



The War Resisters Support Campaign

By Valerie Lannon

In March 2004, Jeremy Hinzman became the first American to leave the US military and move to Canada in order to protest involvement in America's war on Iraq. When a representative of the US anti-war group, Military Families Speak Out, contacted the Toronto Stop the War Coalition to see whether it could assist Jeremy, the War Resisters Support Campaign was born.

By the end of 2004, local chapters of the Campaign had emerged in BC and several cities in Ontario. The number of chapters continues to grow.

Above all else, the Campaign is a political initiative that calls on the Canadian government to let US war resisters stay in Canada, as happened during the US war on Vietnam. Campaign members have gathered tens of thousands of signatures on their petition to the Prime Minister, and have lobbied with local Members of Parliament. To date, the Campaign has been endorsed by the NDP, and by individual members of the Bloc Quebecois and the Liberal Party.

The Campaign also provides practical support to those fleeing persecution from the US military. Campaign members have raised thousands of dollars in order to pay the legal bills associated with the resisters' refugee applications. Until another provision is made in Canadian immigration policy, resisters have no means for staying in Canada other than by claiming refugee status. Funds are also required to pay for living expenses, like food, clothing, and transportation, until resisters can become financially independent through social assistance or work permits.

Campaigners have also opened their homes to provide housing for the resisters until they can reach independence. In some cities, like Vancouver and Toronto, larger safe houses are available to provide this supportive accommodation.

Valerie Lannon is a long-time peace and social justice activist. She helped to establish the Victoria chapter of the War Resisters' Support Campaign. She wrote this article specifically for Justnews. Donations to the campaign may be sent to the national office at 427 Bloor St., Box 13, Toronto, ON M5S 1X7; e-mail: resisters@sympatico.ca

Why support the war resisters? The majority of Canadians, indeed the majority of the world's population, continues to oppose the invasion and occupation of Iraq. They, therefore, are very sympathetic to members of the US military who are also opposed and who have few options to staying out of the military conflict. Some supporters also see the Campaign as a way of resisting President Bush's so-called "war on terror"; i.e. by supporting the resistance inside the US military itself, the Campaign can play a key role in ending the occupation of Iraq.

Our response to those who point out that the resisters

volunteered for duty, and were not drafted, is to emphasize a number of points. First, there is a very real "poverty draft" going on, with predatory recruiters targeting poor regions of the country where job options are extremely limited. Secondly, although resisters volunteered, is their only alternative now to continue with the US military and knowingly commit war crimes? Even Kofi Annan has stated that the war is illegal, so why would we insist that resisters continue to support the Bush agenda?

There are now a couple of dozen resisters with active refugee applications. Campaign lawyers have received about 200 additional, serious inquiries. And there are approximately 10,000 members of the US military AWOL. We can

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... and much more

President's Report

Bob Stevenson

After a slow start during the summer, our CUSJ is moving into at least middle gear. Your Board has had teleconferences in June and this October, as well as an Executive meeting in September.

The treasurer, Bob Stavely, tells me that there are forty new members; if everyone renews their membership that will bring our total to 500. Our own local chapter in Ottawa is working to expand its membership. On October 26th I spoke to sixty seniors at their monthly luncheon about the good work of CUSJ. Please keep encouraging Unitarians to join with us. We need more than ten percent of the national membership.

We are working well with the CUC with whom we have Associate Status. For example, on September 27th, Mary Bennett of the CUC was able to tell us of the good work being done by our national body and the nine monitoring groups.

In terms of lobbying the federal government, four letters have been sent as of October 1st after being circulated for comment to all Board members. The topics included: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Global Warming, the role of Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, and the need to implement the recommendations of Justice O'Connor in the case of Maher Arar.

Your Board has also endorsed two campaigns: the project to ban terminator seeds and the work to stop mass registration and surveillance. The former national campaign is organized by USC-Canada (formally the Unitarian Service Committee). More information about having your local chapter join the mailing campaign is available at www.ban-terminator.org. The latter is an international campaign and was selected at our AGM as the "focus of the year". This is quite a complex topic and I hope that you have received background material. We have now joined more than one hundred organizations in calling for a moratorium of this global project of mass registration and surveillance. The endorsement site for individuals and groups is at www.i-cams.org. The International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group is the small Ottawa-based NGO coordinating the Canadian action of this international project. 'Google' their site for more information.

Please note that it is not necessary to wait for a member of the Board to initiate a letter of social concern. You may wish to circulate a letter on the list-serve and then forward your final copy to the Board for consideration. We are striving to follow our principle of democratic structure in a large country with a small membership linked together chiefly by e-mail. The mandate of CUSJ covers many different interests and your Board of Directors will do all that it can to act on any issue that falls within our mandate. ■



WAR RESISTERS...

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assume that at least some of them are living

underground in Canada, possibly waiting for the outcome of the Campaign before stepping forward.

The first cases, like that of Jeremy Hinzman (see "War Resisters' Stories" this issue), are currently winding their way through the legal system. The Canadian government intervened early in the process to say that arguments about the illegality of the war should not be included as evidence in the refugee hearings. This has meant that, so far, none of the applications has been approved, and that appeals are underway. The cases of Jeremy Hinzman and Brandon Hughey await a hearing before the Federal Court of Appeal.

What can interested persons do to help? Given the political climate, with Harper and Ignatieff only too keen to support US foreign policy, it is paramount that our Members of Parliament know there is huge support for those who leave the US military for refusing to be part of Bush's wars. The Campaign features an extremely practical web site, www.resisters.ca, which offers petitions for people to sign, and an opportunity to obtain signatures from friends, families, neighbours, co-workers, or other colleagues. There is also a sample letter to a member of parliament that we encourage people to submit to their local MP, and to encourage others to submit as well.

If one resides in a community where resisters are coming to live, then one can always help by providing short-term or longer term housing, and by offering financial assistance.

Best of all, one can become active in supporting or creating a local chapter of the Campaign to broaden and deepen its reach. Contrary to popular belief, the policy that was approved by the Canadian government during the Vietnam war was not generously provided by Trudeau from his own initiative. It was a policy that had to be fought for by ordinary Canadians, the same kind of Canadians who support the Campaign today. Please do your part to support the brave members of the US military who refuse to serve the interests of George Bush.

WHY I RAN

A military deserter explains why he left the Army for Canada

By Rachael Daigle

In a war fought by voluntary soldiers, the line between military deserter and war resister can be slim. At the age of 19, Boise native Robin Long enlisted in the United States Army seeking a job with steady pay, medical benefits and a chance to go to college. Two years later, while stationed in a non-deployable unit at Fort Knox, Kentucky, Private first class (Pfc.) Long and a handful of troops from his unit received orders to go to Iraq. Long was given three weeks leave before his report date.

But instead of reporting for duty at Fort Carson, Colorado on April 10, 2005, Long went AWOL (absent without leave) and spent several months hiding out in a friend's basement in Boise. In June 2005, Pfc. Long hitchhiked to Canada. Once there, Long spent several months living as a vagrant out of soup kitchens and hitchhiking coast to coast.

Now 22, Long is settled in Ontario and is engaged to be married to a Canadian woman with whom he is expecting a child.

DAIGLE: Was it a personal decision or a political decision to go AWOL?

LONG: A little bit of both. It was mostly political because I really didn't feel like [the Bush administration] had proven that there was any reason for us to be over there. They hadn't proven there were weapons of mass destruction. It wasn't sanctioned by the United Nations. They [Iraq] were no threat to us. And after seeing Abu Ghraib and the killing of civilians ... you can look at anything on the Internet and see people have been tortured and civilians have been killed for no reason. Also, the people who were coming into my unit had just come from Iraq and they were telling me horrific stories. And another thing was that my superiors were telling me, "You're going to the desert to fight rag heads." It wasn't like I was going to Iraq to liberate the people. It was like I was going to the desert to kill "rag heads."

D.: Some people would argue that you knew all that going into the Army.

L.: Yeah you could say that, but when I joined ... I made it apparent that I didn't want to go to Iraq. I didn't believe in the war that was going on over there so that's why I was stationed at Fort Knox. They kind of stayed true to their part of the bargain until the numbers started getting really low. They didn't have any new people enlisting so they were just taking anyone they could.

D.: Did you apply for conscientious objector status before going AWOL?



War resister Robin Long

L.: I tried to get conscientious objector status but my first sergeant told me he couldn't find the forms and he didn't feel like looking for them. I didn't know about conscientious objector status until about a month before I got orders and that was when I first tried to do it. Shortly after that, I got orders, so I never really got a chance to apply for it. Leaving was kind of like a spur of the moment thing. It was my only option other than live underground in the United States and be running for the rest of my life or go to Canada.

D.: In the Armed Forces Enlistment Oath you swore to "obey the orders of the President of the United States," and as you were swearing to obey those orders was there ever a moment when you said to yourself, "You know, there's a war happening that I'm promising to participate in despite the fact that I don't really believe in it?"

L.: I guess I was kind of not being mature. I was 19 years old at the time I was swearing in. When they told us we were going over there, I thought it was an honourable thing. I thought, hey, there really are weapons of mass destruction and Saddam Hussein really is a bad man in power. I really thought it was an honourable thing. But as the war kept progressing, then is when I started to see that things were not really adding up.

D.: Did you consider trying to get a dishonourable discharge by testing positive on a drug test or putting on weight?

L.: I thought about it, but having a dishonourable discharge limits how you can live. Even McDonald's won't hire you with a dishonourable discharge. It's really hard to get work unless you want to work under the table, so I thought that coming to Canada was a better option because at least here, I can get a job anywhere I want. I won't have to worry about that dishonourable discharge following me around for the rest of my life.

D.: What legal ramifications do you face?

L.: Well if I go back to the States, it's definitely going to be jail. They're giving people anywhere from a year in prison at Fort Leavenworth to three or four years.

D.: Are you willing to go to prison for your decision if it comes to that?

L.: Yeah, if it came down to that, I'd be willing to go to prison because I know I did the right thing and I can sleep at night and my conscience is still good.

Excerpted from the War Resisters Support Campaign web site, www.resisters.ca

Some War Resisters' Stories

Excerpted from www.resisters.ca



JEREMY HINZMAN was a US soldier in the elite infantry division, the 82nd Airborne. He served in Afghanistan in a non-combat position after having applied for conscientious objector status. After being refused CO status and returning to America, he learned that he would be deployed to Iraq.

Hinzman did not believe the stated reasons for the Iraq war. In January 2004 he drove to Canada to seek asylum. He is currently living in Toronto with his wife Nga Nguyen and son Liam. His refugee claim was turned down in March 2005 by the Immigration and Refugee Board. He is still waiting for his appeal to be heard in Federal Court.



BRANDON HUGHEY arrived in Canada in March 2004. Hughey, a San Angelo, Texas native left his Army unit before it shipped out to Iraq. It was, he says, his obligation to leave.

"I feel that if a soldier is given an order that he knows to not only be illegal, but immoral as well, then it's his responsibility to refuse that order," he wrote in response to e-mailed questions from the San Angelo Standard-Times. "It is also my belief that if a soldier is refusing an order he knows to be wrong, it is not right for him to face persecution for it."

Brandon had his hearing before the Immigration and Refugee Board in June 2005. His claim was rejected and that decision is now being appealed to a Federal Court.



CLIFF CORNELL, from Arkansas, was stationed at Fort Stewart, Georgia. He joined the Army with the promise from a military recruiter that he would receive a \$9,000 sign up bonus and job training.

"Ninety per cent of what the recruiters tell you is a pack of lies," said Cliff. Army recruitment techniques amount to entrapment, targeting young men from poor families, he said. His unit was to be deployed to Iraq just after Christmas. On January 8th, Cliff arrived in Toronto seeking asylum.



When Private First Class **JOSHUA KEY** was shipped to Iraq, the US army combat engineer believed he was doing the right thing.

"I left for Iraq with a purpose, thinking this was another Hitler deal," he said in an interview. "But there were no weapons of mass destruction. They had no military whatsoever. And I started to wonder."

He served eight months in Iraq before going AWOL. Key arrived in Toronto in March of 2005, with his wife

Brandi and their four young children. Asked what led him to desert, he says: "The atrocities that were happening to the innocent people of Iraq. I didn't want to be part of it no more. I came home and I deserted."



IVAN BROBECK served 7 months in Iraq with the US marines before deserting and coming to Canada in April 2005.

As Ivan told Now Magazine in Toronto, somewhere between the three-hour fire-fights in Fallujah and the missions to hand out candies to Iraqi children, the native of Arlington, Virginia, realized he had to get out. "A lot of marines feel that way," he said. "A majority know this war is pointless. But orders are orders."

Coming to Canada was a difficult decision. "Going AWOL is always a hard decision because it means leaving everything and everyone you know."



RYAN JOHNSON crossed the border into Canada with his wife Jenna in June 2005. They spent a month crossing the US from California to the Rainbow Bridge in Niagara Falls. Ryan went AWOL in January 2005 because of personal and political beliefs.

He and Jenna spent time with the San Diego Military Counselling Project and attended the court martial for Pablo Paredes, who refused deployment to Iraq.

The day after he arrived in Canada, Ryan told Democracy Now!, "We found Jeremy Hinzman's site before I went AWOL. One of our first thoughts was to go to Canada, and we found the G.I. Rights hotline. Then we found stuff on Camilo Mejia, Aidan Delgado, and it kind of inspired me. It let me know that there were other people like me that weren't wanting to go to war."



PATRICK HART, formerly Sergeant Hart of the 101st Airborne Division, arrived in Toronto on August 21, 2005 after serving 9 ½ years active duty in the US military.

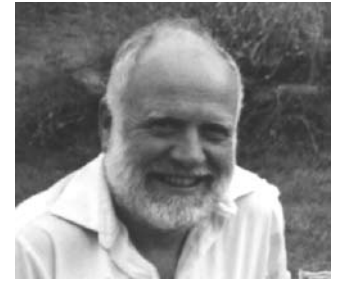
He served in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from April 2003 to March 2004.

"With an impending second deployment, young soldiers were asking me about the war. I didn't have answers, and I didn't want their blood on my hands."

In September 2005 Patrick was joined in Toronto by his wife Jill and young son Rian. They are currently awaiting their hearing at the Immigration and Refugee Board.

The Search for Truth and Meaning

By Philip Symons



Our fourth principle is to covenant, affirm and promote a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. I've always had difficulty with that principle. What is 'truth'? Whose 'truth'? And 'meaning'—meaning of what to whom?

I am reminded of the four blind men and the elephant. You know the story: one blind man comes up against the elephant's leg, and decides an elephant is like a tree, the second feels the elephant's side, and believes an elephant is like a wall, etc.

Those of us who are not blind usually view the elephant from the front: big floppy ears, a waving trunk, tusks perhaps, but generally a kindly benevolent animal who is willing to work and act on our behalf. This is how I, and most people I suspect, view our politicians and their associated enforcement and judicial personnel. Perhaps it is a naïve view, but it's a comfortable one.

A decade or more ago, I (and many others) came to question this view, this truth. We had been tricked too many times, over promises by politicians not to sign the Free Trade Agreement, promises to reduce poverty, promises to honour our international agreements, the Kyoto accord, and so on—promises all broken. Why?

We moved to the side of the elephant in search of answers, and, to paraphrase Pogo, "We saw the enemy". Except that the enemy was not us. The enemy, or rather enemies were very often our chosen politicians and their corporate business friends; the enemies were sometimes the upholders of our laws, our police forces (think of Maher Arar); the enemies, on occasion, and most distressingly, were even our judges, the supposed defenders of justice and the right.

A series of books led me from the side view of the elephant round to the back, and the view there is even more upsetting. The people whom we have come to see as the enemies, but whom we still covenant and affirm as having the inherent dignity and worth of ourselves, act as though 'greed is good', 'democracy is bad' (they've been heard actually to say these things), and corruption is an expected and honourable way of life. You don't believe me? Read *Confessions of an Economic Hitman* (reviewed in this issue of *Justnews*), or any of David Korten's books, and you'll begin to get an inkling of what we're up against.

Why is the inherent good in men and women so often interred within their bones? The simple answer is 'the system made them do it'. But then, of course, we're all part of this system, this econo-political capitalist system. For me, the most distressing aspect of being embedded in the system is the realization that ideas, concepts, institutions that I thought were good—indeed, basically were good—and that I have promoted, have been subverted into part of the problem.

For me, the most distressing aspect of being embedded in the system is the realization that ideas, concepts, institutions that I thought were good—indeed, basically were good—and that I have promoted, have been subverted into part of the problem.

Take the UN, which I have always supported, and then look at what the UN did in Haiti (see *The UN and Canada in Haiti*, this issue). Take the idea for a federal Department of Peace in Canada, and then consider how that might be subverted (a future Discussion Paper will look at this). Take the concept of 'The Responsibility to Protect', and then consider how easily it could be, if it hasn't already been, corrupted to serve the ends of the powerful rather than to protect the lives of the oppressed, despite the safeguards that are a part of that concept.

It would seem, in the present milieu, or "matrix" (as Richard Moore calls it in his book *Escaping the Matrix*), that whatever we try to do to set things right—to work for social justice—can,

and often is, turned against us by our econo-political capitalist system. But people are waking up to the perfidy of our governments, if not to the root cause of it. US soldiers are deserting rather than going to fight a war in Iraq that UN Secretary General Kofi Anan has called illegal. "War Resisters" is the theme of this issue of *Justnews*.

So, we need to change the system. How? Well, there are many ideas and concepts that might move us slowly from our current weakly democratic and unsustainable capitalist system to something else. Few of us can see what that 'something else' is, I certainly can't, nor can I put the ideas and concepts together into a plan or strategy for getting there from here.

But what we can and will do in *Justnews*, over the next year or so, is lay some of the pieces of the puzzle before you so that together we can search through them for a new truth—a message that, in David McNally's words, "another world is possible" (see *Justnews* 10 (1) summer 2006). I hope you will join me in this search for truth and meaning.

News from the Trenches

Collected by Bert MacBain

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa

The Fellowship is supporting a sewing project, known as “Morceau par Morceau” (Piece by Piece), in Kayes, Mali, West Africa, where two members of the Fellowship, Karen and Geoff, are living and working. Karen and Geoff made a commitment to support local initiatives in Mali, and the Fellowship agreed to add its support. “Morceau par Morceau” is a fitting title, because many “pieces” seem ready for the project. A room with six sewing machines is available that had not been used in years; a local tailor is keen to develop Kayes as a sewing centre; a good supply of beautiful African fabric scraps are to be had at reasonable prices (even free); Karen has a talent for patchwork sewing; and a new hotel is willing to market the products. Two classes of 12 women started a 10-week training program in September, with three 10-week sessions planned for the coming year. Because the space and basic equipment are available, costs for the start-up phase are estimated at only \$1,800. The students will acquire new skills, develop their creativity and have an opportunity to earn future income. Supporting the sewing project provides an opportunity for the Fellowship to stay connected with Karen and Geoff, and for children and adults in the Fellowship to learn about life in Mali—a distant part of our interconnected web. More information on the project is posted on the social justice page of the Fellowship website (www.uufo.org). Marilyn Kuhn

Huronian Unitarian Fellowship

Donna Halliday is one of a very few, perhaps the only, CUSJ member in this small Fellowship of 17 people. But social justice and democratic reform are her passion. Donna collected names for the UN petition regarding nuclear disarmament in 2005, and this year she held two events to collect faces for the UN Million Faces petition seeking better control of small arms. Donna Halliday

Elora and Fergus Unitarian Church

This small Fellowship of 21 members and approximately 15 friends has been running the Unitarian Bean Project for 15 years! The project sends 70,000 lbs. of beans to the food banks in Toronto to provide an alternative source of protein. The beans have now surpassed peanut butter as a commodity at the food banks. Funding for the project comes from other churches in Ontario, but the Fellowship must do its annual ‘song and dance’ to keep the project front and centre. This Fellowship is also supporting a family in Africa by raising funds to enable the family to buy land to become self-supporting, and to allow their children to get an education. Ellen Papenburg

Unitarian Church of Edmonton

The Social Justice Committee was resurrected in October 2005 after being dormant for many years. Following a congregational survey to find out what issues were important to church members, the Committee decided to concentrate on the following:

Local—Homelessness. The Committee has a representative on the Edmonton Coalition on Housing & Homelessness (ECOHH) and Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation (ECCCC). It also has a supportive relationship with Human Youth Society, a charitable organization that helps, supports, and advocates for high-risk youth.

Provincial—Public health care. Members of the Committee wrote letters, met with MLAs, composed and sang songs with the Raging Grannies on the Legislature steps, and attended the vigils at the Legislature to protest the privatization of public health care, all as part of a coalition. This has resulted in the privatization issue becoming dormant for now.

National—Water. The Committee invited Ricardo Acuna, Parkland Executive Director, to speak on the issue at a church service.

International—Unitarian Service Committee (USC). Individual members financially support the USC. As well, Sylvia Krogh was on the organizing committee of the Child Haven fund raiser and banquet, which raised over \$18,000 for homes and orphanages in India and Nepal. Unitarian Minister Rev. Fred Cappucino, co-director of Child Haven, spoke at a church service in March.

In addition, the Committee hosted a Social Justice workshop at the Church for 23 people, organized a candidate election forum before the last federal election (which brought out a ‘full house’ and Sasha Trudeau to film the event), carried the UCE banner in the ‘Make Poverty History’ rally, and is represented on the national Project Ploughshares Peace Organization. Sylvia Krogh

Unitarian Church of Calgary

The Unitarian Church of Calgary is following a congregation-wide discernment process to decide on a social justice project for the next couple of years. After launching the process last January, we held a congregational survey, and are now considering two areas. One of them is affordable housing and homelessness, the other is the environment and resource conservation. We will hold a coffee house on each, and then have a congregational vote in December to choose one on which to focus.

This community is thriving with ideas and exuberant energy, and we do reach out into the wider community, providing volunteers for ‘Inn from the Cold’ shelter, raising funds for ‘Alberta Wilderness Association’ through the Calgary tower climb, writing monthly advocacy letters, and



conducting special fundraisers (e.g., fighting world poverty through Make Poverty History, and homelessness through Raising the Roof toke sales). We have also sponsored non-profit organizations to do justice-oriented fundraisers. Our congregation is conducting the Green Sanctuary environmental program (now in our second year after a successful community garden effort this past summer for the food bank). Last fall, we started a new initiative: our '4 Others' monthly collection. Last year we raised over \$7,000 for outside justice organizations. The children, youth, and the justice council each chose one organization per month for these special collections. What wonderful sharing in our concern for others! Rev. Meg Roberts and O.J. Zawlsky

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kamloops

Royal Inland Hospital Spiritual Care Services and the Chaplain are once again part of the hospital's budget, after four years of advocacy, fundraisers, politics, petitions, rallies, lottery funding and behind the scenes manoeuvres. The Interior Health Authority recently gave approval for the CEOs of each hospital to provide these services as they saw fit. The people of Kamloops and the region will once again be served by a full health-care team paid for out of provincial health care funding. During the four years following the province's decision to cut chaplain's salaries, our chaplain held on with the support of this community. Unitarians were involved from the early days of this struggle until the goal of re-instatement of public funding was met. Jan Greenwood

Beacon Unitarian Church

Members of the Fellowship continue to staff and operate the Coquitlam depot of the SHARE Tri-Cities food bank on alternating Wednesdays, and continue to be very active in the Tri-Cities Housing Coalition, a coalition of faith groups and non-profits advocating for affordable housing for low income households in the Tri-Cities area (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody). Sandy Burpee

The (Emerging) Unitarian Fellowship of Salt Spring Island

There are many activists in this small Fellowship who are individually involved in the many social justice activities on Salt Spring Island. In addition to individual projects, members of the Fellowship were asked to help organize the social-justice-themed film festival on the Island. The group also made a banner (Unitarians for Social Justice) and marched in the World Peace Forum parade in Vancouver. Letters have been sent to the com-

munity's Member of Parliament regarding gay marriage and protection of our water. Many Sunday-morning gatherings are devoted to social justice and peace. Sharon Fulton

Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation (Victoria, B.C.)

The SRC at CUUC is composed of five people; it was formed about a year and a half ago. Currently the committee is conducting a survey of congregation members' contributions to social justice over the years, the purpose being to recognize their work and dedication. Committee members have begun writing letters to politicians to register their opinions on social justice issues. They recently showed the DVD *The End of Suburbia*, about the implications of peak oil production, and they will be promoting awareness of water issues in the near future. Each month they publicize community events in the church newsletter to encourage participation by congregation members. Mary Carlisle

First Unitarian Church of Victoria

The Social Responsibility Council has two ongoing activities that may be of interest to other churches across the country. The first is a program called "The Life Line." This is a program that offers emergency funding to families or individuals in distress. Approximately seventy members of the church support the program by agreeing to make, upon request, a \$200 donation to the Life Line. No supporter is asked for more than one donation a year. Four members of the church have agreed to act as contacts for the program. When a referral is made to the church by one of the agencies working with the poor in our community, the family involved is visited by one of these church contacts who has the authority to immediately meet the identified need. The need may involve paying an overdue power bill, or buying food, or clothing for a child. Last year this program assisted more than 40 families in our community.

The second program is called "Healing Our World", the HOW program. Each year the congregation is asked to identify possible projects that church members could undertake to respond to a local, national or international issue. All the proposals are then reviewed and the congregation selects the HOW Project for the year. In 2006 the First Unitarian Church of Victoria chose to assist in the reconstruction of a school in the war-torn country of Sierra Leone, Africa. The church raised some \$30,000 in support of this project. Earle Anthony

The UN and Canada in Haiti

UN "Peacekeepers" Helping Silence the Poor in Haiti

From the Canada-Haiti Action Network (www.outofhaiti.ca/the_un.html)

Since taking over from the U.S.-Canadian-French occupying force on June 1, 2004, the Brazilian-led UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has had the task of reducing insecurity and protecting human rights. According to a Harvard Law School report, however, the UN forces have frequently done just the opposite: "MINUSTAH has effectively provided cover for the police to wage a campaign of terror in Port-au-Prince's slums. Even more distressing than MINUSTAH's complicity in abuses by Haitian National Police (HNP) are credible allegations of human rights abuses perpetrated by MINUSTAH itself."

Canada plays a major role in committing these abuses: Canadian advisors are present in the UN military command and RCMP police officer David Beer heads the 1,401-strong UN Civilian Police (CIVPOL) in charge of

restructuring, training and monitoring the Haitian National Police (HNP); Canada has also contributed over 100 RCMP officers to CIVPOL.

On numerous occasions, UN peacekeepers have stood by as HNP officers have opened fire on peaceful demonstrators. In addition, the UN has been very active in supporting brutal HNP "weapons raids" into the poor slums of Port-au-Prince, despite evidence suggesting that most of the firearms in Haiti are located in the rich neighbourhoods.

Under pressure from Haiti's business elites, and from American and Canadian embassies, to "get tough on bandits", the UN troops have begun committing massacres of their own: on July 6, in an operation involving tanks, helicopters, and over 350 troops, UN forces killed as many as eighty people in Cité Soleil, the largest and poorest slum in Haiti. A labour/human rights delegation sponsored by the San Francisco Labour Council reported that residents claimed to have seen 23 bodies after a raid by UN forces aimed at killing "gang leader" Dred Wilme in the early morning. People were killed in their homes and also just outside of their homes, on the way to work.

While a UN military spokesman claimed that only "armed bandits who had tried to resist were either killed or wounded," aid agency Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) claimed that three-quarters of those treated for gunshot wounds were women and children.



A UN soldier and an HNP officer watch a demonstration in Port-au-Prince. UN forces have rarely intervened when the HNP have fired on peaceful demonstrators, and are now taking an active role in hunting down political opponents of the government.



Haitian demonstrators at the UN's Port-au-Prince headquarters after the massacre.

LETTERS

Justnews welcomes brief letters—brickbats as well as kudos.

They help the Editor and Editorial Board adjust the content of the newsletter to better reflect what CUSJ members want.

I'm writing to extend my congratulations on an excellent Summer issue of Justnews. I really enjoyed reading it and wanted to pass on my encouragement to continue.

I found the content relevant and engaging. It presented a good overview of various ideas, issues and events while at the same time offering a focused reflection on the issue's theme (capitalism). In particular, Al Sharp's article was breathtaking in its coherence and eloquence! I'm sorry I wasn't able to make it to the AGM this year and therefore missed his keynote.

Carry on!

Gilles Marchildon

P.S. The issue prompted me to complete and submit my membership to the CUSJ, something I'd be meaning to do for a while!

Greetings, and a happy September to you! This is a rather late note of appreciation for the article by Sara Maki in the Summer issue of Justnews. I had the honour of knowing Sara when I was the Minister at Waterloo, 1998-2004. (I now live in rural Nova Scotia.)

Would you please pass on to Sara my pleasure in reading her story and my admiration for what she's been doing?

Thanks,

Anne Treadwell

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

Board Members

Over the next few issues, *Justnews* will introduce your Board Members. Each issue will give the full list. Details, including photographs, will be published only once, as these become available.



BOB STEVENSON (PRESIDENT), Ottawa Congregation (Ont.), is a member of the Global Justice Committee. He has also been a member of CUSJ Board for the past seven years. His special interests include policing and security issues, both locally and nationally.

JULIA VARGA (VICE PRESIDENT) (B.C.)

BOB STAVELY (TREASURER) (ONT.)

DON MCDIARMID (MEMBERSHIP CHAIR) (ONT.)

JOHN TAYLOR (B.C.)

BOB VAN ALSTYNE (B.C.)



CHRISTINE JOHNSTON, First Unitarian Church of Victoria (B.C.), has just retired from the Board of the Canadian Unitarian Council, where, as liaison officer, she supported all the Council's Social Responsibility projects. She also retired from the position of CUSJ Treasurer in May, 2006. She has therefore taken on no new roles as yet. Water as a free human right, peace, poverty, racism and First Nations' rights, and working with other faith groups are some of her present preoccupations.

ADINA LYON (ALBERTA)



MARGARET RAO, Toronto First Unitarian Congregation (Ont.). Margaret is seeking to repeal the 'Anti-Terrorism Act' and the use of 'Security Certificates' that detain possibly innocent people indefinitely under the guise of national security. She is also a member of 'Homes Not Bombs'.



BOB MANSON, Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship, Thunder Bay, (Ont). Bob is active in local social responsibility projects such as Empty Bowls Dinners, Friends of Africa (Stephen Lewis Foundation), and shelter house. He initiated a local War Resisters Support Group. He feels honoured to be on the CUSJ Board with such a group of inspiring people.

TOM BROWN (ONT.)



PAULINE HEINONEN, First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, (Ont). Pauline focuses on women's issues and the environment. Caring for these will help us all.

RUTH DI GIOVANNI (QUEBEC)



DAVID WOODBURY, Unitarian Church of Montreal (Quebec), is especially interested in refugee, and diversity and justice issues, as well as stewardship of the environment. He loves music, is an enthusiastic cook and cross-country skier.



SHARON FLATT, Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton (NB). Sharon hopes that the connection between a sustainable environment, social justice, health and the economy will be realized by legislators, educators and citizens before we have lost our children's future. Her favourite NGOs include the Conservation Council of New Brunswick (Conservationcouncil.ca), Fundy Region Safe Spaces (safespacesfundy.com) and the Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ.org).

CAROLYN HUMPHRIES (NOVA SCOTIA)

PHILIP SYMONS is current editor of *justnews*.

Does Wealth Make Us Happy?

By Philip Symons

I was at a conference ten or more years ago when I first heard of the ‘happiness curve’. We were told that happiness increased to a peak, as wealth increased, and then decreased with further increases in wealth. I was sceptical.

On what data was this curve built? Did happiness really decline with increasing wealth, or did it merely plateau?

In January, 2005, the Times Colonist of Victoria, B.C. reprinted a CanWest interview with Jack Jebwab¹, of the Association for Canadian Studies in Montreal. Jebwab gave the percentages of people at various income levels against their rating of happiness. ‘...Jebwab found those with incomes of \$80,000 or more were much more likely to report they were “very happy [than those with lower incomes],”’ the article reported

The data ranged only over incomes from \$15,000 to \$95,000 per year, but they seemed to show that happiness reached a plateau with incomes above \$70,000-80,000 (see figure). Perhaps too few very, very wealthy people were interviewed, but there was no sign of a decrease in happiness as wealth continued to increase.

Does this plateau in happiness mean that people will not seek salaries above \$70,000-80,000 once they are aware that those higher salaries will not increase their happiness? Of course not!

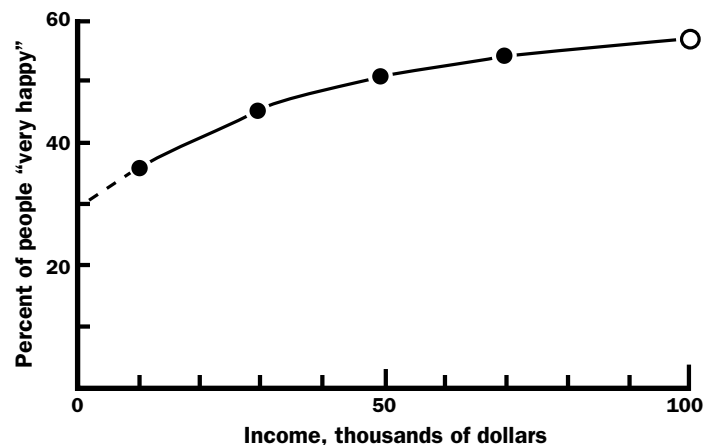
Happiness is not the only thing money buys. There’s prestige, influence, power, the game of seeing how much it is possible to earn, and more. Whether these are things our society should be encouraging is another debate, but the happiness issue is settled.

Or is it? In 2005 the New York Times reported on the happiness of people in different countries whose Gross National Product per capita ranged from a few dollars per year to just under \$30,000 per year². The data were from a World Values Survey project. Happiness showed the same tendency to plateau above a certain level. That level, in this survey was about \$8,000 per year, but there was no indication of how the data were standardized—that is, whether account was taken of the different buying power of a US dollar in different countries.

There were, however, some strange exceptions to the happiness curve. As the NY Times article noted, ‘Many countries, particularly those in Latin America [specifically El Salvador, Colombia and Puerto Rico, but also the African country of Nigeria], had higher marks for happiness than their economic situation would predict.’ Why?

The likely answer was found in yet another article, this time by Polly Toynbee in the Guardian Unlimited³. She reported on research in a book by Richard Wilkinson on the effect of income inequality on the poor⁴. “[Wilkinson] has assembled a mountain of irrefutable evidence from all over the world,” wrote Toynbee, “showing the damage done by extreme inequality. However rich a country is, it will still be more dysfunctional, violent, sick and sad if the gap

HAPPINESS CURVE



between social classes grows too wide. Poorer countries with fairer wealth distribution are healthier and happier than richer, more unequal nations.”

Toynbee gave a graphic example: “...Greece, with half the GDP per head, has longer life expectancy than the US, the richest and most unequal country with the lowest life expectancy in the developed world. The people of Harlem live shorter lives than the people of Bangladesh.”

So there we have it. Money can only make people happy up to a certain level of wealth, beyond which more money does not increase happiness. What really makes people unhappy, however, is seeing others with a lot of money when they only have a little. Most of us have probably intuitively felt this to be true, but the confirmation with scientific data is welcome.

Now we must put what we have learned into practice. If Canada is not to sink to the dismal social levels of the US, it’s time to start thinking about what we can do to cap wealth at some level on the plateau in order to decrease the disparity in wealth in our country. When we’re successful, perhaps the idea will catch on in the rest of the world. Ultimately our safety as well as our happiness may depend on it.

Sources:

1. CanWest News Service, Times Colonist, Sunday January 16, 2005, A5, by Bob Harvey.
2. NY Times Oct. 2005: Ronald Inglehart, *Human Beliefs and Values: A Cross-Cultural Sourcebook Based on the 1999-2002 Values Surveys*. To see the NY Times graph, enter “The New Economist, latest from the happiness industry” in Google.
3. Guardian Unlimited © Guardian Newspapers Limited, Sat. July 30, 2005.
4. Richard Wilkinson, *The Impact of Inequality: How to Make Sick Societies Healthier*, Routledge, 2005.

"Confessions of an Economic Hit Man" By John Perkins

By Philip Symons

"Confessions of an Economic Hit Man" (Plume \$21.00) is two stories in one book. The first story is about John Perkins, the author, his troubled youth as a poor boy among rich kids; his enticement, eventually, into a career as an economic hit man, where he could avail himself of all the frills, including sex and a yacht, of the rich boys, now men; the long struggle with his conscience; his guilt; his decision to kick the hit-man habit; his relapses; and the eventual conquering of his addiction through the publication of this story. The three pictures of Perkins in the book, one on his resume, one accompanying an article about him, and the third supporting the two sentences "About the Author", are symbolic of this complex and twisted man: no one would recognize these three pictures as being of the same person. Perkins' long struggle seems in good part to have been to find out who he really is.

The second story is about how power corrupts, and how absolute power corrupts revoltingly. Perkins' story chronicles the nefarious workings of the US government through multinational corporations (or is it multinational corporations through the US government?)—the "corporateocracy" as Perkins calls it. Perkins worked for corporations to bring a string of countries under the heel of the US. Clearly this sort of thing has been going on for a long time, although the methods now are subtler than in earlier centuries.

The modus operandi of the modern-day hit man is to persuade a developing country to accept large loans for development projects. The developing countries are selected according to the services (often votes at the UN), or resources (usually oil) the US wants. The economic hit man draws up inflated projections of what this economic development will do for the developing country, and sells this to the willing-to-be-duped World Bank (WB) and/or International Monetary Fund (IMF), both controlled by the US. These loans, the hit man promises, will catapult the developing country (in reality its leaders) to the opulence and status of the donor countries.

The development work is nearly all done by US-based multinational corporations, so that the WB/IMF development loans (to which the US contributes far less than its share, an irony that Perkins misses) circulate straight into the pockets of US multinationals, of which George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, and others of their ilk, are board members and major shareholders. Since the development projects do not, of course, provide the promised economic break-through, the developing country's citizens remain in poverty, while its government becomes beholden to the WB and IMF (i.e., the US). The US is now able to demand its "pound of flesh", as Perkins puts it.

Perkins tells us the part he played in this scam in Indonesia, Ecuador, Panama, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Occasionally the scam fails, as when the leader of the developing country refuses to cooperate. At that point the US sends in its "jackals" (CIA personnel) to murder the leader: Allende in Chile, Roldós in Ecuador, Torrijos in Panama. The US can then install its own pliable puppet government. But even this has failed in Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and most recently in Venezuela.

The third step, invasion, as in Grenada, Panama, Afghanistan and Iraq, has usually succeeded where the subtler methods have failed. Only US over-extension in Iraq has saved Chávez and Venezuela from a similar fate, Perkins claims.

The citizens of the defrauded developing countries are often far more aware of what is going on than are the citizens of the US (and Canada, and Britain, and...). Their plight and desperation makes them willing accomplices of the likes of Bin Laden. The US and its corporations are beginning to reap the whirlwind of hatred that they have sewn around the globe. That, Perkins explains in his book, is the work of the economic hit-man.

HELP!\$

Perhaps because of the sporadic production of Justnews over the past few years, CUSJ's bank vault is mostly full of spiders and loonies, the latter not a gathering of your executive, but the metal variety. We'll do our best to restore Justnews to three regular issues and three Discussion Papers per year. At that rate, the cost of each household subscription is about \$30.

Your Board of Directors has always avoided setting a membership fee, because we don't want the cost to discourage people from joining. That policy will continue. This means, however, that those who can afford more than \$30 are asked to consider increasing their contribution a little to help those who find \$30 a burden. Many have helped this way in the past, for which we are truly grateful.

You can also help by checking the mailing address on your most recent issue of Justnews. Above your name you will see a message that reads: Your CUSJ Membership Expires in [e.g.] February 2007. If that date is passed, please renew your membership immediately, giving whatever you can afford. Your membership is as important as your money: numbers count when lobbying government.

Thank you for helping to keep your organization vibrant and productive.

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The views published herein do not necessarily
reflect views and opinions of the
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Being More Inclusive

The CUSJ Board considered but rejected the idea of changing the name of Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice to include "Universalists". The Board wished nonetheless that JUSTnews be inclusive in purpose and content of those whose primary faith is Universalist, and also of those whose mother tongue is French. Authors' by-lines will note their Universalist affiliation if this is desired. News and articles in French will be accepted for publication. Other suggestions to improve inclusion should be sent to CUSJ president, Bob Stevenson, president@cusj.org.

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 General 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 \$_____

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Add me to the CUSJ Listserve: ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ I want to know more.

Name of congregation (if a UU member): _____

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