



Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)

E-Newsletter

October 2011

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Concern about Keystone Pipeline sparks demo in Ottawa



On September 25th, Friends from at least 5 Meetings participated in a demonstration against the 529 km expansion of Keystone pipeline to carry bitumen from the oil sands to Texas where it will be refined. This followed weeks-long demonstrations in Washington, DC, where demonstrators asked President Obama to halt construction plans. The Keystone XL pipeline was approved by Canada's National Energy Board on March 11, 2010. The Parliament Hill demo was in solidarity with the US action and a general protest about oil sands development and its impact on climate

change, Indigenous peoples' rights, etc. CFSC, along with KAIROS, supported participation in the demonstration. To follow is a report from Margaret Slavin of Wooler Meeting (pictured above, speaking with an RCMP officer):

"There comes a time", read the invitation. "We must act together for the health of our planet, our air, our water, our climate, and our children." The call was challenging: to come to Ottawa for a full day of training in preparation, and then next day to commit civil disobedience. Organizers were the Council of Canadians, Greenpeace Canada and the Indigenous Environmental Network. Washington, DC had seen 1200 arrests and there have been passionate demonstrations in BC. Some Friends were among those who felt that the issue must be brought to Ottawa, since the crude oil in question comes from the Canadian tar sands. Some came to offer support but many decided that the action must include their own willingness to risk arrest. They planned to enter the foyer of the legislature and stage a sit-in. The day of training included "role plays" in de-escalating heated actions, practice in speaking with the media, and going over an actual four-foot fence. Most of the leadership of the training and of the speechmaking the next day came from Indigenous peoples, including representatives of those most directly affected by the tar sands.

The following day, more than 200 citizens breached a fence which the RCMP had set up to bar demonstrators from entering the foyer of Parliament. Long lines of citizens of all ages sat on the grass in the sun awaiting processing by the police.

The training had created a sense of centredness, which carried over into those who had not taken it.

The thousand demonstrators remained peaceful and disciplined, even while expressing their deeply felt concern in chants, placards, banners and in cheering the moving speeches and songs. During a long prayer from an Indigenous leader in his language, the whole crowd fell silent. The first wave of protestors carried drifting smoke from a sage smudge. The entire action had the feel of a sacred as well as secular drama. The police remained respectful and made sure that no one was injured going over the fence. After processing 125 of those who had risked arrest, officers walked the remainder off the grounds and told them to go. Arrestees paid a \$65 trespassing fine and are forbidden to come onto Parliament Hill again for one year.

Friends arrested included myself, David Millar (Montreal Meeting), Sheila Nabigon Howlett (attender at Peterborough Allowed Meeting), and Margueritte Kleunch (Thousand Islands Meeting).

Stopping violence against Indigenous women

CFSC supports partner organizations, including the [Native Women's Association of Canada](#) (NWAC) and [Amnesty International](#), in the ongoing work to raise awareness on the critical issue of murdered and missing Indigenous women in Canada. According to government statistics, Indigenous women are at much greater risk of violence than other women. Vigils are held nationally every October 4th. While we did not manage to get this information out earlier, read about the vigils at www.october4th.ca and you can visit and take part in Amnesty's campaign to end the cycle of violence: <http://bit.ly/osEhPK>

Learn about CFSC Grants

CFSC makes grants to individual Friends (and active attenders) and local Meetings for projects that intersect with Friends' concerns. The next deadlines are in January and February. To learn more about CFSC grant opportunities, download our info sheet at: <http://bit.ly/opBnQf>

The kids are back in school – how about some counter-recruitment?

CFSC has available a counter-recruitment brochure that can be used in your community and schools, to encourage young people to think through their goals and options if they are thinking of joining the military. See the brochure [here](#). To receive brochures for use, email cfsc@quakerservice.ca.

Please take action on regressive new refugee legislation

There is profound concern about Bill C-4, a bill presented as addressing human smuggling, but which contains many punitive measures that could affect legitimate refugees, and provide un-checked power to the Minister of Immigration for detention. The Canadian Council for Refugees, of which CFSC is a member agency, is asking for people to meet with MPs (in their ridings 10-14 October and 7-11 November) about the legislation. CCR has new materials on three key issues to share with MPs – <http://ccrweb.ca/en/3issues-summary-2011>. CCR is preparing materials to help people prepare to meet your MP (even if its your first time!) which will be available at <http://ccrweb.ca/en/contact-your-mp>. More background information is at <http://ccrweb.ca/en/c4>. CFSC produced an action alert about Bill C-4 this summer. You can find it at: <http://quakerservice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/C-4.pdf>

New CFSC website – Quakerservice.ca – check us out!



The new website is up and running and we welcome Friends to visit it, learn about our work, and offer feedback. We are pleased with the look and re-organizing of information into thematic categories (Indigenous rights, peace, etc.) and look forward to hearing your feedback so that we can continue to improve the site and meet Friends' informational needs from CFSC. Email comments to cfsc@quakerservice.ca.

Update: Crime Legislation

The omnibus crime bill (Bill C-10) has been tabled in Parliament and there are efforts afoot to limit the second reading debate to two days – for a piece of legislation over 100 pages long, covering a variety of subjects. Called the “most comprehensive agenda for crime reform since the introduction of the Criminal Code”, information on the bill can be found at <http://bit.ly/rnRI66> and <http://bit.ly/ov9mdm>.

As reported last month, CFSC will be making a written submission to the Parliamentary Committee reviewing the legislation. Furthermore, we will work alongside our partners to add our voice to the many concerned about this bill. Below are a few resources that can help you, your community, and your Member of Parliament better understand justice and prison issues:

- CFSC’s “Considering Justice” information brochures: <http://quakerservice.ca/news-and-resources/educational-resources/>
- CCJC’s Prison Facts Infograph: <http://ccjc.ca/prison-facts-infographic/>
- CCJC’s Criminal Justice at the Crossroads series: <http://ccjc.ca/crossroads/>

Follow Canadian Friends Service Committee on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) (#CFSCQuakers) to stay abreast of developments.

New Peace Studies program; a Friends’ experience in the Middle East

The September-October 2011 issue of the Atlantic Friends Newsletter has two articles of interest to CFSC Friends: the establishment of a Peace Studies Program at St. Thomas University, inspired by the work of the late John McKendy (New Brunswick MM). Eastern Friends and CFSC have been a part of the conversation to establish the program – it’s a thrill to see it take hold. Also in the issue is one of a series of articles by Sara AvMaat, who served with the World Council of Churches’ Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Israel-Palestine (CFSC provided a support grant for this service). The newsletter can be found at: <http://atlantic.quaker.ca/newsletter/#2011>.

International Human Rights Training Program – call for applications

Several Friends have participated in this training program and two (Sarah Chandler, CFSC board member, and Marc Forget, former CFSC staff) have served as faculty for years. The IH RTP is intended for human rights workers and educators from NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions, Government bodies and educational institutions. The IH RTP’s goal is to strengthen the capacity of human rights organizations to undertake human rights education efforts aimed at building a global culture of human rights. The curriculum is based on principles of adult experiential learning in which participants and facilitators engage in a process of mutual teaching and learning. **Application Deadline: November 21st, 2011** (only the 2012 Application Forms will be accepted). Find the documents, in English and French, at: <http://bit.ly/nLH5W7>. Comments or questions? Contact the IH RTP Team at ihrt-pifdh@equitas.org

The CFSC E-Newsletter shares current concerns and information related to CFSC, its projects, and other news with Quaker Meetings in Canada, friends and donors to CFSC.

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