



## How Best to Return Canada to a Peace-Promoting Nation?

**T**his Discussion Paper contains two articles by authors who propose different ways to return Canada from a war-promoting nation to its more historic and honourable role as a peace-keeping and peace-building nation. The articles were written specifically for this Discussion Paper, but neither set of authors saw the other's work until the articles were submitted.

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice have previously treated the proposal for a Department of Peace with scepticism because of the government's tendency to co-opt or subvert peace-promoting initiatives, as noted in both articles. Readers are encouraged to send their views and comments to the Justnews Editor (address on back page). Depending on the volume of material received, letters will be published in whole or in part, or will be summarized in a future regular issue of Justnews. Ed.

### A DEPARTMENT OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE FOR CANADA

By Saul Arbess

*"The very agonies of war and the dark night of suffering that has lasted centuries are awakening civilization to a new understanding: the peoples of the Earth have a sacred right to peace." Senator Douglas Roche*

**W**hy has no nation in the world created a department of peace when lasting peace is humanity's most universal aspiration? Yet, every nation has a department of defence, until recently called war departments, and several, including Canada, have added departments emulating the US Department of Homeland Security.

The Canadian Department of Peace Initiative aspires to mobilize Canadians around the objective of creating a Department of Peace (DoP), and to convince government that this development is timely.

The Canadian Department of Peace Initiative's national campaign has already been endorsed by 15 organizations, including the Council of Canadians, World Federalist

*continued on page 2*



### PEACE THROUGH DISARMAMENT NOT MILITARISM

By Susan Clarke & Joan Russow

**A** Ministry of Peace was first envisioned in George Orwell's 1984, and re-envisioned today as a federal department in a government that concurrently advocates peace and endorses war. This duality is inherent in the federal government's policy of "integrated peace and security operations" outlined in the 2005 International

Policy Statement.

The key strategy of this foreign policy is the "3-D (defence-diplomacy-development) approach to conflict and post-conflict," an approach that co-opts the independent roles and mandates of the Department of Foreign Affairs (diplomacy), Department of National Defence (defence), and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA, development). Not acknowledged is the integration of 3-D with Canada's globalized trade policy. In practice, 3-D has allowed Canada to play a belligerent, offensive and destructive role while appearing benevolent through reconstructing what was destroyed.

*continued on page 4*

Movement-Canada, Physicians for Global Survival, Canadian Pugwash Group, Conscience Canada, the Dalai Lama Foundation of Canada and World Conference on Peace and Religion. Its prominent supporters include distinguished Canadian peace-builders such as the Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, Senator Doug Roche and Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford.

Members of the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative are also founding members of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace representing 24 countries. The Initiative hosted the 18-country Summit for Departments of Peace in Victoria, and was prominent at the World Peace Forum in Vancouver in June, 2006.

Members of the Department of Peace Initiative hope that a Cabinet-level Minister of Peace, with the support of Canadians everywhere, will fundamentally change the nature of debate and decision-making in Cabinet, and act as the focal point for the implementation of a culture of peace in Canada and abroad. We seek to develop peace-building as an operational principle of society.

#### **THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF A DEPARTMENT OF PEACE**

The Department of Peace would provide coordination, coherence, effectiveness and timeliness of policy in all areas of peace-related activity. This would strengthen other department mandates, of which some seven are now involved in some aspect of peace work. In particular, the DoP would focus on early warning of potential conflicts that threaten to erupt into violence, early non-violent intervention, root causes of violence, peace diplomacy, and peace-building.

The DoP would have both international and domestic responsibilities, including support for preparation of peace-education materials from pre-school to secondary schools, and peace and conflict studies at the university level.

The DoP would provide for the enhancement of existing citizen initiatives at the community level in areas such as restorative justice, Alternatives to Violence Projects (AVP) and Non-Violent Communication (NVC).

There would be strong civil society participation through a Commission and Commissioner on Peace. The Commission would consist of

representatives from peace and justice organizations and prominent Canadians representing our full cultural and religious diversity. It would provide oversight on government actions related to peace. The Commissioner would be an officer of Parliament, and she or he would report to Parliament on progress made by Canada towards a culture of peace and non-violence.

#### **HOW MIGHT A MINISTER AND DEPARTMENT OF PEACE HAVE INFLUENCED RECENT CANADIAN POLICY?**

Canada's foreign and defence policies have dramatically shifted in recent years, as exemplified by Canada's involvement in Afghanistan. Without any parliamentary debate or public hearings (except for a six-hour debate on extending the mission), our policy moved from an emphasis on peacekeeping and multilateral peace diplomacy to active counterinsurgency operations and abandonment of peacekeeping in favour of fighting the US "war on terror." Who was there to offer an alternative, or to debate these issues? Surely not the Department of National Defence (DND) or

Department of Public Safety, nor even the Department of Foreign Affairs, committed as it is to deep integration with the US.

Members of the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative feel that, had a Minister of Peace been in place, he or she would have been able to stimulate a debate on policy, and present constructive, non-violent alternatives consistent with a mandate to transform conflict by peaceful means. Further, the Commission on Peace would have given civil society organizations considerable influence through its ability to apply pressure in support of non-violent approaches. The Commission would have been a voice for the grassroots peace movement. This kind of input and oversight was sadly missing when fateful decisions on Afghanistan were made.

Some have argued that a DoP would subvert the grassroots peace movement in Canada, replacing its views and voice with those of politicians and bureaucrats. The movement would be co-opted in this way. Further, critics suggest that, if a DoP existed, it would be a powerless department vis à vis the big players in Cabinet, and thus be ineffective. Members of the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative,



Image from The Big Box of Art, 2002©

*continued on page 3*

however, believe that the role of civil society would be increased and strengthened by a DoP with its unique mandate, so desperately needed and yet absent from Cabinet at this time.

Peace initiative members look ahead and ask, what happens should the movement to bring Canadian soldiers home early from Afghanistan succeed? There would still be no architecture of peace in Canada to address the problems in Afghanistan, but the well-honed and funded architecture of war remains, leaving only a military option as a likely response to the next perceived emergency.

#### **INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

The DoP would provide an architecture of peace that would work to transform other departments, in particular DND, towards peaceful conversion of the military and the defence industries. It could provide the long-range thinking and research to address the root causes of violence. The methodologies of peace-building are presently fine-tuned and a global roster of peace-builders exists to implement them.

Further, the DoP would be the visible link with the UN and our Ambassador to the UN to coordinate efforts and to implement UN treaties and conventions as they relate to peace. At this time, many such agreements to which Canada is a signatory simply languish after signing.

Currently, in 2006-2007, the DND's budget is approximately \$15.2 billion. A mere 2%, or \$304M, of that budget would be enough for the initial establishment of the DoP. If there were a genuine government commitment to shift from war-fighting to peace-building, then, over a 10-year period, the DoP budget could be increased by 1% annually, with a corresponding 1% annual decline in the DND budget.

The Human Security Report, [www.humansecurityreport.info](http://www.humansecurityreport.info), September 2005, the first such global report, provides a critical rationale for departments of peace. It states that, despite important gains overall in human security, "the international community's successes in reducing armed conflict worldwide ... have been achieved despite inadequate resources, ad hoc planning, inappropriate mandates (in the case of UN peace operations) and lack of support from the countries most able to help. With additional resources, more appropriate mandates, and a greater commitment to conflict prevention and peace-

building, far more could be achieved. Effective policy...requires better understanding of global and regional security trends-and why some conflict prevention and mitigation strategies succeed while others fail, (p.10)." This is precisely the framework within which a DoP would function, filling a major gap in policy and program formation presently existing in Canada. As a prosperous middle power, we are well-situated to be a leader in this initiative.

As the Human Security Report indicates, the peoples of the world are becoming increasingly "war-averse" as we have seen in the unprecedented demonstrations against the US-led invasion of Iraq before that invasion began. Proponents of the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative see it as a movement that seeks to establish structures in government that respond to this strongly-felt need to end violent conflict and implement the culture of peace for which we all thirst.

*Dr. Saul Arbess is spokesperson for the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative.  
[www.departmentofpeace.ca](http://www.departmentofpeace.ca)  
He may be reached at [sarbess@shaw.ca](mailto:sarbess@shaw.ca)*

#### **Spend a Day with**



**Friday May 17, 2007**

**University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, B.C.**

**9 am Registration**

**9:30 am Workshop: Guaranteed Liveable  
Income, with Cindy L'Hirondelle**

**12:00-1:15 Lunch**

**1:30 Keynote speaker: To be announced**

**2:30 Annual General Meeting  
(This is your official notice)**

**Then join us for dinner**

**Further details to be announced on the CUSJ e-list, or if you have not received the session details by May 1st, and are planning to attend, please call Bob Stevenson at 613-725-3259, or Julia Varga at 250-381-3476**

Buoyed up with euphemistic doctrines such as "human security," "humanitarian intervention" and "the Responsibility to Protect," the Canadian government has justified exorbitant increases in military budgets.

Through these supposedly humanitarian doctrines, an aggressor or so-called "international coalition" can legitimize military intervention in a state that has been destabilized and then labelled a "failed state." The protection of civilians as a pretext for military intervention and occupation is usually applied to states slated for regime change. These doctrines benefit the military-industrial complex but not the victims of "collateral damage."

Given the irreversible social, environmental, economic and psychological consequences of war, under no circumstance or conditions is war legal, just or humanitarian.

A Department of Peace, headed by a senior cabinet minister, would be aligned with government ideology and the current commitment to the so-called "War on Terror." Cabinet ministers would have to respect party discipline or be replaced.

#### **A COMMISSION FOR DISARMAMENT**

Instead of a new government department, what is needed is an independent advocate-a Commission for Disarmament. The mandate of the commission would be to examine government policies and priorities and address the serious discrepancy between government "peace rhetoric" and its "war-making actions."

The Commission for Disarmament would be independent and have the following clear mandate to:

- Scrutinize Treasury Board estimates of the Department of National Defence and other collaborating departments to discern the total allocation to the Canadian war budget and reallocate funds to the promotion of peace;
- Call for Canada to withdraw membership and support for military alliances such as NATO with its first-strike nuclear policy, and NORAD with its ballistic missile defence;
- Call for Canada, in international forums, to: a) support global disarmament and the strengthening of the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) and b) oppose the use of preventive or pre-emptive aggression and the misuse of the provision for self-defence to legitimize the invasion and occupation of other states;

- Terminate the use of Canadian facilities and institutions for military research and contracts;
- Acknowledge the irreversible damage resulting from the entire nuclear-energy cycle and the inextricable link between civil nuclear energy and the development of nuclear arms including depleted uranium, and call for the immediate end to the production and export of uranium and the phasing out of Canada's nuclear-energy industry;
- Ensure that Canadian policy complies with the purpose of the United Nations "to prevent the scourge of war," and that the Canadian government respect the rule of international law and the jurisdiction and decisions of the International Court of Justice. The Commission will compel the government to enact legislation that ensures compliance with Canada's international obligations and commitments related to guaranteeing human rights, protecting the environment, preventing war or conflict, and ensuring social justice;

- Call for the revoking of licences of all corporations operating in Canada that have violated international law and contributed to the destabilization of other states;
- Demand phasing out the production of weapons or components of weapon systems for the international arms trade and for the institution, in consultation with the International Labour Organization (ILO), of a fair and just transition program for affected workers;
- Call for the divestment of government funds, including pension funds, in corporations that produce weapons, their delivery systems, or components;
- Demand whatever further actions are necessary to effect the promotion of peace.

A Department of Peace in a government that is so deeply complicit in war profiteering and war-fighting furthers Canada's hypocrisy and duplicity. Only if Canada's war-making policies and propaganda were abandoned could Canada be an honest promoter of peace.

*Susan Clarke and Joan Russow are members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Victoria Peace Coalition*



## The economics of war and peace

Researcher Dave Hubert, in his book *Canada @ Peace*, estimates that, instead of spending over \$4 billion tax dollars on CF-18 fighter jets and related costs such as training pilots, maintenance, operating costs and fuel, an extra 4,133 Canadians could have been hired for 20 years in a variety of service occupations such as health care workers, conservation officers, teachers and up to 8,266

childcare workers; 27,500 homes could have been built, waterways and forests restored, and infrastructure, such as roads, repaired and improved.

Dr. Tim Wallis, of the group Peaceworkers UK, has pointed out that his organization could recruit and train 1000 civilian peace workers over five years at a cost of approximately \$1 million Canadian, which is "less than the cost of maintaining UK troops in Iraq for a single day."

Another British researcher, Scilla Elworthy, (*Cutting the Costs of War*, Oxford Research Group) notes: "The British government currently provides subsidies to arms exporters of 426 million pounds per annum [2004]. For that amount we could: support the setting up of gun collection schemes in every single country where there is local killing... introduce effective boundary controls to gun-running, with severe and enforceable penalties; fully support the EU commitment to develop a 'Civilian Crisis Management Capacity' by providing training for civilians ready to join."



The CF-18 Hornet fighter jet: \$30,000,000 each

34

August 2006 • FOCUS

### Canada: from peace-keeper to war-monger

The Senate committee on national security and defence, made up of Liberal and Conservative senators, "*unanimously* [emphasis added] called on Canada to re-launch talks to participate in the American anti-missile shield as well as to join the race to put weapons in space" reported the *Globe and Mail* in October, 2006.

This after many Canadians fervently bade the former Liberal government do just the opposite.

"The truth is that there is nothing inherently evil about weapons, just as there is nothing inherently sacred about space," the Senate report said. "To some critics the idea of putting weapons in space is unthinkable. To this committee, what is really unthinkable is waiting so long that potential adversaries are allowed to gain an advantage in space that might be insurmountable." (*Globe and Mail*, Friday October 6, 2006.)

Oh where, oh where has our democracy gone? The Senate, granted, is not elected, but is this what we get or deserve from the body of "sober second thought?" It's enough to make one become, if not a tea-totaller, at least an abolitionist.



The idea for the establishment of a U.S. Department of Peace can be traced back to debates by the framers of the U.S. Constitution. George Washington declared in 1783 in his "Sentiments on a Peace Establishment" that "a large Army in time of Peace hath ever been considered dangerous to the liberties of a Country." The first formal proposal for the establishment of a U.S. Department of Peace dates to 1792. This was the product of efforts by architect and publisher Benjamin Banneker and physician and educator Dr. Benjamin Rush. Their proposal called for the establishment of a "Peace Office" which was to be on equal footing with the "War Department." Their proposal also referred to the urgent need for the establishment of "an office for promoting and preserving perpetual peace in our country" in order to maintain the greater welfare of "these United States." The full text of "A Plan of a Peace-Office for the United States" can be found at <http://www.lewrockwell.com/vance/vance76.html>.

*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

**JUSTnews** is published by

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice  
Bob Stevenson, President  
president@cusj.org  
telephone 613-729-3765

**Editorial Committee**

Philip Symons, Editor, Mel Johnston,  
Bert MacBain, Nichola Martin, Julia Varga

**Production Team**

Ruth di Giovanni, Meg Gourlay, Bert  
MacBain and Bob Van Alstyne.

Submissions to or enquiries regarding  
JUSTnews should be addressed to  
the Editor:

2125 Lansdowne Rd.,  
Victoria, B.C., V8P 1B5;  
FAX 250-592-6484;  
philmar@islandnet.com

The views published herein do not  
necessarily reflect views and opinions of  
the Canadian Unitarian Council, Canadian  
Unitarians for Social Justice or all  
Canadian Unitarian Universalists.

**PLEASE CHECK YOUR LABEL!**

**JUSTnews** relies on annual CUSJ  
membership dues to cover its costs.  
Please check the top line of your mailing  
label (below) on this issue to see if you  
are due to renew. You can use the  
renewal form just here to the right ➡

If you do not have a mailing label, please  
consider joining CUSJ. One of the benefits  
of supporting CUSJ is that you will  
receive your very own copy of **JUSTnews**  
regularly!

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The CUSJ purposes are:

- to develop and maintain a vibrant network of Unitarian social action in Canada and elsewhere and to pro-actively represent Unitarian principles and values in matters of social justice, and in particular
- to provide opportunities, including through publication of newsletters, for Unitarians and friends to apply their religious, humanistic, and spiritual values to social action aimed at the relief of (1) poverty and economic injustice, (2) discrimination based on religious, racial or other grounds. (3) abuses of human rights whether of individuals or peoples, (4) abuses of democratic process, and
- to promote peace and security, environmental protection, education, and literacy in keeping with the spirit of Unitarian values.

These purposes are an integral part of the Constitution of CUSJ, adopted at the CUSJ Annual Meeting in Mississauga, Ontario, May 19, 1999, and amended at the 2003 AGM.

I agree with the above Statement of Purpose, and wish to:

☐ join or ☐ renew membership in CUSJ.

Enclosed please find my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Add me to the CUSJ Listserv: ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ I want to know more

Name of Congregation (if a UU member):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail to:** CUSJ Membership, c/o Bob Staveley, P.O. Box  
40011, Ottawa, ON, K1V 0W8

Publications mail agreement No. 40037866



Return address:  
140 Roger Rd.  
Ottawa ON  
K1H 5C8



Printed on recycled paper