied until President Richard Nixon finally found a way to withdraw American troops at the Paris Peace

Accord in January 1973.

On the US civil rights front, leaders Martin Luther King, Angela Davis, Stokeley Carmichael, Malcolm X, and others were also seen and heard through Canadian media during these times as spokespeople for millions of Americans who engaged in activism to end racial discrimination.

Protests, demonstrations, and the creation of alternate social infrastructures such as schools, clinics, and political organizations were all part of this activism.

Again, the media—particularly, televised coverage of demonstrations with peaceful marchers being battered by police—awakened the public conscience and the numbers of demonstrators multiplied. On July 2, 1964, an uneasy President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the *Civil Rights Act*, which prohibited racial discrimination in employment and education and outlawed racial segregation in public places such as schools, buses, parks and swimming pools.

These lessons from the United States on the effectiveness of activism were not lost on Canadians. The stateside women's movement guided by leaders such as Gloria Steinem, editor of *Ms. Magazine*, inspired Canadian journalist and editor Doris Anderson, who kept the women's magazine *Chatelaine* alive by publishing more content about women's issues in the workplace and fewer tips for creative homemaking.

One of the most challenging issues Anderson was willing to confront was women's right to choose to have an abortion. Dr. Henry Morgentaler was a leading supporter of this cause and was willing to be jailed more than once for his commitment to women's quest for changes to abortion laws.

On January 28, 1988, after almost two decades of activism around this issue, the Supreme Court of Canada approved legislation that gives Canadian women the right to abortion on request without restrictions.

We know that it takes thousands—and sometimes millions—of voices to bring about the changes needed to work towards a just society for all. But sometimes it takes only one voice as it did when Elijah Harper, an MLA in the 1994 Manitoba legislature, refused to vote in favour of Brian Mulroney's *Meech Lake Accord*. (Its passing required unanimous approval of all provincial legislatures.)

Harper was urged by Manitoba Grand Chief Phil Fontaine to vote against the accord because it had not had any input from

First Nations peoples and ignored Aboriginal Rights. Fontaine recently recalled, “Between June 12 and 21, 1994, Harper stood up with the feather and refused to support the accord eight times ... it was a turning point in history for indigenous people. We came to the realization very quickly that our voice mattered. We could make history, we could change the course of history.” (<https://redpowermedia.wordpress.com/2015/06/12>)

Canadian environmental movements have also drawn on the history of activism—Greenpeace has a worldwide presence. The founding members were a group of seven friends who had concerns for the planet and wanted to bring attention to the threat of nuclear arms as well as to the species in ocean habitats. The best known of them, journalist Bob Hunter, was able to use his writing to inform and motivate citizens to make their opinions known to policy makers in government.

It was Greenpeace marches across the Burrard Street Bridge in the 1970s that taught me firsthand about the power of collaboration among ordinary citizens to bring about political and social change—and that change does not happen overnight but through commitment over time, such as that demonstrated by biologist Dr. Alexan-

dra Morton whose campaign to stop salmon farms and restore wild salmon stocks are starting to have results with the help of online petitions.

History has taught us that activism is a part of democratic citizenship and that it can have very powerful results in moving us towards a society that is focused on the common good. Committed activists past and present inspired me to be one of the more than one thousand presenters at the Enbridge Hearings, and continue to inspire me to write letters to newspaper editors and politicians and to show up at demonstrations at the legislature.

But with the plethora of appeals to support so many good causes, how can we best make decisions about our activist work so that we don't feel overwhelmed? I'm putting this out as a question because I don't have an answer and I'm hoping that *Lower Island News* readers will offer some perspective that will keep me subscribed.

I want to continue to walk alongside my grandchildren in the quest for a society that cares more about justice, equitable treatment, and a sustainable habitable planet than profit-driven mandates.

Starla Anderson is a retired school teacher, living (and volunteering) in Victoria.

Volunteering is a priceless gift

By Joan McDermid

I found Starla Anderson's look at the history of activism in the US and Canada during my lifetime a delightful journey but I was also intrigued by the dilemma that she faces in her efforts to remain actively involved in the causes that mean so much to her and her concerns about the many causes that seek her pension dollars.

As a fellow senior, I also look back and remember with happiness and satisfaction the many battles won due to the efforts of fellow human beings who fought for their rights and those of others . During those days, we tried to support causes we felt were important in whatever ways we could, given our personal situations.

Some people made a career out of social change by working to organize or support causes they believed in. Others donated funds and helped out in that way. Volunteering was also an option , if one had the time and energy.

Now as retired persons, some of us suddenly have a lot of free time and not a lot of money. Frankly, I feel that folks like Starla, who devote time and energy to causes that mean the world to them, fill needs that can't be met by those who are still working and raising children .

I appreciate that time and energy spent and hope that Starla and people like her feel good about the valuable contribution they are making and don't concern themselves about donating money they can ill afford. Volunteering to help make the world a better place is a priceless gift.

Thank you Starla and others like you!

HAMILL INDEXING

Non-fiction writers, even in the age of ebooks your book will need an index.

Professional indexer:
Carol Hamill - Victoria BC
hamill@island.net
www.island.net/~hamill.net

The Changing Media Landscape

On May 30, the *Lower Island News*, an independent democratic-socialist newspaper, held a forum in Victoria, on “The Changing Media Landscape”.

The speakers were Randall Garrison, Member of Parliament for Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca; Chris Cook of Pacific Free Press and Gorilla Radio, Victoria; and Janine Bandcroft, former publisher of *Street Newz* and currently a programmer at CFUV, Victoria.

Jon Lee introduced the speakers and served as MC. Photos by Peter Brunette



Right, MC Jon Lee introduces the members of LIN's panel.

Randall Garrison (below) speaks of the dangers to free speech and a free press posed by Bill C51.



Chris Cook (left) discusses how radio and newspapers are coping with internet competition.



Janine Bandcroft (right) tells of the difficulty in keeping a small local paper alive.

Juan de Fuca New Democrats



Hotdogs, Hamburgers and Horgan

Sunday, August 9 at 12 noon
Sooke Flats Campground

Annual General Meeting
Saturday, September 26

10 AM (Registration 9:30 - 10)
Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church
(small hall)

798 Goldstream Ave, Langford
Speaker: John Horgan

Contact President Sharon Wilkinson sawilkinson@shaw.ca 250-478-5907

70 years after the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Canada’s gift to Japan

By Theresa Wolfwood

British pilot Leonard Cheshire, on board the plane with that bomb dropped on Nagasaki, described the bombing as, “Obscene in its greedy clawing at the earth, swelling as if with its regurgitation of all the life that it had consumed.”



The mushroom cloud resulting from the nuclear explosion over Nagasaki rose 18 km into the air.

Two hundred thousand people died immediately and within days of these bombings; 70 years later people continue to die from the radiation effects of these toxic bombs. Canada was complicit in this tragedy and continues to be complicit in nuclear weapons production.

From a deposit in northern Canada, uranium was mined and shipped to the USA; the local First Nations Dene people worked at the uranium mine. Many died and their descendants continue to die from

radiation-caused cancers to this date. Canada provided most of the uranium for the bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945

The Dene gave the white southerners caribou, moose and fish. “They were strangers living among us on our land so we took care of them.” In return, the locals helped extract and transport the deadly ore with no knowledge of its dangers. The southern miners left the people with toxic waste dumps in their community and radiation ticking in their bodies.

Now mines in Saskatchewan and Ontario are the 2nd largest producer and exporter of uranium in the world.



The Hiroshima war Memorial at Ground Zero of the explosion.

USA, Russia, China, Britain, Israel, France, India, Pakistan (and maybe others) have more than 19,000 nuclear bombs, many made with Canadian technology and materials. They are moving around the

globe everyday on land, in the seas and the air, including in BC. Canada continues to be complicit in nuclear development by selling uranium and technology for nuclear energy (which also contaminates the world with harmful radiation) producing bomb fuels as well as electricity and for bombs themselves.. Canada provides so called and highly radioactive “depleted uranium”, to 22 nations for weapons – bomb casings, guns, tanks and other steel-hardening military uses. Depleted uranium weapons were tested in Panama and used in Iraq, Afghanistan and former Yugoslavia.

The Canada Pension Plan, mandatory for all working Canadians, invests our contributions in the five largest arms makers in the world which make nuclear as well as non-nuclear weapons that are sold to and used in many countries against civilian populations.

Nuclear weapons and radioactivity continue to threaten the health of all life systems and undermine the security of human society. Wealth and resources wasted on war-making are needed to create a peaceful and sustainable life for all humanity. It is time to call for nuclear disarmament and a moratorium on uranium mining; to call for cuts in our military spending and an increase in social, health and education budgets. Our precious resources and energy should be directed to the creation of a peaceful, just and healthy world. Nuclear nations

and a handful of men can destroy all life on earth and that unspoken threat is behind wars waged by nuclear powers today in Iraq, Syria, Ukraine and Palestine.

In the words of the mayor of Hiroshima,


“The world without nuclear weapons and beyond war that our hibakusha {survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki} have sought for so long appears to be slipping deeper into a thick cover of dark clouds that they fear at any minute could become mushroom clouds spilling black rain.... Now is the time for us to focus once again on the truth that ‘Darkness can never be dispelled by darkness, only by light.’ The rule of power is darkness. The rule of law is light. In the darkness of retaliation, the proper path for human civilization is illumined by the spirit of reconciliation born of the hibakusha’s determination that <no one else should ever suffer as we did.” (In Victoria on August 6, from noon until 1 pm, Victoria Women in Black will gather is silent vigil on Government Street below the Tourist Office, across from the Empress Hotel. With banners and leaflets the group will call on Canadians and foreign visitors to work for complete nuclear disarmament. All supporters of this message are welcome to stand with Women in Black.


For information contact: 250 595-7519.

Theresa Wolfwood is a peace and social justice activist and writer for many publications. Her poetry book, *Love and Resistance*, was published in 2014 and is available at Ivy’s Bookshop.



Poster in Mexican café by unknown Arabic artist.



Tom Mulcair  NDP

Randall Garrison and Tom Mulcair’s NDP:

Our best chance at defeating Stephen Harper.

RE-ELECT

Randall Garrison

Paid for and authorized by the official agent of the candidate. cope: 225-cm

TO VOLUNTEER, CALL: 778-676-4033
RandallGarrison2015.ndp.ca

A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul.
-- George Bernard Shaw, Irish dramatist, 1856-1950

No sighs of relief

Beset by social, economic, financial and military disasters, crisis-weary people are tempted to seize upon bailouts, cease-fires, nuclear freezes and other “deals” with relief and enthusiasm, reminiscent of 1938 and “Peace in our Time” or the end of the Cold War. But, despite the Greek bailout and the Iran nuclear deal, this is no time for sighs of relief. Instead, it is time to see what still really needs doing and for thinking democrats to square their weary shoulders once more and counter the endless tyranny of power.

As the cradle of democracy, Greece captured the attention of people worldwide but the desperate situation is not just about “bailouts”. To paraphrase Virgil, it is not about “fearing the Greeks, even when they come bearing gifts”, but of the Greeks fearing the IMF and European Central Bank when they come bearing loans -- laced with the hemlock of austerity and privatization. The *Guardian Weekly* put it neatly -- “a political deficit at the heart of the European Union”.

The overwhelming “no” vote by the Greek people on July 5, rejecting the draconian dictates of the IMF and ECB was not the petulant gesture of a people determined to maintain an unjustified cozy and comfortable life – most Greeks do not have much coziness and comfort these days. Rather it was a cry from the heart of a people who have seen the fabric of their country destroyed by unelected foreign technocrats and corporate raiders, aided and abetted by corrupt, self-serving Greek political and financial elites. For most Greeks, their situation since the financial crash of 2008 is an example of capitalism gone berserk.

We hear from the corporate and political establishments how Greece’s problems are really all the fault of the “the Greeks” themselves. It is a characteristic of such crises that those who have played a major part in creating the chaos blame someone else. Yes, plenty of mistakes were made in Greece, over many years, but blaming “the Greeks” in the person of thousands, or millions of ordinary Greek fishermen, farmers and workers for the irresponsible loans made by German, French and international banks is farcical. Why should Greece be forced to sell off its national electricity grid and airports to foreign “investors”? These are national assets and it is for the Greeks to decide their ownership, not the IMF and ECB. Selling public utilities means a one-time cash payment but the family silver is gone forever.

What was done wrong in the past is done and irreversible. It is time to move on. Greece will never be able to repay the mind-numbing debt incurred as a result of the austerity imposed by the IMF/ECB which has destroyed the Greek economy, leaving half the young people out of work, destroyed the public health system and decimated the social and economic infrastructure without which no country can climb out of debt and rebuild itself. The so called bailout – with even worse conditions than the Greek people rejected on July 5 is not a bailout at all – it is forcing Greece to jump from the frying pan into the fire and borrow more money just to pay off some of the existing debt.

It is no good Angela Merkel saying Greek debt (much of it to German banks) cannot be forgiven; even the IMF favoured some relief. Germany owed much of its post-War economic miracle to a 50% debt forgiveness and the Marshall Plan. Europe has spent 70 years trying to get closer together and for northern Europeans to now drive the southerners out of the European Union would be an unforgiveable tragedy. Most current northern governments are right-wing, and like the ECB technocrats and the bankers, they don’t like Syriza and would be happy to see the Alexis Tsipras government fall. But they should be careful what they wish for; desperation and hopelessness are the stuff of revolutions and Europe needs no more of them.

Greece may be the cradle of democracy but like many countries, including our own, there is much talk of democracy and freedom by those running the show, but precious little in the way of social justice and democratic empowerment for the man or woman in the street. The situation in Greece, as in Spain, Portugal and many other countries, highlights the political deficit. In many countries the situation is completely lopsided with right-wing politicians and corporate elites wielding enormous power compared with the average citizen whose only power is one vote on a ballot paper every few years in election campaigns dominated by the influence of those same elites. Powerful and wealthy minorities are more powerful than ever and the majorities increasingly powerless. The Greek government and people need to make changes, but unless they are fair and equitable and the EU is realistic, the road ahead will be harsh -- and dangerous.

The Greek tragedy has overshadowed other festering wounds afflicting the world, but they are still there and getting more dangerous. There is a nuclear deal with Iran – but “Supreme Leader” Ayatollah Ali Khomeini (26 years in power) is no easier to deal with, nor are his Revolutionary Guards. Ukraine remains mired in corruption, debt, and ethnic division with no end in sight to the rumbling conflict. Then there is ISIL – a stalemate going nowhere except for increasing cruelty (e.g. drowning people in cages) which bombing campaigns do not stop. China and Russia forming a strategic partnership; escalating tensions in the South China Sea; refugees by the hundreds of thousands pouring into Europe – and so it goes on.

Often it is because we in the “West” (perhaps from the noblest of intentions?) want to change systems or rulers in other parts of the world to mirror ourselves. Maybe, better the devil you know! -- **DJO**

The Lower Island NEWS

The *Lower Island NEWS*, in its 31st year of publication, is an independent news-feature tabloid newspaper, published as often as financially possible, by the Lower Island News Society, Box 311, 2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC V8T 4E8.

Signed articles are the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Lower Island NEWS* or the Lower Island News Society. Articles submitted for publication are subject to editing at the discretion of the Editor.

Editorial Committee Chair: Sharon Hazelwood
Editor: Dale Young
Editorial Writer: David Olsen
Distribution: Richard Mills, Jon Lee and Diane Walsh
Advertising:

Contributors to this issue: Eric Anderson, Starla Anderson, John R. Bell, Jean Crowder, Randall Garrison, Jim Hackler, Ryan Heighton, Carole James, Dale Lovick, Alistair MacGregor, Joan McDermid, Robbie Mahood, Jim Manly, Helene Narayana, Arifa Nassim, David Olsen, Dale Perkins, Tim Pheotist, Murray Rankin, Ray Travers, Heather Tufts, Barry Weisleder, Terry Wolfwood, Elena Zeledon, and others.

Printed at Web ExPress, Coquitlam, BC
Canadian Publications Mail Agreement #40008124

Lower Island NEWS Privacy Statement

The Lower Island NEWS is owned by the Lower Island News Society, a non-profit society registered under the BC Societies Act. The Lower Island NEWS collects and uses your personal information for the purposes of mailing the paper to you, and may write to you from time to time to solicit donations. The Lower Island NEWS will not share this information with any other group.

As others see it

Are we so compromised we can no longer play a part in bringing in a just and fair society?

By Dale Perkins
“Charity is the instrument by which justice is denied” (Chris Hedges, *The Real News*)
All who consider themselves to be progressive are awakening to a discomfoting reality about one of the core values coming out of the civilized world. That is the private corporate world has orchestrated all governments to strip away civic, public services and deny programs which sustain the poorest of the poor, because charity is the one enterprise licensed to offer basic sustenance to the poor and the economically marginalized.

To add salt on these wounds, these same large private corporations will only legitimize certain respectable institutions, such as institutional churches and faith communities to offer charity. And in the process charity becomes a mask to legitimize predatory capitalism.
Thankfully people like Chris Hedges have the courage and intellect to expose this travesty and the illusion that it’s the modern way to run the “body politic” and service agencies operating openly in most countries and regions of the world. We are all told daily just to “trust the System”.
Hedges delves into a past manifestation of this phenomenon found in (of all places) the Nazi regime in Germany during the 1930s. Citing the work of Claudia Koontz in her book *The Nazi Conscience*, Hedges shows how Nazism attempted – successfully it appears – to convince Germans that they were being protected and defended by offering a moral philosophy of universal human rights based on the “positive” values of community and ethnic purity.
Even Hitler preferred to portray himself as a “practitioner of virtue”, his justification for persecuting and killing millions of Jews, homosexuals and any other deviants he could identify and isolate.

Hedges shows that as our system becomes crueller it extinguishes all values and potential for democratic engagement by the poor and marginalized. They are only reluctantly allowed to be a part of the equation, but they don’t exist as significant players in society. That leaves only charity as the one tolerated social responsibility allowed to exist.
And how easily and quickly the “helping agencies” fall into line. Coming from an institutional religious community, I see how readily and eagerly the Christian church has embraced charity as one of its most important functions.
And the central actors in our charity institutions become expert at milking the charity cow, i.e., they become very effective fund-raisers and can orchestrate gatherings and events that command rich benefits for their institutions. And small cells in every pastoral charge and parish provide a

cadre of volunteers who offer their services to these institutions, because they are doing good charitable work for the “poor” in our community.
What is missing in the process are prophetic justice initiatives that disturb the system and its tireless operatives whose primary function is to keep the wheels of the “System” working.
Were important players within these agencies allowed to operate “outside the box” they might locate other values and themes which aren’t being heard. For the Christian church community they might rediscover their real founder, Jesus of Nazareth, who was decidedly a revolutionary. He spoke out against the principalities and powers of his day – it got him killed in his mid 30s.
His birth parents fled into neighbouring Egypt soon after his birth, where as refugees they stayed until most of their oppressors died or faded away and they thought it safe to go back home. And there they dwelt in the back-water territory in relative quiet and peace -- all devout Jews living the best life they could eke out.
Of course, centuries of apologists have emaciated Jesus’ life and message and adapted it to fit comfortably inside the dominant culture in each and every society they inhabited. However, they definitely changed Jesus’ radical message of love of the enemy and the marginalized, into “Hallmark” sentimentality, individual piety, holiness and prosperity which has now become the bedrock of the institutional Christian church.
I imagine similar things happened with Buddha and Mohammed and all the other patriarchs who preached other brands of religion and spiritual practices in their time and place.
Now we are seeing the emergence of another religion – corporate capitalism and the so-called free market economy. And just as insidious, this religion has assumed total control over the social norms operating in our modern world. But one fact remains according to this religion – charity is good, and needs to be the norm for bringing everyone into the picture.
Most of us aren’t even aware of its influence and control. We’ve just allowed the Private, Corporate Managers to set the agenda and run the show. Can there be an awakening? And how likely will it mean including most of us in the transformation, or have we become so compromised that we no longer can play any useful role in bringing in a just and fair society – especially since we have so much charity to hand out?

Dale Perkins is a retired church minister and social activist in Victoria.

Political leadership, well managed forests, a strong forest economy needed

The February 2015 issue of *Lower Island News* correctly reported that “Raw Log Exports Skyrocket in BC”. BC in 2013 exported one log in 10 overall, one log in three on the Coast, and close to one log in one from the northern end of Vancouver Island to Alaska, many by First Nations Logging Corporations.

What this writer has missed is most of these logs would not be economic to log (with fewer jobs). BC exporters can get about double the value for these same logs because other countries can recover more net value from our logs than we can.

What the writer is advocating is a *further* ban on log exports -- red cedar and yellow cedar logs have been banned for export for decades.

Under current forest policy, logs can only be exported from BC public forest land, when the exporter has three refusals from BC mills. With the permanent closures of many sawmills and pulp mills since 1991, especially on the Coast, there are now fewer and fewer BC mills to buy logs.

A much better policy diagnosis is needed. Log exports are a symptom (not the cause) of a weak BC forest economy. A much better solution is required.

To strengthen the BC forest economy we must grow high quality wood, at a rate faster than it is logged. This has never been done in BC. As a result our timber supply is becoming more and more impoverished.

Without a high quality timber supply, BC has no basis for attracting mill investment.

Logs must be sold competitively in regional log markets, so we get the right log, in the right mill, at the right price. Instead BC has five regional timber monopolies who control 70 percent of our public timber supply, and produce mainly low value commodity products like dimension lumber (2X4’s, etc.) wood chips and market pulp. Today Interfor, Canfor and West Fraser operate 24 sawmills in BC, and 36 in the USA. Log prices and stumpage (government revenue) today are mainly set administratively.

Logs exports will become a non issue when BC imports (now negligible) more logs than we export, like Sweden.

A complete ban on log exports can not get us there. Only strong political leadership, well managed forests and a strong forest economy can.

Ray Travers R.P.F (Ret.)

Mouseland and the Surprise Party

Tommy Douglas was the very first leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada. He is known as the Father of Medicare. He also told very good stories, one of which called *Mouseland* was made into a short movie introduced by his grandson, actor Kiefer Sutherland. (See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqgOvzUeiAA>)

In the story, mice elect black or white cats or even cats with spots who, regardless of their colour, make rules good for the cats but very hard on mice.

The cats, we gather, represent the Liberal and the Conservative parties.

In 1944, Tommy asked why mice kept electing cats, much to their detriment.

What would he think of Mouseland in 2015?

The cats are still ruling over Mouseland, he would say, but there’s a new creature on the block, he would add. It is very strange: it is a cat but it’s green.

No now quite knows what to expect of that creature. Let’s call it the Surprise Party!!

Indeed, there is a new political party in Mouseland.

It has two members sitting in the House of Commons: its leader and its deputy leader. At times, they can be surprising..

When the House was to vote on sending Canadian soldiers to fight the Islamic State in Iraq, the leader of the Surprise Party voted against, but the deputy leader voted in favour.

Another issue over which the two Surprise Party MPs’ opinions differ was the value of the long gun registry. The leader wanted to maintain the registry, the other member voted to get rid of it. He was so adamant about that issue that he left the NDP which wanted to keep the registry.

To justify this strange behaviour, the leadership of the Surprise Party takes pride in letting the MPs vote according to their

conscience or in accordance with the wishes of their constituents. Those notions appear commendable but in reality, they don’t stand up to close scrutiny.

In the United States, where a lot of Surprise Party members hail from, the Republicans and the Democrats can also vote any which way but in general their votes reflect the opinions of those who donate the most to their campaigns.

Canadians who elect Surprise Party MPs might have a few more surprises coming their way if the House is asked to vote on issues such as child care, women’s rights, minimum wage, pensions to name just a few.

Not so long ago, another political party was courting the Canadian electorate with an eerily similar discourse. It was the Reform Party under Preston Manning.

Historian and BC Green Party leader from 1993 to 2000, Stuart Parker writes this about the founder of the Reform Party:

“Manning led a broad, incoherent populist coalition of the fringe, absorbing anti-state voters on both the left and right of the political spectrum ... He proposed to end the gratuitous “whipping” of caucus votes on non-spending measures...”.

The Reform Party may have sounded like mice at times but we know what happened to it: an older cat which was about to die was rescued by the cats that had masqueraded as mice. We have been governed by that big fat cat since 2006.

Mice of Canada, beware. The Surprise Party is trying to sound like you but it is really a cat.

We’ve never been so close to ruling over Mouseland. Let’ be proud to vote NDP!

Hélène Narayana
Salt Spring Island

Markets dominated by small numbers of large transnational corporations do not operate in a way that can be well explained by Marx or Smith

I see from the May *LIN* that Lester Brown is still advocating the so called market solution as the best way to reduce and eventually eliminate our dependence on fossil fuels and to bring an end to the environmental crisis. When someone uses the term market in such a studiously vague or ignorant way without specifying what type of market (s)he is talking about, the claim must be of an ideological rather than a scientific nature.

There are many types of market. Long ago Adam Smith argued for the superiority of an economy in which a great many competing capitalist enterprises confronted large impersonal markets in all sectors such that a society-wide market would regulate and reproduce economic life with the government’s role being reduced to that of a watchman or referee so as to ensure, among other things, that businesses did not collude to obstruct the operation of competitive markets.

Karl Marx later showed that such an economy could regulate material economic life quite efficiently but that it would also reproduce class inequality, be subject to periodic economic crises and create a host of environmental problems because it would necessarily pursue both material and abstract wealth unceasingly.

Virtually no one on the left or right seems to have noticed or have forgotten that capitalism, even in the less than pure forms in which it existed in history, had lost control of economic life by 1929 due to the increasing complexity of and growth in the scale of many industries that produced heavy and complex use-values and thus that it could not be revived after the Great Depression and World War II or indeed ever.

Although most people used the term capitalism loosely and thus unscientifically in the post-war era it was nevertheless

recognized by many and by J.M. Keynes in particular that what was vaguely referred to as a mixed economy dominated by oligopolistic corporations and big government had become responsible for regulating economic life, thus displacing the rapidly disappearing or atrophying competitive.

Markets dominated by small numbers of large and increasingly transnational oligopolistic corporations that were typically in collusion with one another, with compliant states and with international supervisory bodies answerable to large corporations and financial firms do not operate in a fashion that can be well explained by either Marx or Smith. Game theory is a better tool to explain how these firms operate.

What has only changed for the worse over the past seven decades is the ever increasing production and sale of material wealth and the pursuit of abstract wealth/profit by large corporations that massively manipulate docile consumers prior to purchase in a way that competitive capitalist firms were unable to do in Marx’s day.

If we have marketplaces that continue to be dominated by large transnational firms that cannot be constrained either by national governments or by competitive capitalist markets, then even the reduced dependence on fossil fuels will not save us.

We will still be gobbling up ever increasing quantities of energy and matter in the way that Georgescu-Roegen described and that material growth and increasing entropy will trump any efforts we make to reduce fossil fuel consumption on a planet that we have made “old” long before its time.

This is what Brown refuses to acknowledge due to his religious attachment to market fundamentalism.

John R. Bell
Victoria

Ron Duffy attacks Marx and defends Bakunin based on a selective reading and/or secondary sources

It was nice to see anarchism get some deserved attention in the *LIN* but it would have been far better if Ron Duffy had paid more attention to Kropotkin, Goldman, Chomsky or Graeber and ignored Bakunin, who typically posed publicly as an anti-authoritarian, a radical democrat and a libertarian communist while all the while he was plotting with 100 of his most loyal acolytes to exercise an anonymous control over the course of the ultraviolent revolution he envisaged, complete with a large scale bloodbath that would eliminate many members of the privileged classes.

All of this you can discover for yourself if you read all of Bakunin, including such gems as *State and Anarchy*. When Bakunin entered a reasonably democratic organization, he would loudly champion libertarian principles but immediately engage in a conspiracy to put himself at the helm the organization.

Moreover, he never met a conspiracy or half-baked plot that did not capture his imagination if he could play a leading role

in it.

I don’t know who is more irritating – Bakunin and his followers, who make Marx out to be a Leninist, or the Leninists who would remake him as a Marxist-Leninist.

Marx consistently supported universal suffrage, elements of both direct and representative democracy (but not of liberal democracy), a majoritarian revolution, the immediate *smashing* of that part of the state that was a parasitic excrescence oppressing all classes, and a fairly rapid *withering away* of that part of the state that had to act as an agency of proletarian class rule until the proletariat defeated those who opposed the transition to a classless society.

Unlike Bakunin, Marx supported a peaceful transition to socialism/communism wherever possible and eschewed the first use of force.

John R. Bell
Victoria

Silliest comment of the Silly Season?

”Yes we do. We need to get those people cellphones right away!”

Comment by *Globe and Mail* columnist Margaret Wente on July 14, in response to the statement by Pope Francis during his South American tour that read:

“Do we realize that something is wrong in a world where there are so many farm workers without land, so many families without a home, so many labourers without rights, so many persons whose dignity is not respected.”

Note: Wente is an exponent of unrestrained capitalism who also said, “Global capitalism is the biggest anti-poverty program the world has ever known.”

Friends of the Lower Island News

I am pleased to report to the Friends of *LIN* that our media forum, held May 30, although not as well attended as we had hoped for, was nevertheless a success. Attendees learned a great deal from our speakers and we broke even!

Below is the latest list of Friends of the *Lower Island News* who have given donations since the last issue in May:

Reds Hens	\$ 10
Patricia Mae Axis	\$100
Anonymous	\$25
Scott Denson	\$25

If you like this issue of the *LIN*, want it to continue to be published and can afford to give something, please consider becoming a supporting donor and send us a cheque, whatever amount you can afford. All donations, large and small, will be appreciated..

Donations may be sent to the Lower Island News Society at Box 311-2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC, V8T 4E8, and will be acknowledged in the paper. Please indicate if you prefer to be “anonymous”. Unfortunately we cannot take credit card donations, or give tax receipts. Thank you!

Dale Young, Editor, for the Editorial Board

We welcome your letters to the editor, as well as articles and reviews, photos, and anything else you think would be of interest to our progressive readers. Please mail them to the Editor, at Box 311-2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC, V8T 4E8, email them to dale_young@telus.net, or phone 250-384-7621.

The next issue of the *Lower Island News* will be a pre-federal election issue, scheduled to appear in early October. Deadline for submitting advertising and articles is tentatively set for Friday, September 18.

For further information and to submit articles and ads, email dale_young@telus.net.

On the Home Front

Federal election campaign already in -- unofficial -- full blast

By David Olsen

Although the federal election campaign may not have started “officially”, in practice it is running at full blast – the inevitable downside of the otherwise positive aspects of fixed election dates. The present situation allows the government to spend unlimited amounts of public money lauding the bogus achievements of the Conservative Party and Stephen Harper.

In addition, it is reported that 89 per cent of projects in the federal infrastructure New Building Canada Fund – 2013, have been directed to Conservative-held ridings, most of it in just the past few weeks and worth \$14 billion over 10 years. This will give rise to further publicly-funded advertising to show that if you want infrastructure, Stephen Harper is your man.

Whoever wins the election, this boondoggle has to stop before the 2019 election – but will any party actually have the fortitude to kill the goose that lays the electoral golden eggs?

Simultaneously, the government pulled off another pre-election publicity coup with the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement on July 14. Large pictures of a smiling Harper telephoning President Poroshenko and meeting Ukraine PM Arseniy Yatsenyuk appeared in the newspapers, the CBC did the obligatory on-on-one interview with Yatsenyuk who also toed the Harper line by stressing that Russia is a “threat” to Canada (but then, he may be a threat to lots of countries – including Russia itself!).

That’s not to denigrate Yatsenyuk – he has an unenviable job and one can feel sorry for him. Ask yourself – who would want to be PM of Ukraine right now? Transparency International ranks Ukraine as one of the most corrupt countries in the world – down at 142 on a scale of 1 (Denmark – least corrupt) to 175 (Somalia – most corrupt). He may have an impossible task on his hands, but his stated view that privatization and de-regulation are the answer to corruption in Ukraine may be misplaced.

Privatization was tried in the past and the assets ended up in the hands of the very oligarchs that Yatsenyuk now fears. However, his appeal for “Canadian investors and companies to jump into Ukraine” is a bit like asking them to jump into a quicksand. Yatsenyuk wants “to see the Canadian folks buying Ukrainian assets and bringing good corporate governance”. The problem with that is that until the judiciary, police and other arms of government are cleaned up and de-corrupted, incoming companies would have to pay bribes to be able to bring all these good things.

A start has been made by the post-Yanukovich government but there is a long way to go, and Canada should be putting more effort into de-corruption rather than, or in addition to, sending 200 soldiers to “train Ukrainians to fight the Russian backed rebels who still threaten eastern Ukraine”, as the *Globe and Mail* reported.

In fact, more fighting is about the last thing Ukraine and many of its long suffering people need right now (Vladimir Putin, take note also). Like it or not, other than a World War 2 type of total victory, which is too far-fetched even to contemplate, Ukraine’s internal problems are going to have to be solved by negotiation and treaty.

Meanwhile as reported by *The Nation* (oldest independent weekly magazine in

the US, founded by abolitionists in 1865) and the *Guardian*, disturbing new laws have been passed by the Ukrainian Parliament (without representation from the east) to legitimize pro-Nazi organizations (e.g. the notorious Azov battalion) and punish the singing of the Internationale by five years in jail!

But never mind, Petro Poroshenko is Stephen Harper’s new best friend and now we have a free trade agreement. What this trade will be is unclear since Ukraine has no money to buy anything from us and most of Ukraine’s manufacturing industry is in the shattered east of the country.

However Poroshenko, Ukraine’s seventh richest man, worth an estimated \$1.3 billion, according to *Forbes* is reported to own UkPromInvest, “a mysterious holding company that has no website but boasts interests in bus manufacturing, car distribution, shipyards, banking and electrical cables, among other things”. He is famous for owning confectionary firm Roshen, which has factories in Ukraine and Russia and produces chocolate wafers, bars and candies; so maybe we will have something to import after all.

The Harper position on the Iran nuclear deal signed on July 14 was no surprise, although it will have no international effect in any case. Like Ukraine, the Canadian position is based on domestic Conservative election policies.

Perhaps the best case for the deal is that, despite the hard-line of Iranian “Supreme Leader” Ayatollah Khomeini, Iran is now to some degree at least, inside the IAEA tent where useful dialogue can take place. As US President Obama, pointed out, the only alternative to a deal (however fragile) is to go to war. And which Western country is really ready to go into an all-out war to topple the regime in Tehran and end its nuclear ambitions once and for all?

Beyond the rarified atmosphere of the prime minister’s office, there are plenty of pressing issues here at home. A recent Angus Reid and Mindset Foundation survey shows significant support for a national Pharmacare program. The devil is that the Harper government is not interested and a majority of people don’t want to pay for it, preferring, instead to hike corporate tax rates back to the 18% level of 2010 – not supported by Conservatives in or out of government. BC has the biggest problems – 29% of people don’t take prescribed medications because they can’t afford them. But the problem needs to be fixed and it needs a determined approach by the NDP to put it front and centre to the electorate.

Also on the medical front, all progressively minded people must have been cheered by the final outcome of the recent election for president of Doctors of BC (previously known as the BCMA). In the first election, Dr. Brian Day, owner of the private Cambie Clinic in Vancouver, who for years has been trying to get the courts to overturn the public healthcare system in favour of privatization, won by just one vote – a hollow victory in an election which saw only 20% of the BC doctors bothering to cast a vote. His opponent, Dr. Alan Ruddiman asked for a recount which resulted in a dead-heat.

A new election with much more publicity followed – including a call for public interest by the Council of Canadians. The re-

sult was a clear win for Dr. Ruddiman – this time with more than 50% of doctors voting. Dr. Ruddiman is everything that Dr. Day is not. He believes in the universal public healthcare system and is pledged to work for the necessary changes to bring it up to date and do what it is supposed to do – bring timely, efficient and effective care where needed, to everyone in BC, without resorting to private opt-outs and cumbersome inefficient schemes.

Another medical horror story appeared in the *Times Columnist* a few weeks ago headlined “GP shortage a tragic state of affairs”. It sure is and the BC Liberals have bungled this situation now for over 14 years!

BC Health Minister Terry Lake recently admitted that the government is unlikely to deliver on the 2010 pledge to provide everyone access to a family doctor. In plain English “we have failed”! Lake said that “great progress” has been made however, but the 175,000 people in BC looking for a doctor but unable to find one (*Global News* February 2015) would no doubt have wished he would share details of this “great progress”.

This did not seem to matter to BC voters however, who in 2013 re-elected even more of Lake’s fellow Liberals than in 2009. The NDP needs to pile in on all this stuff and nail the government to its own cross!

The BC Legislature Select Committee on Health is currently reviewing “creation of a cost-effective system of primary and community care built around interdisciplinary teams”. Since 2002, when the Liberal government first talked about it, there have been “initiatives”, “rollouts”, “launches”, “announcements”, “creations”, “agreements” and “strategies” *ad infinitum*, but it still seems no closer and things had better get a move on or those 175,000 people will urgently need another service that the committee is looking at, namely “identifying best practices to improve end of life care”!

As we approach the October federal election, and even the next provincial election, now less than two years away, there are many other issues that bear scrutiny

and on which opposition politicians and citizens need to take action. Yes – action, not just talk or platitudes!

For example; corporate tax cuts which have signally failed to boost the economy despite the endless empty claims by the Conservatives. Since the cuts began in 2006 (when the rate was 22.1%.) until now (15%) the annual loss of revenue has reached \$12 billion per year – that’s the figure from the Parliamentary Budget Office.

How was that loss made up? By cuts to public services and increasing public debt.

Meanwhile, the promised boost to the economy having failed to materialize, the Bank of Canada has had to reduce its benchmark interest rate to 0.5%. Result – a flight from the Canadian dollar, a fall in its international value, so imports cost more, prices go up, people spend less and the economy contracts a bit more.

At the same time, as the economy falters, real estate firms say the demand for luxury homes in Vancouver is booming! It will boom even more as overseas buyers take advantage of our falling dollar.

- Finally, just think about:
 - Conservative senators call for imams to be registered (and priests, vicars, rabbis, monks, nuns, Salvation Army?)
 - Parading ex-MP Dean Del Blasio in leg irons on TV (no this was not in North Korea, but here in Canada!)
 - The UN Human Rights Committee highlighting “astonishing levels of fear and intimidation felt by Canadian activists and civil society groups.
 - Omar Khadr captured (kidnapped?) by the US as a 15 year old, held in Guantanamo for 10 years and Canadian jails for another 3years finally released on bail in Canada by a Canadian court, despite unyielding opposition from Harper and Co. A good day for Canadian justice despite Team Harper talking about a “hardened terrorist” (at 15?) and his “heinous war crimes”.

So let’s try and remember all this as the rapid barrage of election war cries threatens to drown out all voices of reason.

Specialist offers insight into lives of WorkSafe claimants with chronic pain: poverty, depression, suicide attempts

VANCOUVER -- A report released June 8 takes an in-depth look at a sample of WCB (or Worksafe BC) claimants with chronic pain and raises the alarm about serious flaws in how WCB deals with injured workers who develop chronic pain.

“I’ve been working in this area for 25 years, and I’m extremely concerned about what I’m seeing,” says Dr Cecil Hershler, the report’s lead author and a specialist who has worked with thousands of patients with chronic pain, many of whom have had workplace injuries. “Financial hardship, severe physical pain, and deep emotional suffering, including suicidal thoughts – these are some of the consequences for my patients who are dealing with the WCB system.”

After seeing a troubling pattern among patients dealing with WCB, Dr Hershler decided to take an in-depth look at the impacts on a sample of these patients. He and co-author Kia Salomons interviewed nine patients with chronic pain resulting from workplace injuries. The authors identified seven key issues facing chronic pain sufferers, including long periods of time with on-and-off payment of compensation or no compensation at all; lack of income and depletion of financial resources; disbelief on the part of employers and WCB; and undue pressure to engage in job search, even when their injuries should have ruled this out.

But what disturbed Dr Hershler most about his findings was the extent to which the interviewees had contemplated suicide – four out of the nine – and attempted it – two of the nine. These findings are reflec-

tive of WCB’s own statistics on suicide. An internal document available on the agency’s website shows a startling and steady increase in “threats of suicide,” from only a handful in the early 2000s to almost 200 in 2010.

In his recommendations for change, Dr Hershler offers concrete ideas for improving patient care and reducing physical and emotional suffering. These include ensuring economic stability during the claims process (including appeals, which can take many years to resolve), not sending patients with serious chronic pain back to work too soon, and ending inappropriate work searches.

One of Dr Hershler’s biggest concerns is that claimants must rely on doctors and rehab specialists employed or contracted by WCB for their treatment. “The priority should be helping the worker recover as much as they possibly can, and this requires collaboration with the patient’s own family doctor and pain specialists. The patient should be able to rely primarily on their own providers, whose familiarity and expertise are essential to their recovery, and those providers should play more of a role in WCB’s decision-making process about the patient’s claim and entitlement to benefits, including pensions.”

Work injuries, chronic pain and the harmful effects of WorkSafeBC/WCB compensation denial: A policy brief is published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives’ BC Office and is available at www.policyalternatives.ca/web-chronic-pain.

Victoria Labour Council
219-2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC V8T 4E8
Ph: 250-384-8331 FAX: 250-384-8381 Email: vlcbc@telus.net

The VLC, representing affiliated unions in the Greater Victoria area, holds its regular monthly meetings the third Wednesday of each month at 7 pm, at the BCGEU Auditorium, 2994 Douglas Street.

All delegates are invited to come out and meet the Executive:
Mike Eso, President; Stan Dzbik, Treasurer; Michael Maloney, Secretary

Riding and sustaining an Orange Wave in BC

By Alistair MacGregor

These are heady days to be a federal NDP candidate. Not only is the 2015 federal election shaping up to be a pivotal election for our country, but national and British Columbia polls have consistently placed the NDP in first place for the last two months. After almost a decade living under a Conservative government, we have reached a point where this election is very much turning into a referendum on Stephen Harper's leadership and the authoritarian style of rule he has employed as our prime minister.

It is easy to get caught up in the excitement brought on by the polls, but we must remember that these are a snapshot in time and that we have a long three months ahead of us before we get to the October

19 election.

The only certainty is that more and more Canadians are thirsting for change. I have been door-knocking steadily throughout the riding of Cowichan-Malahat-Langford since the beginning of April, and this has been a constant theme. Desire for change is one thing, but how it actually transforms into votes this October is another.

Adding fuel to the desire for change are a multitude of progressive organizations across the country, who are stepping up their campaigns against the Conservative government.

Some organizations are making strong cases for strategic voting to make sure the best-placed progressive party candidate receives enough votes to prevent a Conservative MP from being elected. How well these progressive organizations can

mobilize their supporters in the next three months could very well be a deciding factor in many local races because in the 2011 federal election, the Conservative "strong, stable majority" was established by an astonishingly small 5,184 votes in 12 of Canada's 308 ridings. This was out of a total of 14.59 million ballots cast.

Labour is also doing its part. The Canadian Labour Congress is becoming actively involved in the 2015 federal election with their Better Choice campaign (www.betterchoice.ca), which concentrates on four main issues: retirement security, health care, child care, and good jobs.

It is no surprise that these issues align with what the NDP is proposing as a part of its electoral platform. After all, the CLC was a founding member of the New Democratic Party in 1961, and its current president, Hassan Yousef, has made no secret of his wishes to see a federal NDP government elected.

A desire for change may present a great opportunity for the election of more NDP MPs. Here in British Columbia, the NDP captured 12 seats in the 2011 federal election, but its candidates captured second place in a further 19. Since the last election, BC has seen its seat total climb from 36 to 42, and I think it will be a very interesting province to watch on election night as New Democrat candidates make a compelling case that they have the support necessary to defeat Conservatives.

Cowichan-Malahat-Langford is a new riding, made up of parts of Nanaimo-Cowichan and Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca. Nanaimo-Cowichan in 2011 saw the following election results: NDP 48.9%, Conservative 38.3%, Green 7.8%, and Liberal 4.7%. The Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca riding voted NDP 40.8%, Conservative 40.2%, Liberal 10%, and Green 8.3%. The redistributed 2011 results show a very narrow NDP hold by just a few hundred votes over the Conservatives with the Liberals and Greens trail-

ing far behind.

As the NDP candidate for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, I know it's not enough to just show people previous poll results and expect them to flock to the NDP banner. My job is to make a connection with voters by showing them a positive and progressive federal vision for Canada. The desire for change is present because Stephen Harper's Conservative government has abandoned many of the values that Canadians hold dear.

I believe how people vote in the federal election will ultimately depend upon which candidate and party can best express empathy for the troubles voters are experiencing.

Empathy is at the heart of progressive politics. Indeed, everything at the core of the social democracy of the NDP is linked to empathy – it is the political expression through which we care for one another, protect one another, create equal prosperity, help one another lead fulfilling lives, and care for the health of our planet. It goes beyond feeling sorry for someone else's troubles and right to the heart of actually perceiving and understanding the world through another's eyes.

We are living in a time where more and more families are working harder and harder just to stay where they are and can't seem to get ahead. After decades of fighting for social justice, the NDP is poised to make history and bring meaningful change to Ottawa and how we govern ourselves. There are a lot of people depending on us to bring this change forward. With less than 100 days to go until one of the most important elections in Canada's history, we must stay focused and true on the task ahead.

Alistair MacGregor is the federal NDP candidate for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford. You can learn more about his campaign by visiting his website, www.AlistairMacGregor.ndp.ca.

\$15 minimum wage will help families, reduce inequality; no evidence that sky will fall

VANCOUVER -- In the wake of the BC government's shockingly low 20-cent increase to the minimum wage, a new report suggests that such small changes fail to adequately reduce poverty and inequality, and are unnecessarily timid.

David Green, a professor and former chair of the Vancouver School of Economics at UBC and an International Fellow at the Institute for Fiscal Studies in London, conducted a thorough review of academic research on the economic impacts of minimum wages, and concluded that bold increases to the minimum wage make good economic sense.

"My goal was to assess what would actually happen if we went ahead and raised the wage to \$15," says Green. "In a nutshell, workers and their families would benefit a great deal, and any claims that we'd see massive job losses in low-wage sectors of the economy are just not credible."

Among the paper's key findings:

- The large job loss impacts predicted by some opponents of minimum wages misrepresent the existing economic research. In fact, estimates showing job loss effects of minimum wage increases apply only to teenagers. Estimated effects for young adult and adult workers are effectively zero.
- For example, in 2011, when the minimum wage increased from \$8 to \$10.25 over a year, the Fraser Institute claimed the increase would result in a staggering loss of over 52,000 jobs. In reality, employment for 15-24-year olds declined by 1.6 percent, one tenth of the Fraser Institute's projec-

tions. Their projections were based on old estimates and erroneously applied estimates for teenagers to young adults.

- An increase to \$15 would likely result in a modest decline in the employment rate. However, the likely impact is less than a 1 percent reduction in the overall provincial employment rate. Overall, those making less than \$15 would still benefit from a substantial increase in their total wages.
- Focusing on teenage workers plays up an inaccurate stereotype about who earns very low wages in BC and leads to exaggerated claims about job losses. Only 26 percent of those currently making between \$10.25 and \$12 are teenagers, and only 5 percent of those making between \$12 and \$15 are teenagers.
- The evidence for Canada suggests that higher minimum wages lead to lower turnover rates, meaning workers are more likely to have higher-paying and more stable jobs. This may be because a higher minimum wage reduces the incentive for firms to operate on a low-wage, high-turnover model.
- At the current minimum wage, a full-time worker remains below the poverty line. The minimum wage can be an important tool for reducing poverty and income inequality – so long as it is high enough to lift workers out of poverty.

The Case for Increasing the Minimum Wage: What does the academic literature tell us? is published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' BC Office. Download the report at www.tinyurl.com/increasemw.

Conservatives reject upholding fundamental rights of indigenous peoples

OTTAWA - On May 6 Conservatives voted down Bill C-641, An Act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which would have enshrined the Declaration's principles into Canadian law. The bill's sponsor, NDP Deputy Critic for Intergovernmental Aboriginal Affairs Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou), made the following statement:

"This bill received important support from the Assembly of First Nations, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as well as many municipalities and other governing organizations. The support received from all had one thing in common: to ensure Canadian laws are in accordance with the UN's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Tonight, Conservatives ignored Canadians, and voted down a piece of legislation that would uphold the fundamental rights of Indigenous peoples.

"The government of Canada endorsed

the UN's Declaration in 2010 and Bill C-641 would have been a step towards finally enshrining the principles set out in the UN's Declaration in the laws of our country.

"Tonight's vote was an opportunity for the federal government to engage in genuine partnership with Indigenous peoples.

"The result of tonight's vote is disappointing. But we take heart in the unity that has grown from this struggle to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The question before Parliament tonight was not a matter of left against right, but right against wrong.

"The NDP will continue to stand with Indigenous peoples in the implementation into Canadian law of the principles set out in the Declaration, and will hold Conservatives accountable for their failure to uphold their fundamental rights"

In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

--Martin Luther King, Jr



NDP Leader Tom Mulcair (l) congratulates Alistair MacGregor on his nomination as New Democratic Party candidate in the new electoral district of Cowichan-Malahat-Langford.

Join the campaign to elect

Alistair MacGregor

the MP for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford

Contact Alistair MacGregor:

E-mail: alistair.macgregor@ndp.ca

Website: alistairmacgregor.ndp.ca

Twitter: [@amacgregor4cml](https://twitter.com/amacgregor4cml)

Facebook: Alistair Macgregor for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford

Authorized by Ellen Oxman, Financial Agent for Alistair MacGregor

NDP bill a chance for real action on climate change

By Murray Rankin

Five years ago, the NDP led every opposition party in the House of Commons to pass a landmark bill without precedent in Canadian history—a bill to fight climate change by setting binding greenhouse gas reduction targets.

The NDP bill was then—and, incredibly, remains to this day—the only piece of federal legislation to ever mandate nationwide reductions in greenhouse gas pollution.

Passing it in 2010, Parliament aimed to establish Canada as an international leader in the fight against climate change. So, what happened?

“Tory senators kill climate bill passed by the House,” the *Globe and Mail* roared on November 17, 2010 after Stephen Harper’s unelected senators used a snap vote to block the NDP climate bill. At a press conference the next morning the late Jack Layton, who had fought for the bill since introducing it four years earlier, slammed the Conservatives’ action as “one of the most undemocratic acts that we have ever seen in the Parliament of Canada.”

It would not be the last. For nine years now, Stephen Harper’s Conservative majority has blocked crucial action to protect our climate. Now we can change that.

Weeks after the federal election, the world will gather in Paris to hammer out a new climate treaty. Among much else, October’s election will decide which leader sits at that table as Canada’s Prime Minister.

Under Tom Mulcair, the NDP has reintroduced the climate bill in Parliament and is committed to using it as Canada’s blueprint for the upcoming climate talks in Paris.

Called “an essential piece of legislation” by the Sierra Club Canada, the *Climate Change Accountability Act* is built on scientific assessments of the emissions reductions required to hold global temperature increases to 2 degrees Celsius and avert runaway climate change. Under the bill, Canada will set a course for reducing emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Last month, Environmental Defence released a report comparing each federal party’s position on climate change. The results were clear. Not only is the NDP one of the only parties with a concrete plan to tackle carbon pollution, it’s also the strongest—offering the deepest greenhouse gas reductions by 2025 of any party’s plan.

Are such reductions possible? The answer is a resounding yes, confirmed again in a recent report by more than 60 Canadian academics. Laying out a plan to shift all Canada’s electricity to renewable sources by 2035 and meet our 2050 target, the report supports key policies the NDP has proposed to move Canada forward. Ideas like carbon pricing and “polluter pay” laws; restoring and enforcing environmental protections; switching subsidies from fossil fuels to renewables; and using cap-and-trade to lower emissions and raise revenue.

Our approach must also be guided by our values. Environmental justice goes

hand in hand with economic and social justice. Energy-efficient buildings and vehicles are important in lowering emissions and promoting them can reduce our footprint and improve our quality of life. New investment in infrastructure and public transit can offer urban residents quicker commutes and cleaner air. Tax credits for energy-efficient retrofits can create thousands of skilled trades jobs and increase efficiency, lowering Canada’s emissions and home energy bills—crucial for low-income families. At the same time, federal loan guarantees can help every community, including First Nations, share in Canada’s blossoming clean energy sector.

Stephen Harper’s choice between economic wealth and environmental health—like his choice between protection from violence and protection of civil liberties—is beguiling but false. In this century, economic prosperity is inextricably tethered to the health of natural systems.

Despite Harper’s heel-dragging, there are hopeful signs. From 2009 to 2013, employment in clean energy grew by 37 percent and Canada built enough new renewable electricity capacity to power 2.7 million homes. Clean energy now employs more people than the oil sands. Imagine what’s possible with a new and engaged federal government.

While Canada overall has captured just one percent of the global market, Victoria is ideally positioned to seize the opportunity of clean energy. With deep-rooted research centres like UVic’s Institute for Integrated Energy Systems, a vibrant tech sector and an educated, climate-conscious workforce, our community will help lead Canada’s transition from fossil fuel dependence to sustainability.

Around the globe, the renewable energy revolution will roll on, whether we join in it or not. In 2010, for the first time, global net investment in new renewable energy capacity topped investment in fossil fuels—a trend that has continued. After much finger-pointing in Copenhagen in 2009, the world’s two biggest emitters reached an agreement that will see China’s emissions stabilized and America’s reduced by 30 percent by 2030. China now leads the world in renewable energy investment.

As the world turns the corner on clean energy, Canada risks being left behind. Instead, let’s make 2015 a turning point. It’s time for Canada to become a leader in the transition to an advanced, clean energy economy.

Murray Rankin is Member of Parliament for Victoria.



MP for Victoria Murray Rankin meets new Canadians at a special citizenship ceremony at Government House on Canada Day.



MP Murray Rankin leads fellow New Democrats in the Victoria Pride Parade.



Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca MP Randall Garrison (centre) speaks at the Victoria Gay Parade. He was joined by Alistair MacGregor, NDP candidate in the new riding of Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, on the left, and by Victoria MP Murray Rankin.

Alberta’s NDP victory sends message of hope and optimism

OTTAWA – The historic election results in Alberta May 5 sends a message of hope and optimism across Canada, said Murray Rankin, chair of the BC caucus for Canada’s New Democrats.

“On behalf of BC’s New Democrat MPs,

I extend our wholehearted congratulations to our neighbours in Alberta,” he said.

“A seismic shift occurred in the Alberta landscape, and it was felt across the country. Albertans signalled their clear desire for change when they chose Rachel Not-

ley as premier, elected a record number of women, and delivered a powerful mandate to a majority New Democrat government. It shows that real change can happen when progressives unite, and when we work hard and stand by our principles.”

Canadians are sick of Conservative and Liberal Senate corruption

New Democrats agree with the AG – it’s time for ‘transformative change’ in Senate accountability

OTTAWA – Canadians are sick of seeing public money wasted on unaccountable Conservative and Liberal Senators, as the Auditor General outlined in his explosive report on Senate misspending released June 9.

“This report outlines a culture of Liberal and Conservative entitlement and cronyism that has infected Ottawa for far too long,” said NDP Ethics critic Charlie Angus (Timmins – James Bay). “Conservatives were elected on a promise to reform the Senate and fix Ottawa – they failed miserably at both.

Conservatives in the Prime Minister’s Office have tried for months to cover up the spending scandals involving Mike Duffy,

Pamela Wallin, and Patrick Brazeau – and blamed the whole scandal on a few bad apples. The June 9 report from the Auditor General shows that the rot in the Senate ran very deep.

“Canadians are fed up with high-spending, unelected and unaccountable Senators making laws for them,” said NDP Ethics deputy critic Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont – La Petite Patrie). “The NDP has proposed common-sense solutions to start cleaning up the Senate – but sadly the Conservatives and Liberals block any change.”

This October, finally, citizens will be able to vote for the change they want – and this time get it.

Murray Rankin

murrayrankin.ca

Here to serve you

// Pensions (OAS, GIS, CPP)

// Taxes

// Employment Insurance

// Citizenship & Immigration

// Veterans Affairs

Community office:
1057 Fort Street
Victoria, British Columbia
250-363-3600

Garrison explains reasons why he wants to be part of a new government for Canada

By Randall Garrison

It is time for change in Ottawa and time to elect Canada's first NDP government. I am seeking your support and your volunteer involvement to help me get re-elected in the new riding of Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke. On Vancouver Island it is New Democrats who beat Conservatives and, winning riding by riding up and down the Island, is the way we will drive the Conservatives out of office.

Under Stephen Harper, incomes have been stagnant and household debt continues to climb. Two out of three working Canadians don't have a pension and won't be able to save enough for their retirement on their own.

The Harper government has slashed corporate taxes and then used the shortage of revenues to justify relentless cuts to public services. Veterans, Employment Insurance recipients, pensioners, Citizenship and Immigration applicants are just some of the Canadians hit by these reductions in services. This has led to a situation where Canadians are frustrated that they cannot even "talk to a human" about federal programs and services.

Harper has attacked the ability of our professional public service to do their jobs efficiently, even going so far as not allowing government scientists to speak to the media and eliminating the long form census which collected the information necessary to allow good, effective public policy decisions.

sions.

I am extremely proud to be part of the Thomas Mulcair team. We have an experienced leader, an experienced team of candidates and a concrete plan to help families get ahead. You can trust the New Democrats led by Tom Mulcair to deliver on our campaign promises and restore a federal government we can all be proud of.

Canadians deserve better than the tired old Stephen Harper government which is negative, divisive and ethically challenged, not to mention being out of touch with the needs of Canadian families.

Tom Mulcair and the NDP are focused on helping to build strong families in every community by creating a national, affordable \$15/day childcare program. A national childcare plan will not only make life more affordable by drastically reducing the cost per family for daycare, it will also allow more women to re-join the work force by adding new child care spaces in every community.

We know this can work as Quebec and Manitoba have already seen clear economic benefits from their existing programs. Now it is time to make quality, affordable childcare available to all families who need it right across the country.

A New Democratic federal government will reverse the Conservative decision to phase in an increase in the retirement age to 67. Forcing Canadians to work two years longer is no solution to the problem of inadequate retirement incomes and keeping older workers in the work force denies opportunities to younger Canadians. Instead New Democrats are committed to expanding the Canada Pension Plan through a gradual increase in contributions that will eventually allow a doubling of CPP benefits.

New Democrats know that a healthy economy and environmental sustainability must go hand in hand. A New Democratic government will finally tackle climate change in a meaningful way and rebuild Canada's reputation as a climate change leader abroad. We will rebuild the federal government's environmental protection capacity and recreate rigorous environmental assessment processes that put sustainability first.

As the NDP Public Safety spokesperson, I was proud to lead the opposition to Bill C-51 (the so-called Anti-Terror Legislation) in the House of Commons. New Democrats reject the Conservative Bill C-51 which threatens civil liberties in return for supposed gains in national security and we were surprised to see the Liberals support the bill every step of the way.

Instead we have argued our government has a duty to protect both rights and security. The Conservatives have never shown there were gaps in our legislation that actually threatened our security and instead they have continued cuts to the budgets of the frontline agencies who work every day to protect us.

In contrast New Democrats are committed to the repeal of C-51 and getting

down to the hard work of enforcement and working with local communities to combat radicalization, tasks that will actually help to keep us safe.

It has been a privilege to serve as the MP for Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca and to serve as our party Public Safety and National Security spokesperson as well as our spokesperson for LGBTQ issues.

I want to thank the hundreds of New Democrats who helped send me to Ottawa four years ago. I am honoured to have been nominated as the NDP candidate for re-election in the redrawn riding of Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke.

Over the next 90 days we have a unique opportunity to convince Canadians that they can elect a government more in line with Canadian values at home and abroad. I want to be part of a new government for Canada, the first social democratic government in Ottawa, but I can't do it without your ongoing support and assistance. Start by reminding your friends and neighbours that here on Vancouver Island it is New Democrats that beat Conservatives.

Please contact my campaign office if you want to assist us in throwing the Harper government out of office and replacing them with the strong team of New Democrats led by Tom Mulcair.

Contact my campaign at
Phone: 778-676-4033
Website: RandallGarrison2015.ndp.ca

MP shares her thoughts after 11 years as MP

By Jean Crowder

After four terms and 11 years as MP for Nanaimo-Cowichan and almost 30 years of public service, it is time for me to call it a day. I won't be seeking re-election in the upcoming federal election in October.

I wanted to take this opportunity to share two important speeches that I gave in the House of Commons before it rose for the summer.

The first was the final debate on my bill on derelict vessels, Bill C-638. Here is an edited version:

"Mr. Speaker, I have to admit to feeling some frustration after listening to the Conservatives outline a program that is clearly not working. If it were working, I would not have to stand here in this House and propose a piece of legislation to deal with the problem.

"Throughout Canada there are hundreds of derelict vessels, both on coastal waterways and on inland waterways, and this is a problem for many members in this House from coast to coast to coast. I am baffled as to why the Conservatives will not support this first step, and I acknowledge it is a first step. In my brief period of time I want to tackle a couple of concerns that they raise.

"There seem to be four main areas where the Conservatives say they cannot support the bill. The first one, they say, is that this would force the Coast Guard to deal with every derelict vessel, which would adversely affect their operational capacity.

"If they had read the bill, they would understand that I included a provision that would allow the minister to set out in regulations the circumstances where the receiver of wreck was not obligated to take measures to deal with a derelict vessel.

"Clearly, the intention of the bill is not to have the receiver of wreck, the Coast Guard, deal with absolutely every derelict vessel, but we already know the problems that provincial governments and municipalities are having and that we do need some clear definitions about when a derelict vessel needs to be apprehended.

"Second, the Conservatives say that the Coast Guard is not a stand-alone department. It is part of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, so it cannot be made a permanent receiver of wreck.

"Actually, under the act and the regulations as they currently stand, the minister can designate any entity or individual as a

receiver of wreck. The status as a stand-alone entity does not matter because the power to designate still resides with the minister. The bill does not change the ability to have the minister designate a receiver of wreck.

"Third, the Conservatives are claiming that the cost of dealing with derelict vessels will now be borne by the government and ultimately by the taxpayer. Again, the member for Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca pointed out the \$40,000 that was spent in cleaning up a vessel, and then an additional \$100,000 had to be spent in dealing with the derelict vessel when it had been torched and otherwise dismembered.

"Nothing in the bill removes the obligation on the owner of a vessel to pay for its disposal. That is why the receiver of wreck must take all reasonable steps to contact owners before taking action, because those owners are responsible for paying the cost.

"If we wait for all derelict vessels to become navigational or environmental hazards, the cost of dealing with them goes up. Again, we have seen that in cases. The longer a vessel remains derelict, the more costly it becomes to remove it.

"By giving a receiver of wreck the ability to contact the owner upon observing a wreck, this legislation may help prevent vessels deteriorating to such a point that the removal or disposal becomes a costly burden.

"Finally, the government is proposing a public relations exercise that will tell owners about their responsibilities. I have to say, many owners already recognize that there is a life cycle issue with vessels, but part of the problem is, there is nowhere to recycle these older vessels.

I am hoping that some members of the government will recognize that these derelict vessels are serious problems in their own riding and that they will actually have the courage to stand up and support Bill C-638 so that we could take the very important first step in dealing with a problem that the government has ignored for the 11 years that I have been elected."

The second is my final speech in the House of Commons, on June 16, 2015 focused on the effect of drought and climate change on our rivers. Here it is in its entirety:

"Mr. Speaker, I am introducing this private member's bill today to add the Koksilah and Nanaimo rivers to the *Navigation*

Protection Act, because rivers on Vancouver Island are in trouble. Like most rivers on the west coast of North America, our rivers are suffering from drought conditions. A smaller than normal snowpack this winter meant very little spring freshets that feed these rivers.

"The Koksilah River was once known for its run of steelhead, but overfishing in the 1980s nearly extirpated them from the river. Now impacts from logging, agriculture, and low summer flows continue to endanger its recovery.

"Along with the Cowichan River, the Koksilah drains into the Cowichan estuary, an important intertidal area that hosts migratory waterfowl, abundant eel grass beds, and the occasional otter. If summer flows are too low, the spawning salmon must be captured in Cowichan Bay and transported upriver to their spawning beds.

"The Nanaimo River flows 78 km from its headwater on Mount Hooper to the Strait of Georgia. While it is celebrated as a great recreational river, it also provides drinking water to 86,000 residents. However, the surface water is only part of the story.

"The Cassidy aquifers are near the terminal end of the river. While the river recharges the aquifers during the high spring flows, the

opposite happens in the late fall when the cool groundwater from the aquifers helps recharge the river, providing ideal conditions for salmon runs.

"Sadly, there is no federal protection for either of these rivers, even though they both provide fish habitat for the west coast's iconic salmon. That is why I propose that these two rivers should be added to the list of those protected by federal legislation under the *Navigation Protection Act*.

"I want to thank my seconder, the member for New Westminster-Coquitlam. I also want to thank the member for Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca for his very strong support of the bill."

Jean Crowder is completing her last term as MP for Nanaimo-Cowichan.

Jean Crowder
MP

Nanaimo – Cowichan

1-866-609-9998
jean.crowder@parl.gc.ca
www.jeancrowder.ca





Randall Garrison, MP
ESQUIMALT-JUAN DE FUCA

We're here to help constituents with Federal government programs and services.

ADDRESS: A2-100 Aldersmith Place
Victoria V9A 7M8

HOURS: 10am-4pm, Monday-Thursday
or by appointment

PHONE: 250-405-6550

EMAIL: Randall.Garrison@parl.gc.ca

FAX: 250-405-6554

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

www.randallgarrison.ndp.ca

MLA Report:

Standing up for public health care

By Carole James

Government cannot do everything, but at the very least it can start with the basics. And there is nothing more basic to our well-being than health care. But unfortunately, government is letting British Columbians down when it comes to health services.

Canada has a proud history of public health care that stretches back more than 50 years. But our public health care system in BC is being eroded by a government that isn't taking care of current needs, or planning well for future needs, leaving citizens without the health care when and where they need it.

In the 2013 election campaign, the BC Liberals promised that everyone would be able to access a family doctor by 2015. The "GP for Me" program, they called it. Well, it's 2015, and guess what? They have not delivered on that promise – and the situation has actually gotten worse. A backlog of 176,000 British Columbians looking for a family physician in 2010 has grown to more than 200,000.

As a result, our walk-in clinics are bursting at the seams and many British Columbians are receiving hallway medicine instead of quality care. Many of my constituents, like Diana, are having to wait two and three hours at overburdened walk-in clinics just to see a doctor.

Diana is very concerned about how many people are in her situation, unable to find a family physician, and stuck receiving substandard health care. I share Diana's concerns – and those of other constituents who have contacted me about this issue. I, too, have gone through this in the past year, with my family doctor retiring.

The government must do more to train doctors, encourage them to set up family practices, support other health practitioners, and alleviate this enormous burden on BC health care system. We need action now!

Wait times for surgeries are also a significant problem here on the South Island, and throughout the province. Patients in Victoria are waiting 38 to 58 weeks for hip replacements and 22 to 37 weeks for knee surgeries, for example.

In April, 1,265 people were waiting for a colonoscopy at the city's two hospitals.

We know the challenges are great, but we need to find an approach that works to better treat citizens who are in pain and suffering from such long waits.

A new report by the Seniors Advocate, released last month, details failure upon failure by the government to care for and support our province's most vulnerable seniors. The Official Opposition and advocates have been speaking up about problems of abuse and neglect of seniors for the last 14 years and three years ago, the ombudsperson laid out more than 150 recommendations to fix the problems this government has created. Those recommendations have been largely ignored.

I hear frequently from families who have elderly loved ones that cannot find a long-term care placement and are stuck in a hospital bed. That's not cost effective and certainly doesn't provide good quality care.

Then, as the Seniors Advocate has noted, some seniors are being admitted to residential care when they could still be living independently with adequate home supports. The system must provide better support for our seniors who can still live in their own homes and just need a little help to stay independent, mobile and healthy.

Addressing these issues isn't always about the money. It's often about using the resources we have more wisely, and making better use of professionals like nurse practitioners and midwives.

It's also about more efficient use of our facilities, like community health centres, to reduce costs and provide better quality care.

As always, I appreciate hearing your views on this topic and any others of interest to you and your family.

Please contact me at 1084 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K4; phone me at: 250-952-4211, or email me at Carole.James.mla@leg.bc.ca

For more information visit www.carole-jamesmla.ca.

"I always cheer up immensely if an attack is particularly wounding because I think, well, if they attack one personally, it means they have not a single political argument left."

--Margaret Thatcher



MLA Carole James speaks at the Canada Day Citizenship Ceremony held at Government House, watched by (l-r) Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps, Victoria MP Murray Rankin and Lt. Governor Judith xxx



MLAs Gary Holman (Saanich North and the Islands), Carole James (Victoria-Beacon Hill) and Maurie Karagianis (Esquimalt-Royal Roads) join BC Dogs outside the legislature after the Opposition introduced a bill to help prevent animals suffering in vehicles without adequate ventilation.



MPA Carole James (centre) joins a group taking part in the Ride for Lyme, an event to raise awareness about Lyme disease.



MLAs (l-r) Maurine Karagianis, Rob Fleming and Carole James address the crowd at the Stroller Brigade in support of affordable, accessible, quality childcare.

Carole James, MLA VICTORIA-BEACON HILL



Honoured to serve you in our community

1084 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K4
250-952-4211 / Carole.James.MLA@leg.bc.ca
www.CaroleJamesMLA.ca



MLA Rob Fleming

Victoria-Swan Lake

Proud to be your MLA

1020 Hillside Ave.
250-356-5013
rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca
robflamingmla.ca



Strategic voting—an idea whose time has come?

By Dale Lovick

I don't know how many people looked at the recent EKOS poll and the comments by Frank Graves. Worth a look.

In the wake of the recent Alberta election EKOS conducted a major poll of more than 2,200 people. The results show a surprising improvement in the fortunes of Tom Mulcair and the NDP and a corresponding decline in the popularity of the Conservatives *and* the Liberals.

Graves describes “a political climate where there is a growing ‘anyone but Harper’ sentiment, and a growing openness to strategic voting and coalitions”. It is the second of these observations I wish to consider here.

Strategic voting, quoting *Wikipedia*, happens “when a voter supports a candidate other than his or her sincere preference in order to prevent an undesirable outcome”.

Though it's arguable whether a majority of voters do indeed have a “sincere preference” when they mark their ballots, voters might like the idea of voting against somebody or something. As well, many voters are persuaded by the appeal to make their vote count, rather than vote for a candidate or a party with perhaps little chance of winning.

It is certainly true that many Canadians are dissatisfied with our current voting system, often called a first-past-the-post system. Under that system we've had governments elected for the past decades while having the support or confidence of fewer than 40% of voters.

What's more, there's lots of evidence to demonstrate the PM and his colleagues have given up the quest to find a majority. Instead, so the argument goes, as long as there is a divided opposition, the party in power knows it can retain power and control in the House of Commons simply by

maintaining its “base”, usually considered to be just under 40%. There is therefore no incentive for government to be conciliatory or to compromise its agenda or approach. And of course there is no appetite for a Proportional Representation (PR) model.

When it comes to voting in the next federal election, then, what are the choices for those who do not wish to see Stephen Harper and the Conservatives re-elected, but who have no loyalty or strong feeling, negative or positive, for any other party? The answer is perhaps the simple one: vote strategically.

In practical terms, this means voting for the candidate or party which you conclude is the most likely to win the seat. Fortunately there's a simple rule to follow in figuring out how to vote: choose the party in your riding which came second in the last election.

Strategic voting is not for everyone, however. There are some of us, strange as

it may seem to others, who always vote for the same party, and will do so even if there's is no chance whatsoever—or hardly any--that our candidate might get elected. Passionate New Democrats, ardent Liberals, and dedicated Greens are not likely to park their preference for this election, no matter how important or crucial they think replacing a Conservative government led by Stephen Harper might be.

Normally voting is a pretty simple matter: you choose the person or party listed on the ballot which best represents your vision of what a particular government should and should not be doing. Straightforward, eh?

Where voting becomes complicated and complex is when people are not happy with the way our country is being governed and its governors, but who are habitually not “political” and therefore have no firm ties to any party. Question: What should they do? Answer: vote strategically.

Dale Lovick is a retired politician and college-instructor. He served in the BC Legislature for three terms, and was Speaker of the House and Minister of Labour and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. On retirement he did some part-time teaching at Vancouver Island University in the Political Science Department.

BC Hydro: sales record and financial fitness do not support building Site C Dam

By Eric Andersen

The just released BC Hydro Annual Report for the year ending March 31, 2015 shows British Columbia sales (domestic only) were 3.4 percent less than in 2014. The power demand volume over the same period, as measured in gigawatt hours (GWhrs), was 51,213, or about the same as it was a decade ago.

For many years now, the government of BC and BC Hydro have both claimed a new dam on the Peace River was essential in order to meet a growing demand for electricity by BC businesses and citizens. In 2006, for example, Hydro forecast a domestic demand of 57,201 GWhrs by 2012 and 63,865 GWhrs by 2018 – a combined forecasting error of about 10,000 GWhrs for the 2015/16 years.

It is alleged that Site C will generate about 4,000 GWhrs per year and cost close to \$9 billion to build. Therefore, the 10,000 GWhrs error is the same as making a borrowing/spending error of about \$20 billion. As recently as 2011, BC Hydro still failed to acknowledge its own evidence of declining sales and the more general malaise of weakening global economies and scale back its outlook for domestic demand.

In 2011, the corporation forecast an absolute need for 67,457 GWhrs by 2017, less than two years hence. That is a mind-blowing forecasting error of about 15,000 GWhrs or an equivalence of \$30 billion.

If the provincial government and BC Hydro wish to remain oblivious to the ongoing effects of the global implosion of 2008/09, that will not change reality. This wilful avoidance of reality shows up regularly

in the annual government and Hydro budgets. Revenues are exaggerated and expenses are minimized. A near decade of evidence has just been an inconvenience in their political determination to build a third dam in the fertile Peace River Valley.

The BC Hydro way of desperately trying to stay solvent is to do what all monopolies do – increase rates.

As stated previously, Hydro's data show that the amount of physical product sold to domestic users during the last fiscal year decreased by 3.4 percent, yet revenue from those sales actually *increased* by 6.6 percent. The paradox BC Hydro has created for itself is one of trying to sell more product at the very same time demand is shrinking because of global economic weakness and customer response to ever higher electricity rates.

It is impossible to see this as a winning business strategy and of no value whatever as a support for building more generation capacity in BC.

As if that were not enough we now read that the “Regulatory Asset Accounts” stand at a record high of \$5.714 billion. Starting about a decade ago the BC Hydro Board and managers began making aggressive use of an accounting ruse only available to corporations reporting to a Public Utilities Commission.

Up to 2006, all capital investments were expensed in the current year. That process created a symmetrical relationship between needed capital investment and the rate structure used to recover investment expenses from BC Hydro customers.


Since 2006, some non-expensed investments have accumulated in what Hydro's accountants designate as,

“Regulatory Asset Accounts”. In this fashion, those amounts may – or may not – become needed assets or generate specified ~~by the disapproved~~ of this strategy but was overruled and has since left BC. Today, the regulatory asset account sits at a record high of \$5.714 billion which, coincidentally, matches the total annual revenue BC Hydro currently collects from ratepayers. As Hydro customers you are currently one year in arrears. Yet if this so-called asset category were removed, Hydro would be close to if not actually in a negative equity position.

It is impossible to believe that successive BC Hydro executives and managers could be so financially and economically illiterate as to allow the corporation slide into this deplorable condition and then continue to borrow and spend another \$9 billion to build a third Peace River dam for which no sound business, agricultural or environmental case can be made.

Erik Andersen, economist (ret'd) was previously employed by the Federal Transport Commission as a transport economist; as manager of Airport Planning, Pacific Region; as an economist at Pacific Western Airlines ; as chief research, ICAO; as an Investment consultant to private clients. He presently is a director with the BC Chapter, Public Interest Advocacy Centre

Bill Routley, MLA
Cowichan Valley



Community Office Hours
Tuesday to Friday
10:00 am - 3:00 pm
273 Trunk Road,
Duncan
Phone: 250-715-0127
Fax: 250-715-0139
Email:
bill.routley.mla@leg.bc.ca
www.billroutley.com
Mailing Address:
PO Box 599
Duncan BC V9L 3X9

Proudly
Representing Esquimalt
Maurine Karagianis,
MLA
Esquimalt-Royal Roads

250 479 8326
maurine.karagianis.mla@leg.bc.ca
www.maurinekaragianis.ca



Calls to Stop Site C grow as crowd gathers on Peace River

FORT ST. JOHN, BC – Hundreds of people in canoes, kayaks and other watercraft floated down the Peace River July 11 to protest the imminent construction of the Site C dam. The \$9 billion dam, approved by the BC government last December, would flood more than 100 kilometres of the Peace River and its tributaries, forcing farmers, ranchers and other families from their homes.

“The decision to proceed with Site C construction is even more inappropriate in the wake of the Truth and Reconciliation report,” said Chief Roland Willson of the West Moberly First Nations. “Site C does not represent a rapprochement with Canada's First Nations. It will take us in the opposite direction.”

On July 1, following a petition by two Alberta First Nations, the World Heritage Committee voted to send a mission to investigate Site C and other industrial development affecting the Wood Buffalo World Heritage Site. The committee asked the Canadian government to ensure that no irreversible work is done on Site C until its mission and report are complete.

Six court cases are pending against Site C, including five by First Nations. BC Hydro has served notice that work on the dam can begin as early as the first week

of July.

On July 3, the Greater Vancouver Regional District Board, representing 23 local governments and 2.5 million people, voted to ask BC Premier Christy Clark for a 2-year moratorium on Site C. The board joins more than 30 other BC municipalities calling for a Site C moratorium.

Former Agricultural Land Commission Chair Richard Bullock called the largest removal of agricultural land in the history of BC's Agricultural Land Reserve for Site C a “sin against humanity”. Energy economist Robert McCullough said recently in a report that BC Hydro has dramatically underestimated the cost of producing power from Site C and that far cheaper energy alternatives are available.

Harry Swain, chair of the environmental assessment Joint Review Panel that examined Site C for the federal and provincial governments, said the BC government's decision to proceed with Site C is a “dereliction of duty”.

“The Site C dam is an idea whose time is long gone,” said Wilderness Committee campaign director Joe Foy, who was at the Paddle for the Peace. “It's a bad idea from the '60s that needs to be dropped for good.”

Gary Holman, MLA
Saanich North and the Islands

YOUR COMMUNITY ADVOCATE
for assistance with provincial programs and agencies

COMMUNITY OFFICE
2393 Beacon Avenue, Sidney V8L 1W9
250-655-5711 / 1-855-955-5711
gary.holman.mla@leg.bc.ca
www.GaryHolmanMLA.ca





John Horgan MLA Juan de Fuca
Our Office is Open
to Serve You

#122-2806 Jacklin Road, Victoria BC V9B 5A4
250-391-2801
john.horgan.mla@leg.bc.ca
www.johnhorganmla.ca

Heads must roll – Tim’s summer tumbrel

By Tim Pheotist

The current social and economic news in Greece will be the stuff of future economic text-books.

At time of writing it is not known whether the Euro will remain Greece’s national currency and what part Greece will continue to play in the European Union.

What we do know is that the miserable economic philosophy, known as “austerity”, has brought hopelessness and social destruction to Greece.

Austerity has been the favoured economic policy of the richest nations throughout these early years of the 21st century, and throughout the final decades of the 20th century. The economics of austerity have enabled the advancement of capital markets and private profit driven interests entirely at the expense of labour and the humane and progressive social values that civilized societies expect.

The economic tectonic plates of capital and labour are always grinding and, to the seeming surprise of the advocates of austerity, an economic earthquake has happened in Greece.

Actually it’s difficult to imagine that the shock of Greece’s eruption is really a surprise. To the advancers of austerity, Greece is collateral damage in the journey toward greater concentration of capital groupings, globally.

Greece and other victim societies of austerity now need an economist Portia to remind today’s self righteous nation creditors that:

“...*There is something else.*
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood.
The words expressly are ‘a pound of flesh...’”

In today’s terms, those who claim to be deserving creditors of Greece may not claim so disproportionately and damagingly,



the blood and sweat of so many blameless Greek citizens.

Greece is not alone in living the nightmare of austerity economics.

Here in beautiful British Columbia, Canada, we see a national election fast approaching. The current Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, has been unswerving in his dedication to the principles of austerity economics. He’s been enabled by a Conservative party that rabidly destroys the social infrastructure upon which any civil society relies.

With lies and political propaganda Stephen Harper has conned and frightened Canadians into voting for economic policies that favour only a wealthy sliver of Canadian society.

His policies, mimicking the austerity

politics of some notable European countries, have led Canada into technical and actual recession. In British Columbia homeless and helpless citizens of all generations have much in common with the ordinary citizens of Greece – no jobs, no prospects and no means of sustainable support.

It is vital that Canada delivers a clear message at the next general election – parties advocating austere and recessionary economic policies must no longer be elected.

Greece represents a modern day economic revolution. Its previous governments have failed. By the ballot box, Greeks have held their previous rulers to account.

By the ballot box, Canada must do the same in October 2015.

But it’s not so easy. Voting systems here in Canada often deny election and parliamentary seats to the candidates receiving the majority of votes. Our “first past the post” system is no longer fit for democratic purpose. Populations and electoral boundaries have shifted. Parliamentary seats are often no longer representative of votes cast.

Thus it is of critical importance that whenever the opportunity to vote for informed and socially minded candidates arises, that those votes are cast. Do not stay home on polling day!!

Now to Tim’s Tumbrel. The final decade of the 18th Century saw, in France, what can reasonably be argued to have many similarities to our modern age of austerity. Society became angry and frustrated with the unequal distribution of wealth and resources. Sound familiar?

While I don’t think we’re going to see the return of the guillotine in BC or Canada, it does seem worth noting and reminding which people control the levers of power, both close to home and far away. We must understand which individuals have accumulated massive wealth and which individuals have the most control over our day to day lives.

It’s interesting to note that while we know the names of our local counsellors, MLAs, MPs etc., these elected officials often have little power, especially if they represent a minority party.

We know the name of our premier and the prime minister. The names of the executives of the institutions that price and supply the essentials of life are surprisingly secret. They are unelected – their appointments narrowly revealed.

Here’s a selection of a few who are close to home and might enjoy (perhaps not) the spotlight shining on them, and a few who are distant but certainly make a difference to our local lives. You can decide whether or not the contribution they make to society matches the rewards they receive or hoard, and the influence they wield.

For convenience I’ve posted their images as they might have appeared in a

basket at the end of the 18th Century.

Greedy Canadians:

Stephen Harper, - PM; Christy Clarke - Premier; Stephen Bellringer – BC Hydro Chair, Jessica McDonald – CEO, BC Hydro, Mark Blucher – President & CEO, ICBC; Barry Perry – President & CEO, Fortis Inc.; Mike Corrigan – President & CEO, BC Ferries; Jim Pattison – retired founder of Jim Pattison Group; J R Shaw – Executive Chair, Shaw Communications.

This is a very incomplete sampling of the list of very powerful or very wealthy Canadians who directly impact your quality of life. Only two names are elected to their position. All others are appointed. The voting public have no input. As business heads, drawing massive salaries, their lives aren’t troubled by the financial uncertainties of markets and business that face millions of working Canadians – the companies that pay them are virtual monopolies!! Their management “skills” never include the imagination to reduce the price you pay for the essential services their companies provide. They have no competition!!

Greedy Globalists:

David Koch – Executive VP, Koch Industries Inc. (net worth \$50 billion+); Jeff Bezos – CEO, Amazon.com (net worth \$40 billion+); Mark Zuckerberg – Chair & CEO, Facebook Inc. (net worth \$35 billion+); King Abdullah bin Abul Aziz (deceased), Saudi Arabia (net worth \$18 billion+); David Cameron – Conservative Prime Minister – United Kingdom, Perpetrator of Austerity Economics; Angela Merkel – Chancellor of Germany, Perpetrator of Austerity Economics; Benjamin Netanyahu – Prime Minister of Israel, ferocious enabler & consumer of military resources.

There isn’t enough room in this tumbrel to contain the hundreds of controllers, existing globally, of stolen national resources and capital. What must be remembered is that the capital control and ownership is attached to unelected individuals and corporate groups. The elected enablers – prime ministers and heads of state -- serve to promote an economic system that increasingly separates societies from rightful resources. In 18th century France, tiring of austerity, and finding it difficult to separate the greedy from their wealth, society separated the heads from the bodies instead.

This tumbrel is by no means representative of today’s greediest characters. While guillotining bankers is not an answer there are lessons to be learned from 18th century France and 21st century Greece.

Both societies have sought to change to a system that enables fairer distribution of the economic product of human labour.

If the French tumbrel was a vehicle of doom for inflated aristos 200 years ago, it can now be a virtual vehicle of shame for today’s merchants, bankers and hoarders of stolen capital.



FRASER

Plumbing & Heating Ltd.

Residential & Commercial • Service & Renos
A locally owned & operated family business
Reliable • Priced Fair • Quality workmanship

250-727-3888 | info@fraserplumbing.ca | www.fraserplumbing.ca

Victoria Federal New Democrats

Stay in Touch

with your executive and get involved in the next election

To contact president James Coccola
email president@victoriandp.ca
visit our website at www.victoriamsp.ca

Cowichan Valley

NDP Constituency Association

Stay in Touch over the Summer!

You can reach your president, Deb Foster at 250-510-0544
or by email to deb.foster21@gmail.com
or email to cowichanvalley.NDP@shaw.ca



Photo by Cheryl Farquharson
Art Farquharson, of Victoria, bows his head in silent respect after singing Len Wallace’s *Men of the Midnight Shift*. Art and Cheryl Farquharson were travelling towards Newfoundland in June when they found their way to this memorial in New Glasgow, NS, to the 26 men who perished in the Westray Mine in 1992. This year marks the 30th anniversary of Miners’ Memorial Day in Cumberland BC.

Mandatory minimum sentences decay judicial discretion and Americanize the Canadian criminal justice system

By Ryan Heighton

I have previously written here about some of the paradoxical politics that govern changes in the criminal justice system. The Conservative agenda has been to bring sweeping and incredibly punitive reforms, while collapsing their motive under the umbrella of “victim’s rights”. Another popular stand-by is the fight against “terrorism”, despite the fact that the existing terrorism offences in the *Criminal Code* are very rarely charged. Regardless of the governing motive, the overwhelming result is an unnecessary erosion of human rights for individuals charged with criminal offences.

One of the keystones of the Canadian criminal justice system is an individualized sentencing regime, which takes into consideration the personal circumstances of the offender and the offence itself. On sentencing, the judge hears submissions from both defence and Crown counsel, which can include victim impact statements (which the *Criminal Code* requires that the Crown at least seek prior to sentencing), as well as materials in support of the offender. Prior to rendering a sentence, the judge is made aware of the offender’s criminal record, while defence submissions can help contextualize the evidence before the court. Judicial discretion, particularly in criminal sentencing, has been greatly reduced in the past four years under the Harper Conservatives. The effect has been a reduction of individualized discretion in sentencing, moving toward a more formulaic style of sentencing. In addition to making victim surcharges a statutory mandate for

all offenders, rich and poor, pre-sentence custody has been reduced, conditional sentences have been restricted, and mandatory minimum sentences have increased both in number and in substance. With legislative titles such as the *Truth in Sentencing Act* and *Increasing Offenders’ Accountability for Victims Act*, the politics of criminal law are perhaps more alive than ever. By taking a “tough-on-crime” stance, including the illusion that policies are driven particularly at the protection of victims, the recent and increasingly punitive amendments to the *Criminal Code* appear to be compromising rights of the accused. By reducing judicial discretion and increasing the penal consequences of criminal convictions, it appears as though the current government seeks to implement an Americanized sentencing regime. The American criminal sentencing regime employs a series of grids and “points” systems, which serve as guidelines to make the sentencing uniform across offenders, based on the offence. This approach is effectively a regression in the legislation from the Canadian sentencing reform of Part XXIII of the *Criminal Code* in 1996. Instead of promoting judicial discretion in sentencing, which encourages fair, individualized, and proportionate sentencing, as Part XXIII of the *Criminal Code* was designed to promote, discretion is being reduced to a “one-size-fits-all” approach. The simple fact is: no two offenders or offences are the same. The sentencing provisions of the *Criminal Code*, which were extensively reformed in 1996, provide for judicial discretion in sentencing, based on



Ryan Heighton

the evidence before the court. Often, this can be quite helpful, depending on the circumstances. For the mentally ill offender with no previous community supports, a lengthier term of probation with counselling terms will often be more constructive than a short jail term. The increase in the number and substance of mandatory minimum sentences is a political veil, used to give a perception

of being “tough on crime” and seeking justice for victims. In effect, it is handcuffing the judges, who are quite adept at rendering sentences that are appropriate based on the circumstances of the offence, the offender, any potential victims, as well as the public at-large. The great irony of the Americanization of the Canadian regime is that outgoing US President Obama has recently called for an overhaul of the American sentencing regime and the reduction of mandatory minimum sentences. Our current system, even as modified by the Harper Conservatives, is not yet on the punitive level of the existing American system, but there is great potential for us to devolve to a Draconian police state.

Ryan Heighton is a criminal defence lawyer in Ontario, and a licensed member of the Law Society of Upper Canada. He recently launched his practice, Heighton Law, in Kitchener, Ontario, with a focus on assisting marginalized groups. He is a graduate of Osgoode Hall Law School (J.D.) where he placed at the top of his class in the Criminal Law Intensive Program, and Trent University (B.Sc., Biology and Psychology; M.Sc., Environmental and Life Sciences with a focus on breast cancer research). A recent recipient of one of the highest Trent University Alumni awards for his work in social justice, he has led various student initiatives in attempts to bring awareness to social justice issues in the criminal justice system, and to provide direct advocacy services to those in need. He is a frequent blogger about criminal justice issues, and has won various awards for his advocacy in the pursuit of social justice. He is also passionate about education, and is a frequent volunteer speaker and mentor with high school and university student groups.

Lower Island News hopes he will be writing here frequently.

Trudeau trying and lying to catch up

By Barry Weisleder

Though the October 19 Canadian federal election is still three months away, the changing pattern of public opinion is forcing the major parties to shift gears. According to a major late-June poll, the labour-based NDP has the support of 35 percent and is extending its lead. The governing Conservatives have fallen to 28 percent, and the Liberal Party is down to 29 percent. It’s no surprise that both big business parties are increasingly directing their fire at the NDP. But the Liberals, under their man-boy leader Justin Trudeau, are turning to very traditional tactics -- stealing and lying. By advocating electoral reform that might include Proportional Representation, easier and wider access to information, and a return of the long-form census, by letting government scientists talk to the media, making it easier for university students and Canadians living abroad to vote, and stopping Canada Post from ending door to door mail delivery, the Liberals are simply copying NDP policies. They also promise to restore some social spending that Tory Prime Minister Stephen Harper cut. But can the Liberals be trusted?

Remember the Liberal Red Book in the 1993 election campaign. Prime Minister Jean Chretien, and his successor Paul Martin, shredded the document and broke nearly every promise they made. Martin infamously cut 40 percent of federal transfer monies to the provinces. Today, Trudeau pledges to retain (with minor reforms) the appointed and highly corrupt Senate, to build more pipelines, and to support “free” trade deals that kill good full-time jobs. Trudeau Liberals favour tax cuts to the private sector to spur the economy. They sent Canadian soldiers to Iraq. They voted for Bill C-51, the so-called Anti-Terrorism Law. So it seems unlikely that Trudeau can get very far with his claim that he represents “real change”. NDP Leader Tom Mulcair, on the other hand, champions change in the form of a \$15 per day national child care program, raising the minimum wage to \$15/hour, increasing Canada Pension Plan benefits, giving the cities a new deal for mass public transit, and he demands abolition of the Senate. The party also calls for removing Canadian forces from Iraq and Syria, and restoring home mail delivery. Such progressive policies helped the NDP to a


shocking win in the Alberta provincial election. They can carry the labour-based party to government in Ottawa. Mulcair would be wise to resist pressure from the business class to downplay differences with the Conservative Party, leaving that role to the Liberals. But it is up to the ranks of labour and the party membership to push the NDP towards bigger and bolder change-seeking -- like demanding national pharmacare, no new pipelines, expropriation of Big Oil and Gas to finance a rapid shift to green energy, and the implementation of steeply progressive taxation to give relief to workers, farmers and small business, and to make the rich pay. The business media constantly remind us that the NDP is a working class party linked to the unions. So, why not make the most of it? Fan the flames of discontent with capitalist rule. And what if the October 19 federal election results in the NDP being in first place, but no party with a majority of seats? Socialists urge the NDP to stand firm, form a minority government, and implement policies in the interest of the working class and the vast majority. If the capitalist parties choose to vote against progressive measures and force an early election, make them bear the consequences. Rule out any notion of a coalition with the Liberals, the Bloc Quebecois or the Green Party. Despite its many shortcomings, the NDP represents the possibility of a course of action independent of the bosses’ parties, and that must be amplified, not compromised.

Canadians are sick of Conservative and Liberal Senate corruption

New Democrats agree with the Auditor General – it’s time for ‘transformative change’ in Senate accountability

OTTAWA – Canadians are sick of seeing public money wasted on unaccountable Conservative and Liberal Senators, as the Auditor General outlined in his explosive report on Senate misspending released June 9. — “This report outlines a culture of Liberal and Conservative entitlement and cronyism that has infected Ottawa for far too long,” said NDP Ethics critic Charlie Angus (Timmins – James Bay). “Conservatives were elected on a promise to reform the Senate and fix Ottawa – they failed miserably at both. Conservatives in the Prime Minister’s Office have tried for months to cover up the spending scandals involving Mike Duffy,

Pamela Wallin, and Patrick Brazeau – and blamed the whole scandal on a few bad apples. The June 9 report from the Auditor General shows that the rot in the Senate ran very deep. “Canadians are fed up with high-spending, unelected and unaccountable Senators making laws for them,” said NDP Ethics deputy critic Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont – La Petite Patrie). “The NDP has proposed common-sense solutions to start cleaning up the Senate – but sadly the Conservatives and Liberals block any change.” This October, finally, citizens will be able to vote for the change they want – and this time get it.



Cozy 3 BR home for rent

Located on a quiet side street in the Gorge area, this 3 bedroom home has just been tastefully renovated by the current owners. New open concept kitchen (F/S/DW/MW), new four piece bathroom, refinished wood floors, new high efficiency furnace, washer/dryer. Off street parking and an easy care yard. This could be your chance to live in a cozy turnkey home that is close to downtown and the vibrant Gorge waterway. Email Marianne at azimuth@telus.net to inquire.

Forced marriage is a form of abuse, widespread around the world

By Arifa Nasim

A few weeks ago I was out shopping for my trip to Vancouver for some last minute bits and pieces when I saw my friend's mother. She stopped to say “hi”, and casually mentioned she had just gotten married this morning.

My mind slowed in confusion. I wondered if I had totally missed her white wedding attire? Nope, no dress, or anything white wedding related at all.

In the brief one-minute conversation that ensued, I learned that she had just popped to the shops to make something nice to for their dinner, to celebrate. This was a far cry from the typical Asian weddings I was used to, which usually left a sizeable dent in your bank account. But what screamed out to me was the aspect of choice. They chose this, and more importantly they chose each other.

This is a freedom that is not afforded to many individuals across the world, Forced marriage is when a person is pressured, either physically or emotionally to marry another against their will. This contrasts strikingly to an arranged marriage, though the two terms are often used interchangeably. The latter is where the parents suggest suitable matches and the person questioned has the choice to accept or reject the proposed spouse.

Honour crimes such as forced marriage are shrouded in mystery and are highly taboo. They are silent underground crimes that take place. Most mistake it for being cultural, but forced marriage is not cultural. It is a form of abuse. Many may now be wondering why parents, the two people who are supposed to love you most in the world, would abuse their children in this way.

Reasons vary, from seeing their children become “too western” and the desire to tame them, to “fixing” their sexuality. I interviewed a Canadian Pakistani woman, Naila* who was able to stand up against

her family when they tried to force her into marrying a relative from Pakistan. She recounted the intense bouts of “emotional blackmail”, the threats that her mother would die from the pressure of the “shame” she had brought on the family. A particularly harrowing part of the story was the extent of her families' involvement. Naila* flinched as she described how her brother slapped and kicked her when he realized she was backing out of the match her parents had set.

Naila's* story is not unique. I have heard stories of forced marriages that have ended in extreme domestic violence, spousal rape, and even suicide. The ring that is usually a symbol of love and adoration becomes a shackle to an absolute stranger you are then expected to live with side by side.

When I arrived in Vancouver, I started researching the prevalence of forced marriage in Canada. As hard as you may look you will never get an exact figure. Would you admit to being married against your will if the perpetrators of this abuse were your parents? I couldn't myself, despite having campaigned against this atrocity since I was 14.

You see, families from South Asian and Arab backgrounds that force their children to marry usually operate an honour system, whereby the actions of one has the potential to taint and dishonour the entire family and women tend to be the gatekeepers of honour in such systems. Therefore refusing to marry someone suggested by your parents could lead to the entire family being ostracized by the community.

But this is not the only reason. And forced marriage is not confined to a single community. This horrific form of abuse is cross-cultural and cross religious, affecting men and women, from Indian Sikhs to Jehovah's Witnesses.

Increasingly, the prevalence of honour crimes such as forced marriage are being investigated. According to a study conduct-

ed by the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario, between a two-year period, 219 people reported being forced to marry against their will.

However, until more victims come forward, the full scale of this horrific abuse can never be uncovered. There is a quiet revolution that is occurring; in my native Britain, we are close to unveiling a day for Britain's lost women, those who lost their lives in forced marriages and crimes of honour such as Shafiea Ahmed and Banaz Mahmood. Internationally charities such as Plan are working towards ending child and early forced marriage for good.

Education about such crimes is, as ever, the key to prevention. In our community every one knows someone who was “married off but hardly anyone spoke up or supported them.

The revolution has begun – will you join and speak out for those silenced?

This article first appeared in the *Georgia Strait* and is reprinted with permission.

Arifa Nasim is an activist who works in the UK Labour Party as a volunteer, and is co-founder of Educate2Eradicate She has been published two times in *The Guardian*.

Continuing the international fight to eradicate FGM

Lower Island News's long-time contributor and reporter, Diane Walsh, is headed to the University of St. Andrews, Scotland.

Walsh has reported for *LIN* at the UN in New York and Geneva in recent years, covering the international campaigns to eradicate the practice of Female Genital Mutilation.

High profile campaigns in western and developed countries have resulted in the criminalization of this abusive practice which mutilates young girls.

LIN is proud to have published Walsh's reports over the past years.

Now we can report that Walsh will continue her FGM research and campaigning at the prestigious University of St. Andrews in Scotland. Her research will further investigation into the most effective methods to combat the practice of FGM globally, and will include contextual studies in related human rights and environmental

sustainability.

She notes that St. Andrews' offer and support of a place, leading to the study of methods to eradicate FGM, is a first for a Scottish university. With recent graduates, including the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, St. Andrews' is well known for its progressive and far reaching international profile.

For readers who may have missed previous references to FGM in *LIN*, Walsh's description on her GoFundMe site, published here, will help inform.

Walsh reports that it has been thanks to so many elements of support, including scholarship funding, private donations and the moral support of so many people, as well as the imagination of the University of St. Andrews, that has enabled the possibility of this opportunity.

Lower Island News looks forward to Walsh's continued reporting about this important and tragic topic. -- JRL

An End to Female Genital Mutilation - A PhD study that matters

International migration, and the import of Female Genital Mutilation practices to Western countries, has propelled the need for the UK, Europe, Australia, the US and Canada to confront the heinous practice of FGM.

To be graphically clear, FGM is the practice of mutilating young girls. Adults hack and irreparably mutilate the genitalia of young girls. These are horrible crimes that are very difficult to imagine, let alone confront.

In countries which welcome and enjoy the benefits of migration and integration, the practice of FGM is too often also introduced into Western society.

Because FGM in modern societies, as a practice and a crime, has been poorly defined and under-exposed, proliferation has occurred “below the radar”. There has been little ability or incentive to publicize or prosecute the frequent movement of young girls for the sole purpose of mutilating them.

Publicizing such horror is a thankless task and the messengers are often vilified and sidelined, thus perpetuating FGM practices.

In offering an opportunity and forum for advanced research into Female Genital Mutilation at PhD level, the University of St Andrews does not shrink from the difficulties attached to research of this nature.

I am honoured to have been accepted into the St. Andrew's research family, especially given the sensitivity of my research subject.

In my work around FGM abolition over the past eight years at UN levels in New York and Geneva, and my involvement in encouraging integration of anti FGM efforts internationally, I've seen directives and mandates censoring and criminalizing FGM practices. See #ENDFGM and #GAFGM on twitter. Also a UN Special Article - one of many articles I've been able to publish

<https://indydiانewalsh.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/un-special-article-by-diane-walsh-foreign-correspondent-fpa-london.pdf>
<http://www.gofundme.com/indydiانewalsh-com>

Volunteers to end FGM have seen successes. All too often these successes have further inspired those who would

continue or enable mutilation practices, to misrepresent the work of those working to eradicate the practice.

It's a perverse conundrum for anti FGM campaigners. Advanced research is needed to discover effective ways of acquiring strong public understanding of the problem and its scale without such publicity being used to undermine the eradication purpose. Campaigners are almost entirely volunteers. My work has been almost entirely unfunded. It's now time to match St. Andrew's brave offer with proper research funding.

So, to those whose understanding of FGM practices is already enlightened, I respectfully ask for your support, enabling this unique opportunity to add to the international efforts to spare so many millions of young girls from mutilations that bring pain and misery to them and which normalizes a barbaric and criminal practice. Anti-FGM leadership at a university with this level of prestige can have a marked positive global influence. Coupled with the 2012 United Nations resolution to end FGM in one generation, it is in this historically pivotal area that I can and will make a useful contribution. Please consider pledging your support.

Time is of the essence.

It is not me as an individual that you would be helping -- it is about what you would be doing for girls and women in harm's way -- joining together to fight FGM on a global scale. In a global village it is only through an international federated effort that female genital mutilation will be successfully stopped and it is with this objective that I am asking for your financial support.

Remember:

If current trends aren't stopped, as many as 30 million girls are at-risk of being mutilated. Internationally more than 130 million girls and women have already undergone FGM in 29 countries in Africa. However less frequently cited are Egypt, countries in the Middle East, Asia (Indonesia), the Caribbean (Jamaica)...

Please always feel welcome to contact me with any questions.

Diane Walsh, MA
@dwalshmedia

Safety and Human Factors Consultant
Call David Olsen
250-655-6218
or email him at
olsendj@shaw.ca



Victoria-Swan Lake New Democrats

Stay in Touch!

You can reach your executive at:
president@vslndp.ca or
802 Lawndale Avenue
Victoria V8S 4C7



Esquimalt-Royal Roads New Democrats!

B.C. Families Need a Break!
Want to help stop Christy Clark?

Contact your executive:
esquimaltroyalroads@gmail.com

P.O. Box 231, 110-174 Wilson Street
Victoria, B.C. V9A 7N7

Shooting ourselves in the foot yet again

By Jim Hackler

During the 50 years or so that I have been a supporter of the NDP, I have been proud of their views on social policy. I was not particularly concerned that their optimism about actually winning an election was usually not warranted. After all, I spent 30 years in Alberta where some of our meetings could be held in a phone booth and, according to a young Grant Notley, university professors were deemed to

be among our wealthiest members. While winning elections was not common, election period gave us a short time to put forth ideas. Some of them even got mentioned in the press.

Sometimes, however, the NDP has been in a position to influence legislation. Thus, I am distressed to see the NDP make decisions that increase their chances of failure and produce poorer government in Canada.

Assessing reality has never been an

NDP strong point, as illustrated in the last federal election. They convinced themselves that they could do better without co-operating with other progressive political elements -- and they gave Harper a majority.

Four years ago, disastrous experiences for the Liberals provided the NDP with a chance to be the opposition; this was less a victory for the NDP than a failure for the Liberals, but the NDP viewed the situation as a shift toward their views. Becoming the opposition may have provided a little satisfaction for the NDP, but the Harper majority has hurt Canada more.

The reality is that the NDP has support from approximately 20-25 percent of Canadians. Those voters are probably better informed than the average voter but the NDP rarely attracts many of the less informed and irregular voters who, unfortunately, tend to have more impact on elections than the more involved and informed members of any of the political parties..

The NDP hopes to attract disappointed Conservatives. This is unlikely. Such folks are more likely to vote Liberal. The Alberta election of the NDP should be viewed as unique, not evidence of a dramatic shift toward social reform.

Canada remains behind Western Europe on most social issues because the NDP does not systematically join other progressive parties to pass legislation. They are good at criticism but in reality, most legislation must often be a compromise.

Left-oriented political parties are more successful in Europe than in Canada because they have learned to co-operate.

When David Lewis led the NDP and held the balance of power, he could influence Pierre Trudeau. With a majority, Harper can, and does, ignore the NDP.

To win elections in Canada, a party must win a good portion of the least informed voters, people who also vote irregularly. Short phrases and chants such as “Yes we can” work for both the right and left, but the right wing is usually better than the left at emotionally laden nonsense phrases.

Attack ads, a Harper government specialty, also have more impact on poorly informed, irregular voters. Some of our NDP leaders think that they can take their rational arguments into the gutter and come out ahead. Long, carefully thought out sentences will not be heard by marginal voters.

Also puzzling is NDP hostility toward the Green Party. There will be differences between those trying to protect jobs and those protecting the environment. A handful of Green Party members in Parliament would be an asset for progressive politicians on the left. The NDP seems blind to the number of forward-looking voters who are tired of the NDP’s denigration of a party that is ahead of them on some issues and with them on many others.

But imagine that the NDP decided to co-operate. In some select ridings, Greens and progressive Liberals might win extra seats when they put forward better candidates than the NDP. The NDP might also pick up more votes by supporting fewer, carefully selected candidates. Nominating candidates for all ridings sounds like a worthy goal but it is often a poor use of resources.

In the next election, if the major parties split three ways and the Greens gain a fistful of seats, the Governor General could face a dilemma. Who could command the respect of parliament?

The Governor General knows that Tom Mulcair is capable of criticizing the Harper government, but could he gain co-operation? Which of the three leaders, all of whom are uncooperative, could actually govern, actually develop legislation that would be constructive? Would a short period of cooperation with other progressive elements suggest that Mulcair is more than just a critic? Could he bring together people with different but somewhat overlapping ideas?

Mulcair’s chance of being prime minister would improve if he could demonstrate that he also is skilled at cooperation. Being a good debater and critic is not the same as genuine leadership. But it seems that such displays of real leadership are not going to happen. The chance for basic changes, such as proportional representation, that could lead to more effective government in the future will again be abandoned for an unrealistic bid for power.

How many times must we shoot ourselves in the foot?

Jim Hackler is adjunct professor of sociology at the University of *Victoria*. He writes articles for newspapers utilizing useful sociological research that rarely gets before the public.

BC government plans for LNG exports require extensive impact on water, land, climate; jeopardize energy security: major new study

VANCOUVER -- As the BC and federal governments continue to push for LNG (liquefied natural gas) development and export, a major new study details the consequences of ramping up fracking and LNG production: not only serious environmental and climate impacts, but grave risks to Canada’s energy security if conducted at the scale envisaged by the BC government.

David Hughes, former federal government geoscientist and expert in unconventional energy, is the author of *A Clear Look at LNG: Energy security, environmental implications and economic potential*, released by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives’ BC Office.

Hughes’s study considers in detail six possible scenarios for BC LNG export development: from zero export terminals built to the five that the provincial government is promising.

“If BC goes ahead with five terminals, it would require four to five times the current BC gas production levels,” says Hughes. “This means drilling up to 43,000 new fracked wells in the northeast by 2040, and using up to 22,000 Olympic swimming pools of water per year in the fracking process. We’re talking about serious environmental impacts.”

Despite efforts to brand LNG as a “clean” fuel, nearly all natural gas for export would be extracted by fracking, which uses massive amounts of water, produces high levels of greenhouse gases through fugitive methane releases, and has been linked to water contamination and increased seismic activity.

“Even scenarios that the BC government would consider less than ideal, like three terminals, would require 3.5 times more gas than current proven gas reserves, and 32,000 more wells,” says Hughes.

Hughes notes that the BC government

appears to be misrepresenting the amount of gas available for export. According to the BC Oil and Gas Commission (OGC), there are about 42.3 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of proven raw gas reserves, with another potential 416 tcf of “remaining marketable resources,” which is a less certain number, based on estimates and extrapolations. Yet as recently as mid May, the BC government claimed that BC has a natural gas supply of 2,933 tcf to support domestic and export markets, six times the OGC’s estimate.

Beyond the environmental damage, Hughes raises grave concerns about Canada’s future energy security, and the National Energy Board’s apparent failure to ensure domestic energy needs can be met.

“So not only is the NEB approving exports of gas that its latest production forecasts show is unavailable, but, if corporations do somehow export this much gas, Canada will have to turn around and import natural gas just to meet our own needs. If the NEB forecasts are to be believed, anything more than one terminal will see Canada become a net importer of natural gas.”

The study also shows that despite BC government claims, there is no evidence that exporting LNG will reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. Large amounts of gas must be consumed just to create and transport LNG and there are significant methane leaks during the production process.

“The provincial and federal governments are racing to liquidate oil and gas as fast as possible,” says Hughes. “But we need to slow down and treat this like the non-renewable resource it is — to protect our environment, our economy and Canada’s energy security.”

A Clear Look at LNG: Energy security, environmental implications and economic potential is available at tinyurl.com/LNGrealitycheck. Thanks to Vancouver Foundation for partially funding this paper.

Saanich North and the Islands
New Democrats

KEEP IN TOUCH!

You can reach your president, Allan Collier
by email at silcol@telus.net

Please visit our webpage
www.snibcndp.wordpress.com

Oak Bay-Gordon Head
New Democrats!

You can reach your executive
by mail to
PO Box 5539, LCD 9, Victoria, BC, V8R 6S4
or email the president
at president@obghnewdemocrats.ca

Saanich South
NEW DEMOCRATS

YOU CAN CONTACT YOUR EXECUTIVE
BY WRITING TO US
AT PO BOX 30041
RPO REYNOLDS, VICTORIA, BC V8X 5E1
OR BY PHONING US AT 250-479-1100.

Victoria-Beacon Hill
New Democrats

Stay in Touch!

You can reach your president Marilyn Callahan
by mail to PO Box 8523, Victoria, BC V8W 3S1
or visit our new website at <http://victoriabeaconhill.theorem.ca>

The First Nations Elders Gathering

Photostory by Heather Tufts

Tsawout First Nation and WSANEC elders were the proud hosts of the 39th Annual BC Elders Gathering at the Panorama Centre from July 7 to 9. There were more than 2,500 registered First Nations elders from across British Columbia along with guests visiting from Alberta, Yukon and even a delegation from the Indigenous peoples of Malaysia. The primary purpose for the First Nation's Elders Gathering is to provide elders with an opportunity to reconnect, socialize and celebrate their culture and history in a relaxed atmosphere of lively entertainment, fun and recreation. The gathering began with a spectacular and emotive grand entry which showcased the diversity of Indigenous nations.



First Nations elders arrive at the Gathering in spectacular regalia.



The visiting Malaysian women are adorned for the Grand Entry.

Additionally the gathering provided a space for elders to share traditional ways with various cultural and linguistic groups while participating in a wide range of workshops. There were also opportunities for health and well-being with massage, reiki, and personal care like nail manicures and haircuts. To take advantage of some of the local sights, buses were provided for those who chose field trips to the museum, Butchart Gardens or a local baseball game, etc. A wonderful display of Indigenous arts and crafts was a highlight of the gathering and a popular place for buying and selling.



All elders are assisted to participate in the Grand Entry.



The Bear Dancers provide stunning and popular entertainment.

“We have to value our elders,” said Chief Vern Jacks from Tseycum First Nation, “and talk to them with our hearts. To our visitors, First Nations and especially to those here who are non-First Nations, you have lots to learn from us. We really do respect one another.” Notwithstanding the invited representation of elected officials, including BC NDP Leader John Horgan, the gathering was not a political event. The most stirring words of political action however came from Grand Chief Stewart Phillip when he urged First Nations people to get out the vote in October in order to help defeat the Harper government. More than 500 volunteers assisted with providing meals, first aid and transportation for the elders and the Panorama Centre was transformed by colourful songs, dances, bone games, drumming and good conversation. An atmosphere of laughter amongst the participants was enhanced by a healthy dose of humour from an Elvis impersonator and stand-up comedian while the elders danced to the rocking sounds of Rukus. An honouring of the veterans was much more emotional as people told their stories of war and neglect and residential school survivors were available in one of the many display booths. However on the final day, the elders dispersed to their home destinations with stories and laughter, in the spirit of reconnection with the renewed knowledge that nothing can diminish the resurgence of community capacity and connectivity. This is an annual event for First Nations elders in British Columbia and next year’s gathering will take place in Williams Lake with the local guidance of an incredible organizational team. Planning for this event is already underway and we celebrate these special gatherings with heartfelt support.



The Tsawout king and queen for the Gathering, Kathy and Doug LaFortune.



The WSANEC children sing a beautiful welcome song.

A long, uphill journey

By Jim Manly

On June 2, Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) issued a 382-page *Summary* of the *Final Report* which runs to six volumes and will be published in October. For most of us, reading the *Summary* itself is a formidable but important task and the full *Report* will be used mainly for getting additional details on subjects of particular interest.

The federal government appointed the TRC after thousands of residential school survivors had flooded Canadian courts with civil suits demanding reparation for the abuse they had suffered at the schools. Unfortunately, the handling of these cases, which followed decades of silence, was itself abusive as defence lawyers, acting for the government or one of the defendant churches, subjected the Survivors to merciless cross examination, often poking into every corner of their private lives. Even in successful cases the awards handed down by the courts were pitifully small.

Finally in 2006, recognizing that the litigation approach was intolerable, the government, and Roman Catholic, Anglican, United and Presbyterian Churches which had run the schools, along with Aboriginal leaders and representatives of the Survivors reached a Settlement Agreement. Instead of going to court, Survivors could opt to receive a Common Experience Payment, a flat sum for every year they had attended one of the schools whether they claimed particular abuse or not. In addition, those who had been abused could enter a process where a trained adjudicator would hear their story, asking only non-threatening questions to clarify details. Representatives from government, the church that had run the school, as well as legal and support workers for the Survivor could be present at each hearing; if they had a question or an issue they could request a timeout with the adjudicator but they could not interfere with the questioning itself.

The Settlement Agreement also included financial support for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, funding for projects to commemorate the experience of residential school students, and appointment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

On June 11, 2008 Prime Minister Stephen Harper delivered a gracious and comprehensive apology before the House of Commons with Aboriginal representatives present. Leaders of the opposition also apologized on behalf of their parties. Following this, many people expected that a

new, more positive relationship would develop between the federal government and Aboriginal people. Unfortunately this did not happen. Instead in March 2010, the Harper government terminated funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation which sponsored community run projects throughout Canada.

The TRC began in 2008 with a five year mandate but the first three commissioners had all resigned by June of 2009 due to disagreements; new Commissioners, Justice Murray Sinclair (Chair,) Chief Wilton Littlechild and Marie Wilson were appointed as of July 1, 2009; the TRC’s mandate was later extended to 2015.

The Commission has looked into the often hidden and forgotten truth about Canada’s residential schools for Aboriginal children. In communities across Canada, former students, their children and grandchildren and also some staff told of their experiences at these schools. These testimonies were supplemented by extensive research using government and church archives. The TRC had to get court orders in order to get full access to the government documents it needed.

The *Summary* outlines the history of Canada’s residential schools with many illustrations from Survivors’ stories. It shows how government consistently underfunded the schools with the result that students were subject to inadequate food, sometimes not fit to eat, overcrowding with resultant spread of contagious disease. The majority of teachers were poorly trained. These nasty conditions went hand in hand with cultural abuse where children lost their language and were taught to despise their parent’s culture, spiritual abuse where missionaries sought to confine them to dogmatic straight-jackets, frequent cases of physical abuse which sometimes resulted in permanent injury and even death, as well as abhorrent sexual abuse.

Little children, taken from the love and care of their families and communities, were lodged in huge impersonal buildings often at great distance from their homes so that some did not get home even for summer holidays. As is well documented by statements by church and government officials, this separation was neither accidental nor incidental but was deliberately intended “to kill the Indian in the child”. For this reason the *Report*, following Paul Martin, describes the entire process as “cultural genocide”, a term to which many people object but is all too accurate.

The *Summary* next examines the legacy of those schools in Canada today.

This shows patterns of persistent poverty, unemployment, poor health, addiction, broken homes and domestic violence in many communities where parents and grandparents had been taken to residential schools. The lack of adequate role modeling for parenting, combined with poverty and social stress, resulted in the “sixties scoop” where welfare agencies placed thousands of aboriginal children in foster care or adoption, sometimes in the US or overseas.

In 2011 3.6% of all First Nations children were in foster care, often subject to maltreatment and abuse and far from their traditional homes. In 2012 the UN Commission on the Rights of the Child reported that when there was difficulty in a home, Canada often used removal as a “first resort”.

Although First Nations agencies appear to be more effective, they are not adequately funded. “The lowest levels of educational success are in those communities with the highest percentages of descendants of residential school Survivors. (194)

These abhorrent conditions are not inherent in Aboriginal peoples, nor are they part of traditional cultural or community life. They result from years of colonial racism and government policies which assaulted their culture, marginalized them, stripped them of economic opportunity and placed their children in abusive and alienating residential schools.

Many non-Aboriginal people continue to say, “just get over it” but as Laurence Kirmayer, a psychiatrist says, the inability to do this is not “a consequence of personal weakness, but ... the inhuman force of the evil they have endured” (p. 406, Marlene Brant Castellano, Linda Archibald and Mike DeGagne, “Conclusion”, pp. 403-410, *From Truth to Reconciliation: Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools*).

The TRC seeks not only to outline the truth of what happened, it also attempts to chart the difficult path to reconciliation. “We believe that true reconciliation can take place only through a reshaping of a shared, national collective memory: our understanding of who we are and what has come before.” (p. 318)

This “reshaping of our shared, national collective memory” is exactly what the *Report’s* 94 Recommendations seek to achieve. These recommendations look for a transformation in every aspect of Aboriginal peoples’ relationship with the rest of Canada. This requires not only changes in the education of children but also in the education of teachers, nurses, doctors, police, lawyers, journalists, and all citizens in-

cluding New Canadians; in addition there must be adequate funding for Aboriginal schools, health systems, and child welfare agencies, the recognition of Aboriginal justice systems, setting specific targets for the reduction of children in care, and the reduction of Aboriginal people in the prison system. Because languages are so integral to the cultural life of peoples, the TRC calls for recognition of language as an Aboriginal right, an Aboriginal Languages Act and college and university courses to teach them. The list goes on.

The TRC calls on Canada to look to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework for reconciliation. Under the Harper government, Canada was one of the last nations to adopt this declaration and finally did so only as a “non-legally binding aspirational document”. Truly the implications of this document call for significant and costly changes in Canada’s relationship with Indigenous peoples, but we must recognize that reconciliation does not come cheaply. As the prophet Jeremiah said, “They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace.” (6:14) Band-aids cannot bring reconciliation.

Many of the recommendations call for Annual Reports of progress to be presented to Parliament. The importance of this cannot be over-estimated as it establishes a process of accountability so that these important recommendations cannot be left to gather dust in the Parliamentary Library.

Although the government needs time to assess these far reaching recommendations, it has so far barely acknowledged their existence or their importance for our common future. One of the major tasks facing the new government after the October 19 election will be coming to terms with the urgent demands that the TRC has placed before us. One of the major tasks for opposition parties will be holding the government accountable on these issues.

Canada’s need for reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples presents us with a tremendous challenge; the costs will be high both in terms of money and commitment. To meet this challenge “there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour”. The present intolerable situation resulted from more than a century of abuse and neglect; we cannot expect it to be corrected overnight. We are at the beginning of a long, uphill journey.

We can afford \$10 a day child care

By Iglika Ivanova

For families with school-aged children, summer is one of the most stressful and expensive times of the year as they scramble to find and pay for child care.

But for parents of younger children, that’s a year-round struggle. At about \$10,000 a year, four years of child care can easily add up to more than the cost of a university degree. And that’s if you’re lucky enough to find a spot, since BC only has enough regulated child care spaces for 27% of children under six.

Numerous studies have shown how our society benefits from quality child care being easy and affordable for all parents to access. Child care experts in BC have developed a plan that would reduce fees to \$10 a day, create enough spaces for all families who want them, and increase the quality of care in regulated programs. This \$10 a day child care plan has gathered support across the province, from businesses, local governments and academics.

However, when BC’s political leaders are asked about \$10 a day child care, they wring their hands and tell us that unfortunately we simply can’t afford it, despite being one of the richest provinces in one of the world’s richest countries.

I bring you good news: the \$10 a day child care plan is entirely affordable, in part because it would be largely self-financing.

In a study published July 13, I build on research by economist Pierre Fortin, which found large and almost immediate econom-

ic benefits from Quebec’s child care plan, launched in the late 1990s. These benefits were the direct result of more mothers returning to work (Quebec’s program did not have a measurable impact on the working patterns of fathers).

If BC’s experience were similar, the \$10 a day child care plan would lead to a significant increase in the number of women in the workforce, boosting our provincial economy by \$3.9 billion per year. The provincial and federal governments would see benefits to the tune of \$1.3 billion, split close to 50/50 between the two levels of government. These benefits come from higher tax revenues, fewer families with children needing social assistance, and reduced reliance on other income-tested transfers.

In other words, the direct returns to government from investing in the \$10 a day plan would almost entirely cover the \$1.5 billion annual cost of the plan (once fully phased in, which would take 10 years).

Since the federal government stands to see a boost in revenues from the introduction of quality public child care in BC (or any other province), it makes sense to share the costs. However, my analysis shows that in the absence of federal support, BC can afford to implement a provincial-only program like Quebec’s.

We’d need to raise a larger amount – approximately \$870 million per year – because the boost in federal tax revenues could not be counted to offset the costs. But \$870 million is just 2% of this year’s

provincial budget, and we can comfortably afford it.

There are a number of ways BC could raise these revenues without cutting other programs. My study models one possible approach in the form of a series of modest tax reforms staged in gradually over a 10-year period.

Changes to the income tax brackets for the richest British Columbians, modest corporate tax increases and very small personal income tax increases could raise the revenues we need and still leave us with tax rates lower than the average for other provinces. For the vast majority of people, these changes would mean paying between \$20 and \$80 more per year.

Under this proposal, the typical BC family with children in child care would save more than \$13,000 per year (at the median two-parent family income of \$90,000, with two children aged two and four).

Families that directly benefit from child care would still contribute a large share of the program costs – but instead of paying through exorbitant fees up front they would pay through a combination of affordable fees and the income tax system.

For the rest of us, pitching in a little is a bargain for what we’d get with universal quality child care: healthy child development, improved social inclusion, more gender and income equality and economic prosperity.

This is the model we use for funding schools. It’s time to extend it to earlier years

by building a quality public child care system.

Iglika Ivanova is a senior economist at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and author of *Solving BC’s Child Care Affordability Crisis Financing the \$10 A Day Plan*.
CCPA BC Office is located at 1400-207 West Hastings St, Vancouver, BC V6B 1H7; phone: 604-801-5121; fax: 604-801-5122.

Conservatives must do more to ensure rail safety

OTTAWA -- NDP Transport critic Hoang Mai (Brossard-La Prairie) is appalled by the Conservative government's inability to enforce basic measures recommended by the Transportation Safety Board (TSB) to ensure public safety.

Details of an investigation into a CP Rail train transporting 57 cars near Revelstoke, British Columbia, – some of which contained dangerous goods – indicates that hand brakes were not activated at the direction of CP and over the concerns of employees.

“The Lac-Mégantic tragedy, which saw new charges laid June 22, made it clear that hand brakes are essential to ensuring public safety. The TSB report clearly indicated that an insufficient amount of hand brake force directly contributed to the derailment. The fact that the government is still unable to enforce these measures is appalling,” said Mai.

Calendar of coming events

CENTRAL SAANICH RESIDENTS ARE invited to attend regular neighbourhood gatherings, held every Friday night at 7 pm at Spelt’s Coffee Shop, 7586 East Saanich Road, in Saanichton. Share stories, books, talk politics and enjoy hot coffee. Nothing is taboo. No pretentiousness, no meeting agenda...just a chance to chat with neighbours and build community. Call 250-652-8228 for further information.

THE VICTORIA LABOUR COUNCIL representing affiliated unions in the Greater

Victoria area, holds its regular monthly meetings at 7 pm on the 3rd Wednesday each month at the BCGEU Auditorium, 2994 Douglas Street, Victoria. All delegates are welcome to come to meet their executive, president Mike Eso, treasurer, Stan Dzbik, and secretary Michael Maloney.

WOMEN IN BLACK invite you to join them in their monthly vigil to remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki and call on all Canadians and people globally to work for peace and disarmament. All those who support our

goals are welcome. For further information, contact bbcfc@bbcfc.ca.

JUAN DE FUCA NEW DEMOCRATS ARE invited to Hotdogs, Hamburgers and Horgan on Sunday, August 9, at 12 noon, at Sooke Flats campground. For further information, contact president Sharon Wilkinson at 250-478-5907 or email her at sawilkinson@shaw.ca.

JUAN DE FUCA NEW DEMOCRATS will hold their Annual General Meeting on Sat-

urday, September 26, in the small hall at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, 798 Goldstream Avenue, Langford. Registration will be from 9:30-10:00 am, when the meeting will start. Guest speaker will be BC NDP leader John Horgan. For further information, contact president Sharon Wilkinson at 250-478-5907 or email her at sawilkinson@shaw.ca.

FEDERAL ELECTIONS will take place on Monday, October 19.

Climate change as a social justice issue

By Heather Tufts

Despite the international scientific community’s consensus on climate change, the Harper-esque deniers are determined to “disprove” or ignore the evidence that clearly attributes the speed of climate change to human causes.

However as an antidote, many people are referring to the urgent need for climate mitigation as *climate justice* in order to highlight the integral connections to both environmental and social justice. This means that we need to move beyond the traditional debate and contextualize such issues as poverty, gender equity, human rights and sustainable economics in relation to climate change. Legal systems will be required to ensure that justice is achievable, if we aspire to address climate change effectively.

There are huge variables around the world regarding the current impacts of climate change and developing countries are often especially challenged by the economic and social implications of the ever-increasing extreme weather conditions. Women especially face disadvantages since in many countries they are responsible for securing water, food and other natural resources to sustain their families.

At the same time women are often excluded as decision-makers although they are disproportionately living in poverty around the world. It is therefore crucial that gender disparity be considered within discussion about climate change solutions and that the voices of women be heard internationally.

The corporate economic interests that have impacted too many countries have especially separated women and indigenous peoples from land. This situation compounds the effects of climate change in developing communities. Climate justice is therefore a sustainable development, human rights and international survival issue.

The Commission on the Status of Women has called on governments to: “*integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national environmental policies and to provide adequate resources to ensure women’s full and equal participation in decision-making particularly on strategies related to the impact of climate change on the lives of women and girls*”.

Indigenous peoples have known for decades that climate change is happening, and because of the connection to land they understand the significance of these changes in their daily lives. They have experienced early warning signals which indicate that even small changes in temperature or rainfall can hold unprecedented consequences on land that has already been marginalized by colonization practices.

The Masai in Kenya for example, who traditionally grazed their cattle on lush grasslands, have been displaced by colonization and powerful dominant cultures onto semi-arid scrubland where their herds find barely enough food under the best of climatic conditions. A drought or heat wave can result in tragic disaster.

In the Amazon, the effects of climate change include deforestation and forest fragmentation, and consequently more carbon released into the atmosphere exacerbates ongoing changes. Droughts over time have resulted in fires in the western Amazon region and this almost certain re-occurrence will continue to have a huge



Photo by Heather Tufts

effect on the livelihoods of the indigenous peoples in the region.

Indigenous peoples contribute very little to greenhouse gas emissions yet they are often living under some of the greatest threats posed by climate change. There exists an inherent interrelationship to land and water in their territories, and so indigenous peoples hold knowledge that could enhance the resilience of these rich ecosystems. Recognition of this is crucial to the debate on climate justice.

In addition, indigenous peoples have responded to the impacts of climate change in creative ways, drawing on traditional knowledge and other technologies to find solutions which may help society at large to cope with impending changes.

In North America, some indigenous groups are striving to cope with climate change by focusing on the economic opportunities that it may create. For example, the increased demand for renewable energy using wind and solar power could make territorial lands an important resource for such energy, replacing fossil fuel-derived energy and limiting greenhouse gas emissions. Locally we have witnessed the inspiring initiative of T’Sou-ke First Nation in its successful solar power program.

In 2014, a United Nations’ report stated that unless governments act immediately to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, no one will be immune from the effects of climate change. However the report also stressed that those who did the least to cause climate change would be most seriously impacted. Clearly this refers to those living in poverty and communities that are subjected to discrimination or colonization.

“People who are socially, economically, culturally, politically, institutionally or otherwise marginalized are especially vulnerable to climate change,” it said.

One impact is through the reduction in crop yields, which leads to higher prices. “The story is that crop yields have detectably changed. As time goes on the poor countries that are in the warmer and drier parts of the planet will feel the crop yield decreases early,” said Michael Oppenheimer, professor of geosciences and international affairs at Princeton University.

Many global communities are already experiencing the impacts of climate change with increasingly scarce natural resources such as drinking water. Some crops and livestock will not survive in certain locations

if conditions become too hot and dry, or too cold and wet. This increases the potential for displacement and climate refugees which will ignite conflicts as people compete for decreasing resources.

Meanwhile the oceans continue to absorb high rates of carbon dioxide and studies indicate that most sea-life is failing to adapt. Acidification is already leading to the degradation of coral reef habitats and negatively impacting some commercially important fisheries, like shellfish which means ongoing threats to yet another vital

food source.

But some corporations already understand the implications of these global trends and are poised to take advantage of changing land use plans. Monsanto boasts its understanding of climate change:

“Some effects of agriculture—such as the greenhouse gases produced by farm machinery and the production of fertilizer—are contributing factors. And of course, agriculture itself can suffer from the effects of climate change. Agriculture needs to adapt to changing conditions and use farming techniques that reduce the impact of our changing climate.”

Whereas this sounds good in theory, this inevitably morphs into another argument for corporatized agriculture that would lead to an increased use of genetically modified seeds and crops. It appears that Monsanto understands the economic significance of transitioning Alberta from an oil-rich province into a corporately run bread-basket for North America under the guise of climate solutions.

Corporate “conversions” to greening have not proved successful to date because the motivation is profit and not systems change, whereas climate change is an issue of human rights, equity and justice.

Vulnerable and marginalized populations are on the front lines as they struggle for survival. Their voices need to be heard by policy-makers so that creative responses can be prioritized into legally-binding solutions. This discussion is essential on the path to climate justice and Canada holds a moral obligation to participate.

Specialist offers insight into lives of WorkSafe claimants with chronic pain: poverty, depression, suicide attempts

VANCOUVER -- A report released June 8 takes an in-depth look at a sample of WCB (or Worksafe BC) claimants with chronic pain and raises the alarm about serious flaws in how WCB deals with injured workers who develop chronic pain.

“I’ve been working in this area for 25 years, +and I’m extremely concerned about what I’m seeing,” says Dr Cecil Hershler, the report’s lead author and a specialist who has worked with thousands of patients with chronic pain, many of whom have had workplace injuries. “Financial hardship, severe physical pain, and deep emotional suffering, including suicidal thoughts – these are some of the consequences for my patients who are dealing with the WCB system.”

After seeing a troubling pattern among patients dealing with WCB, Dr Hershler decided to take an in-depth look at the impacts on a sample of these patients. He and co-author Kia Salomons interviewed nine patients with chronic pain resulting from workplace injuries. The authors identified seven key issues facing chronic pain sufferers, including long periods of time with on-and-off payment of compensation or no compensation at all; lack of income and depletion of financial resources; disbelief on the part of employers and WCB; and undue pressure to engage in job search, even when their injuries should have ruled this out.

But what disturbed Dr Hershler most about his findings was the extent to which the interviewees had contemplated suicide – four out of the nine – and attempted it –

two of the nine. These findings are reflective of WCB’s own statistics on suicide. An internal document available on the agency’s website shows a startling and steady increase in “threats of suicide,” from only a handful in the early 2000s to almost 200 in 2010.

In his recommendations for change, Dr Hershler offers concrete ideas for improving patient care and reducing physical and emotional suffering. These include ensuring economic stability during the claims process (including appeals, which can take many years to resolve), not sending patients with serious chronic pain back to work too soon, and ending inappropriate work searches.

One of Dr Hershler’s biggest concerns is that claimants must rely on doctors and rehab specialists employed or contracted by WCB for their treatment. “The priority should be helping the worker recover as much as they possibly can, and this requires collaboration with the patient’s own family doctor and pain specialists. The patient should be able to rely primarily on their own providers, whose familiarity and expertise are essential to their recovery, and those providers should play more of a role in WCB’s decision-making process about the patient’s claim and entitlement to benefits, including pensions.”

Work injuries, chronic pain and the harmful effects of WorkSafeBC/WCB compensation denial: A policy brief is published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives’ BC Office and is available at policyalternatives.ca/wcb-chronic-pain.

Directory of locations, organizations, publications of interest

MLA COMMUNITY OFFICES

Cowichan Valley Community Office, Bill Routley: MLA, 273 Trunk Road, Duncan, BC, or PO Box 599, Duncan, BC, V9L 3X9, phone 250-715-0127, toll free 1-877-715-0127, fax 250-715-0139, email bill.routley.mla@leg.bc.ca.

Esquimalt-Royal Roads Community Office, Maurine Karagianis, MLA: A5-100 Aldersmith Place, View Royal, BC, V9A 7M8, phone 250-479-8326, email maurine.karagianis.mla@leg.bc.ca or visit her website at www.maurinek-aragianis.ca.

Juan de Fuca Community Office, John Horgan, MLA, 122-2806 Jacklin Road, Victoria, BC V9B 5A4, phone 250-391-2801, fax 250-391-2804, email john.horgan.mla@leg.bc.ca.

Saanich South Community Office, Lana Popham, MLA: 4085 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC, v8 1K5, email lana.popham.mla@leg.bc.ca, or visit website at www.saanichsouth.ca.

Saanich North and the Islands Community Office, Gary Holman, MLA., 2393 Beacon Avenue, Sidney, BC , phone: 250 655-5711, toll-free: 1-855 955-5711, fax: 250 655-7398, email gary.holman.mla.leg.bc.ca.

Victoria-Beacon Hill Community Office, Carole James, MLA: 1084 Forst Street, Victoria,BC, V8V 3K4, phone 250-952-4211, fax 250-952-4586, email carole.james.mla@leg.bc.ca.

Victoria-Swan Lake Community Office, Rob Fleming, MLA: 1020 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8T 2A2, email rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca.

MPs and COMMUNITY OFFICES

Jean Crowder, MP, House of Commons, Confederation Building, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6., email crowder1A@@parl.gc.ca.

Nanaimo-Cowichan Community Office, Jean Crowder, MP, 101-128 Ingram Street,. Duncan, BC, V9L 1P1, email jean@jeancrowder.ca or visit her website at www.jeancrowder.ca.

Randall Garrison, MP, House of Commons, Confederation Building, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6, email randall.garrison@parl.gc.ca.

Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca Community Office, Randall Garrison, MP, A2-1000 Aldersmith Place, Victoria, BC, V9A 7M8, open 10 am-4 pm, Monday-Thursday or by appointment. Phone 250-405-4550; fax 250-405-4568.

Murray Rankin, MP, House of Commons, Confederation Building,Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6. email murray.rankin@parl.gc.ca, or visit his website at www.murrayrankin.ca/

Victoria Community Office, Murray Rankin, MP, 1057 Fort Street, Victoria, V8V 3K5, phone 250-363-3600, fax 250-363-8422, email him at murray.rankin@parl.gc.ca

PROVINCIAL NDP CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS

Cowichan Valley New Democrats: Write PO Box 102, Duncan, BC, V9L 1P0, or contact president Deb Foster, at 250-510-0544 or by email at deb.foster21@gmail.com, or email cowichanvalley.NDP@shaw.ca.

Esquimalt-Royal Roads New Democrats: Write Box 231, 110-174 Wilson Street, Victoria, BC, V9A 7N7 or email esquimaltroyalroads@gmail.com.

Juan de Fuca New Democrats: Phone president Sharon Wilkinsn at 250-478-5907 or email her at sawilkinson@shaw.ca.

Oak Bay-Gordon Head New Democrats: Write PO Box 5539, LCD 9, Victoria, BC, V8R 6S4 or contact president Keith Todd at 250-598-8039 or by email at keith.todd@shaw.bc.ca.

Saanich North and the Islands New Democrats: Email president Allan Collier at silcol@telus.net.

Saanich South New Democrats: Write PO Box 30041, RPO Reynolds, Victoria, BC, V8X 5E1, phone 250-479-1100, or email emrogers@uvic.ca

Victoria-Beacon Hill New Democrats: Write PO Box 8523, Victoria, BC, V8W 3S1 attention President Marilyn Callahan.

Victoria-Swan Lake New Democrats: Contact the president at President@vslndp.ca or write PO Box 282, 1681 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8T 2C1.

FEDERAL NDP RIDING ASSOCIATIONS

Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke New Democrats: Contact president Jared Butcher at 778-676-4033. or email him at jared.butcher2010@gmail.com or write to PO Box 622, 105-1497 Admirals Road, Victoria, BC, V9A 2P8.

Cowichan -Malahat-Langford New Democrats (formerly Nanaimo-Cowichan): Contact president Anne Balding at 250-710-0351 or email her at a.balding@hotmail.com.

Saanich-Gulf Islands New Democrats: Contact co-president Nox Gyes Edith Loring-Kuhanga, at 4169 Quadra Street, Victoria, BC V8X 1L3, or by phone at 250-881-1212, or by email at loring-kuhanga@gmail.com, or by email to ndpsaanichgulfislands@gmail.com or Irene Wright (Gulf Islands) by phone/fax at 250-537-5347, or email to aiwright@telus.net.. See also Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SaanichGulfIslands or website: http://alturl.com/ofyvb8.

Victoria New Democrats: To contact president Deb Foster, 250-510-0544, write to PO Box 8383, Victoria, BC V8W 3R9 or visit their website at www.victoriandp.ca.

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL NDP OFFICES

BC New Democrats: 5367 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, V5H 2G1, phone 604-430-8600, fax 604-432-9517, toll free 1-888-868-3637.

Canada's New Democrats: 300-279 Laurie West, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5J9, phone 613-236-3613, toll free, 1-866-525-2555, fax 613-230-9950, TTY: 1-866-776-7742.

OTHER GROUPS YOU MAY WANT TO REACH

Amnesty International--Canadian Section: www.amnesty.org

BC Council of Senior Citizens Organizations: phone 604-438-3221.

BC Latin American Congress: 4184 Brant Street, Vancouver, BC, V5N 5B4, phone 604-879-3246, fax 604-872-6776, email bclac@vcn.bc.ca.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives: 410-75 Albert Street, Ottawa ON, K1P 5E7, phone 613-563-1341, fax 613-233-1458, email ccpa@policyalternatives.ca, website www.policyalternatives.ca.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives--BC Office, 1400-207 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 1H7, phone 604-801-5121, fax 604-801-5122, website: ww.policcyalternatives.ca.

Canadian Health Coalition: phone 613-233-1018.

Canadian Labour Congress (Pacific Region): 201-5118 Joyce Street, Vancouver, BC, V5R 4H1; Regional Representative Iris Taylor, phone 604-430-6766, ext 267, fax 604-430-6762.

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East, Victoria Chapter: Victoria, BC, phone 778-679-2943 or email frances.everett@cjpme.org. Enquiries, new members, guests welcome. CJPME's website can be found at www.cjpme.org.

Council of Canadians, Victoria Chapter: 203-391 Tyee Road, Victoria, BC V9A 0A9. Info@victoriacouncilofcanadians.ca and www.victoriacouncilofcanadians.ca.

Canadian Wildlife Federation: 350 Michael Cowpland Drive, Kanata, ON, K2M 2W1, phone 1-800-563-9453, or visit www.cwf-fcf.org.

Cool Aid Society: www.CoolAid.org; phone 250-383-1977: Building homes, lives and community. Cool Aid creates opportunities for people who are homeless or living in poverty. We make a difference through housing, health care, support and emergency shelters. Founded in 1968, Cool Aid helps over 9,000 people in the Capital Region every year, at 14 locations in Langford, Victoria and Saanich. The Society's major new campaign is "Help End Homelessness", to build an additional 360 apartments for people in the community who have no home.

Ecojustice: 214-131 Water Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 4M3, phone 1-800-926-7444.

Human Rights Internet: www.hri.ca.

Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria: phone 250-388-4728, fax 250-386-4395.

Mining Justice Action Committee (MJAC): contact Heather Tufts at htufts@shaw.ca or

Sharlene Patterson at daveandshar@shaw.ca.

NAPO (National Anti-Poverty Organization) News: advocates for the poor in communities, courts and political arenas, www.napo-onap.ca.

NDP Socialist Caucus: www.ndpsocialists.ca. "Our aim and ongoing struggle as New Democrats must be to establish a Socialist Canada."

Parliamentary website lists all federal cabinet ministers, parliamentary scretaries and opposition spokesepersons. Visit www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/people/key/critic.asp?language=E

Seniors' Advocacy Services (Seniors Entitlement Service), sponsored by the Greater Victoria Seniors (OAPO) organization and located at the Blanshard Community Centre, 901 Kings Rd, (Kings and Dowler Streets), close to the #4 and #6 buses on Quadra St. Service is free to seniors 55+ in Greater Victoria. Normally open on Mondays & Thursdays from 9-3 pm and Wednesdays from 9-12 noon. We will be closed for summer break from July 15 to August 19. For more information please phone 250-388-7696.

Seniors Serving Seniors: 109-1022 Pandora Avenue, Victoria, BC, V8V 3P5, phone 250-382-4331.

South Island Health Coalition, an affiliate of the BC Health Coalition. If you are concerned about access affordability and quality of health care in our community, get involved by calling co-chairs Dale Perkins at 250-592-5487 or Wendy Strong at 250-592-1222.

Together Against Poverty Society (TAPS): 302-895 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1H7, phone 250-361-3521; fax 250-361-3541.

Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society: Third floor, 535 Yates Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 2Z6 phone 250-361-9433, fax 250-361-1914 or see website www.virca.bc.ca.

Victoria Labour Council: 219-2750 Quadra street, Victoria, BC, V8T 4E8, phone 250-384-8331, fax 250-384-8381, email vlcbc@telsu.net.; Mike Eso, president, Stan Dzibik, treasurer, Kim Manotn, secretary Michael Maloney...

World Wildlife Federation: 410-245 Eglington Avenue East, Toronto, ON, M4P 3J1, phone 1-800-26-PANDA, fax 416-489-8055, website www.wwf.ca.

United Nations Association of Canada (UNAC)--Victoria Branch: 202-3293 Douglas Street, Victoria, BC, V8Z 3K9, phone 250-475-2868, fax 250-475-5898, email unavic@coast-net.com or website www.unac.org.

ALTERNATIVE PUBLICATIONS

Canadian Dimension Magazine: An independent forum for Left-wing political thought and discussion — including just about the entire range of what passes for the Left in Canada. A few years ago we adopted the banner "a magazine for people who want to change the world". That's still a good summary of who we are. Subscriptions from \$29.99. See http://canadiandimension.com for more information.Or contact them by mail at Canadian Dimension, 2E-91 Albert Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 1G5, or by phone at 204-957-1519 or oll-ree: 1-800-737-7051.

CCPA Monitor: a monthly journal sent free to all members, and published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Canada's leading organization for articulating progressive, positive social policy reform. Ever constructive and independent. Contact them at CCPA National Office, Suite 500, 251 Bank Street, Ottawa ON, K2P 1X3; tel: 613-563-1341; fax: 613-233-1458; email: ccpa@policyalternatives.ca.

Our Times: Canada's independent labour magazine and read by most labour organizations and other supporters of working people. Check its website at www.ourtimes.ca.

The Dominion: a monthly paper published by an incipient network of independent journalists in Canada. It aims to provide accurate, critical coverage that is accountable to its readers and the subjects it tackles. Taking its name from Canada's official status as both a colony and a colonial force, the Dominion examines politics, culture and daily life with a view to understanding the exercise of power. It can be purchased at Bolen Books, Victoria, Camas Books & Infoshop, Victoria, Dark Horse Books, Victoria, and Munro's Bookstore Ltd, Victoria.Or suscribe and Receive an email notice when a new issue is online: Visit http://www.dominionpaper.ca/ to view the paper and to subscribe.

Turn Left: Official magazine of the NDP socialist caucus, is published for each federal and Ontario provincial convention. It is written and edited and by SC supporters but also includes articles by and interviews with progressive activists from

Lower Island NEWS

outside the NDP as well. Download the paper at www.ndpsocialists.ca/Issues.html

ALTERNATIVE WEBSITES

www.alternet.org--A US website featuring alternative articles on US and world politics, an online magazine and information source.

www.avaaz.org/en/global--By confronting such threats as global warming together, Avaaz hopes to build a more just, tolelrant and vibrant world.

www.counterpunch.org--An American website with a left-wing viewpoint.

http://dominionpaper.ca--A Canadian ezine covering national and international stories that mainstream sources maynot cover.

www.globalproblematique.net--is an invitation to participate in a carefully conceived sustainability-oriented process. The story is organized as a linear flow. First it explains why and how we address the World Problematique in this fashion. Then, it branches out into four distinct, interactive threads. For more information go to the website.

www.lowerislandnews.com is a democratic socialist tabloid newspaper published in Victoria, BC, four or five times a year.

http://newsdaily.ca--CanadaNewsdaily.ca is a good (and bad) news service with a refreshingly non-corporate view of the news, from local to global stories, with features, opinion, analysis--all for free, including classified ads. Newsdaily covers Canadian and world news, plus a focused look at British Columbia, Victoria, and the Islands.

www.ndpsocialists.ca/Issues.html

mai-not@globalproblematique.net--Originally set up to discuss the implications the Multilateral Agreement on on Investments, this website and related email list now discuss world-wide developments of concern to left wing readers.

http://pacificfreepress.com

www.pejnews.com--Peace, Earth & Justice News, a free email and web service, provides news, opinion and analysis of peace, environment (earth) and justice issues. Stay informed with postings often days, weeks and months ahead of the mainstream media, and often never covered in the mass market. PEJ News is produced entirely by volunteers, and is a project of the non-profit Prometheus Institute based in Victoria, Canada.

www.policyalternatives.ca--The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' webpage offers research reports, books amd opinion pieces on issues of social and economic justice.

www.rabble.ca--A cheeky site offering original stories, feature articles and columns from some of the progressive voices in Canada.

http://socialcoast.org

http://socialenvironmentalliance.word-press.com

www.straightgoods.ca--A watchdog working for Canadian consumers and citizens.

www.thetyee.ca--BC news and views from a non-corporate perspective.

www.truthout.org--US website with Real news.

www.victoriacarshare.ca--If you don't want to own a car, but still need to drive one sometimes, then this website may be for you.

www.vivelecanada.ca--The mission of Vive le Canada is to protect and improve Canadian sovereignties and democracy through education, dialogue, and advocacy, especially using existing and emerging communications tools. We believe that the direction of this country should be set by its citizens, rather than by corporations or corporate trade bodies/trade agreements, the United States, or a small number of Canadian corporate elites.

www.wsws.org--The World Socialist Web Site is the Internet centre of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). It provides analysis of major world events, comments on political, cultural, historical and philosophical issues, and valuable documents and studies from the heritage of the socialist movement.