



Vol. 10: No. 98: Dec. 01. 2011

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**Our Mission**

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents a growing number of area residents of diverse backgrounds brought together over the Iraqi crisis. We support multilateral action for non-violent conflict resolution, human rights, ecological integrity for the planet and international law, through education and dialogue locally and globally. We encourage everyone's participation as we strive for peace and justice to build a better world for future generations.

**The Boundary Peace Initiative meets: 2nd & 4th Thursday @ 7 pm. in Selkirk College**

**To Do**

- **Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>**—National Day of Remembrance to End Violence Against Women meet at City Hall at **12:15 pm.**
- The very best of the holiday season from the BPI to all our global family-- Merry Christmas as we work together for a Peaceful New Year.

**Memo From the Rich to the Rest of Us**

*Keep up the good work! Our thanks is compensation enough.*  
(Following is the copy of the memo received by Erika Shaker, Director of the CCPA's Education Project)  
**Contributed by Jack Blower**

Dear Low and Middle –Income Canadians:  
It's been a while since we talked. But we know how busy you are, working harder and longer, with less and less time for your families. So we understand that you can't always find the time to make it down to the Embassy Club—even though, it's really the best place to catch us when we're ready to kick back and relax over a few drinks and hoot the breeze about how to invest last year's bonus.

Not to start this off on a sour note, but we have to say that the recent spate of articles and reports suggesting that we are less compassionate and less pro-social than you, really hurt. However, in spite of this unfair characterization, recent events have suggested to us that you may feel a bit taken for granted. But you have to understand that this isn't entirely our fault. It's not so much that we're incapable of showing compassion, but usually our executive assistants are the ones who take care of sending flowers and writing than-you cards on our behalf. So, given that we're a little out of practice, we hope you appreciate the time we have finally taken to send this personalized note expression our gratitude for everything you do to make our lives easier—perhaps in ways you yourselves don't even recognize.

For those of us in the top 1%, the last three decades have been good. Very, very good. For the rest of you, we understand it's been a little rough. Your incomes have remained stagnant, or even fallen, while we've more than doubled our share of the national income pie. And you say we don't give you enough credit—are you kidding? We're frankly bowled over at how some of you can last a whole year on what we spend on a celebratory night out with friends.

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**(From last column) Keep up the good work!**

Speaking of credit, we hear many of you are going into debt in the process of living off those stagnant salaries (though surely some of you could have made wiser purchasing decisions—I'm looking at you, Ms Sally Two-Ply Bathroom Tissue!). But we do feel your pain. We're all struggling, and in the midst of economic turmoil it's important that you remember what we have in common, not how many times greater our incomes are than yours (just 155 times greater for the CEOs among us, but what's a little gap like that between friends?)

And this is where we really do appreciate your sacrifice for the greater good (for us), and the fact that you rarely complain about those minor differences between our reality and yours. We're quite sure the hissy fits some of your fringe elements are throwing in protest across North America are cathartic anomalies. After all, if they indicated a serious and sustained wave of discontent, would we still see government after government elected based on their promises to keep cutting corporate tax rates?

Just look at the record: since 2000 Canadians have elected governments that have cut taxes and shrunk the federal treasury by \$420 billion. And we know who's really benefited from these tax cuts; it's those who make the most money. And, no offence, but clearly that ain't you, Mr.-and-Mrs. "Pay the Rent or Feed the Kids"! But your support of economic policies that make our lives easier is touching. Way to take one for the team!

Admittedly, there are times when we're amazed that so many of you find your annual share of the tax cut package—at most a few hundred dollars—enough reward for your troubles. Especially when you do the math and see who the lion's share of the tax cuts go to, while your public services are trimmed accordingly. (Of course, we don't have to worry about that—our kids go to private schools, where overcrowding and broken bathroom sinks are not issues, and we can save our fund-raising efforts for a new Olympic-sized pool). But do you

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(From page 1) **Keep up the good work!**

expect us to look a gift horse in the mouth? You're making these sacrifices for the greater good, and we appreciate it. Because in post-recession, belt-tightening, the recovery-is-still-fragile Canada, the greater good means that we are now paying less tax overall as a portion of our income than the poorest 19% of you. Even our secretaries are paying more tax than we do.

The whole "keep the market happy" argument has been good for a few laughs, though. When one of you puts together an articulate argument against rising inequality, someone on Kevin O'Leary's speed-dial quickly reminds you how unwise it would be to do anything that would undermine the recovery, or promote market instability (which is pretty funny if you think about it, given recent market behavior). And then we like to lay bets on how long it takes before calls for investment in social and physical infrastructure or making the tax system more progressive or cracking down on CEO bonuses get lost in a debate about why corporate tax cuts are the safe, market-friendly choice. Or why we need to keep our executives happily compensated rather than investing in pensions for...well, for people like you. One word about market instability and all those niceties about "restoring the balance" scatter like ants. This proves how the whole "occupy Wall Street and Bay Street" phase is a bit of a whim—something to let off steam before you go back to being compassionate, empathetic team players and recognizing that we at the top of the heap have it pretty tough too.

When you think about it, the recession has brought us closer together. You've done your bit to make sure that we economic trailblazers are well compensated for our hardship. And it's working. Canada might not be in full recovery, but we certainly are. And we promise to save you a seat for when you finally make it out of that whole stagnant-income rising—household-debt fix you've got yourself mired in.

Till then, take our word for it: the view is awesome from up here. And we can't thank you enough for the boost.

Very sincerely yours,  
The Canadian Council of Chief Executives

**Resolutions to the CPA Convention 2011  
2011-02. Direct Steering Committee to Develop  
Proposals to Clarify Duties of Officers and  
Directors**

**WHEREAS** the current CPA Bylaw IV sets out that "Directors shall ensure that CPA members in their region are aware of resolution deadlines for setting CPA policy"; and

**WHEREAS** the current CPA Bylaw VI, Duties and Powers of Directors, sets out that the Steering Committee shall "develop and implement the activities of the CPA" and "oversee the activities of the Administrative Committee"; and

**WHEREAS** these clauses contradict the fact that the direction of the CPA is actually set by its biannual convention; and

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(From last column) **Resolutions to the CPA  
Convention 2011**

**WHEREAS** these clauses also do not adequately reflect the actual and current duties of the directors/steering committee, which include communication between SC members and with member groups represented, fundraising, and committee work; and

**WHEREAS** the current Bylaws set out the positions and basic duties of officers, but lack detail; and

**WHEREAS** a better representation of officers' duties, including the role of the Treasurer-Secretary as an integral member of the officers, is needed; and

**WHEREAS** the CPA Bylaws should also better reflect the requirement of accountability between steering committee members and a better description of their duties; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Steering Committee for 2011-2013 be directed to develop Bylaw amendment proposals for the duties of Officers and Directors for discussion at the 2013 biannual convention.

*Submitted by ACT for the Earth*

**CPA Convention: October 14-16, 2011**

By: Laura Savinkoff (installment #1)

The convention was initially scheduled for Nov. 2010 but because two major tours surfaced for that month (George Galloway and Malia Joya) in which the majority of the Steering Committee was directly involved, we delayed until March and then it was necessary to delay once again until May of 2011. And then the Federal election was called it was decided to delay yet again. October 14-16<sup>th</sup> was picked, the program/agenda developed/presenters and speakers slated, final plans laid and here we were, off and running. In fact this made it almost 3 years since the last time we gathered face to face. I was excited to see old friends and colleagues as well as establish new contacts.

I left Kelowna and arrived in Toronto the afternoon of the 13<sup>th</sup>. I was warmly welcomed into the home of an older activist couple with whom I stayed in 2008. John is a retired professor from the University of Toronto and Jean a retired teacher,

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both are in their 80's yet remaining extremely active members of Scientists for Peace and other peace and social justice groups. Their home is only a few blocks from the CPA office in the United Church, along with the War Resisters Support Campaign and Stop War and a few others.

Friday morning I made my way to the CPA office to give Sid, our lone employee, a hand with the last minute details for convention. I had also been tasked with setting up a display to honor the 25 years that the CPA has been in existence. From home, I brought pictures, some documents Lucille Faminoff so graciously provided as well as a write up by John Semenoff of his recollections of the meeting in Vancouver that launched the CPA. Sid had unearthed the folder containing minutes from the founding conference and from the following few years. At 3 pm a few volunteers, Sid and I, made our way to Ryerson University to set up the Student Union Building (SUB) in time for the outgoing Steering Committee (SC) meeting. As a note, we were able to secure the SUB through our Ryerson Student Union member group and therefore it was rent-free.

As 4 pm approached the SC members started trickling in (due to staggered travel times and work schedules, some were late and others only able to make to the panel discussion at 7 pm). Our meeting was brief since many things had been addressed and handled via Skype, email with a conference calls. We finalized the 'facilitators' list (it was decided that a Steering Committee member would facilitate each workshop, panel and plenary) and reviewed the recommendations of the Resolutions Committee (I was on this committee and the Convention Committee) as well as a few other minor details. We were all set to begin.

Friday's panel was to deal with Afghanistan: Ten years of war and resistance. CPA Co-chair Christine Jones was the moderator with Derrick O'Keefe (CPA co-chair), Judith Lablanc (Peace Action USA, United for Peace and Justice, and other groups), Ali Abrahami and Suriaia Rahar (Afghans for Peace) made up the panel. Chris began by honoring the Mississauga Nation on who's land we are holding our convention and recognized all victims of war. She thanked all past, present and future activists over the last 25 years since the CPA was founded for all the energy, dedication and at times onerous work. We draw our strength from

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**(From last column) CPA Convention**

them and take joy in the energy of today as we continue the work of resistance by all the volunteers who make all this happen in Canada and around the world, she said.

A video of Malalia Joya was presented which is available through a link on the CPA web site.

Judith LaBlanc, an energetic and focused woman, expressed her appreciation for an opportunity to speak to the need for stopping the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. The coming together of the movement for peace over the last 20 odd years gives impetus and energy to the current movements and we must continue to build networks locally, nationally and internationally. At present it is important to build resistance to the upcoming G8/G20 summits in Chicago and am pleased to be working with Canadian and global groups/people to spread the message and gather support. As a reporter in 2001 I spoke with many victims of 9/11, which led to an understanding that peace and justice are inseparable and that there needs to be a change in US militaristic Foreign Policy. The time we are in right now is a new birthing, a transition from the reliance on politicians to a movement of the people with a consistent strategy to give voice to the people. I remember the 60s and today there is a wider understanding that War is Not the Answer and that although we may not be able to control all that our Governments do, we can have an impact and can influence what and how they do it. Recently, through the work of local people, when they Mayors of Maryland had their conference they passed a resolution stating Troops Home Now and since 58% of the US military budget is not for national security, they insisted that all those war dollars be brought home to help the people. Since this was a non-binding resolution Lockheed Martin pressured many Mayors and they backed down but this speaks to the ability to influence policy coming from the grassroots. It is possible and we must continue to work locally to change national and international policy and attitude. The Occupy Wall Street is a social, political, labour and peace movement that is not based on a single issue but one of broad based solidarity that speaks to the systemic issues of poverty and disenfranchisement, of rising militarism and drive for empire and an understanding that war does not end poverty nor create jobs. United, as people, we can change today to a brighter future.

(More next issue)

## **Our happiness should be part of measuring economic success**

From: The Montreal Gazette

Submitted by: Martin O'Brien

Are we as a country happy? Fulfilled? Conscious of the well being of our environment, our fellow citizens, ourselves?

Canadians aren't used to being asked these questions. We're more used to being treated as economic units to be weighed and, in our case, found wanting.

Economists have been blasting us for years for not keeping pace with American productivity and earning power—never mind that vast swaths of the United States have sunk into misery and its income gap has widened into terrain not seen since the days of the robber barons.

The problems with using consumption and profits to measure happiness, economists do and politicians tend to, is that a country's annual gross domestic product doesn't reflect the things that make most people's lives meaningful.

The idea of a "happiness index" has taken off since the kind of Bhutan decreed that the Himalayan kingdom of 750,000 souls would measure its wealth in terms of Gross National Happiness.

Even the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development this month issued what it calls a "Better Life Initiative," saying, "There is more to life than the cold numbers of {Gross Domestic Product} and economic statistics."

The idea behind a happiness index makes brilliant sense. It is that the well being of a country is measured in the commitment of its people to each other, their communities, the environment and their democratic institutions.

Canadians want their children to be well educated and be given the opportunity to find meaningful work and contribute to society. They consistently say they want a good, sustainable health care system. They want their environment protected; their water supply safe and the air they breathe clean.

Keeping track of how we're doing on these indexes should provide a fuller, more meaningful portrait of Canada as a country to live in. Measuring our national well-being using a series of small but important gauges,

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will let us correct things when they're going wrong in a way that a single blunt instrument like the GDP doesn't.

We can thank a group of dedicated Canadian and international scientists for developing—and charitable organizations for funding—Canada's own "Index of Well-being." Based at the University of Waterloo, the index tracks 64 indicators in eight areas: leisure and culture, community vitality, living standards, environment, democratic engagement, education, healthy populations and time use.

The index shows that while the country's GDP grew by 31 per cent between 1994 and 2008, our well-being measure lagged well behind, at 11 per-cent growth. In practical terms, this means children are spending more time in front of computers, income inequality has widened, women are increasingly pressed for time, greenhouse-gas emissions are rising and voter turnout is sliding badly.

These are important issues that, left unresolved, will hurt individual Canadians and the country's very future. We need to pay attention to these issues. With the index, we can.

Significantly, this is an example of leading by doing. By funding the index, groups like the Atkinson Charitable Foundation and the J. W. McConnell Family foundation, along with the Ontario Government and the University of Waterloo, have shown a dedication to Canada's well-being that could inspire many more of us to act.

The whole idea of compassion is based on keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another and all involved in one another.

Thomas Merton

The Boundary Peace Initiative (BPI) welcomes articles, which are the sole responsibility of the authors and may not be common consensus. To contribute please contact **Laura** at **250-442-0434** or **l4peace@telus.net**. The BPI is a member of: Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Alliance, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War, Uranium Free Kootenay Boundary, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation as well as other local and global groups.

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