

Invisible Victims

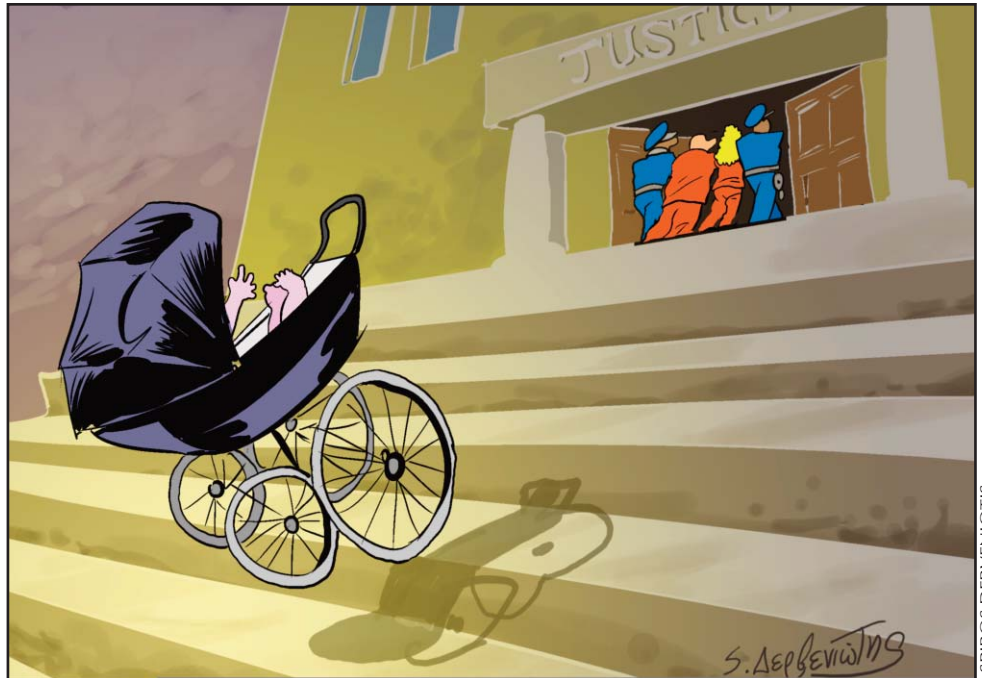
By Sarah Chandler

The children of prisoners are the invisible victims of crime and the penal system. They have done no wrong, yet they suffer the stigma of criminality. Their rights to nurture are affected both by the criminal action of their parent and by the state's response to it in the name of justice.¹

What happens to a child when a parent is sent to jail or prison? If a woman is pregnant when she is sentenced to prison, what happens to her baby when it is born? Who looks after the child's best interests? Who looks after the child's health, welfare, education? How do the emotions involved in having a parent in prison affect a child's development?

In 2008, the mother-baby program at British Columbia's Alouette Correctional Centre for Women was cancelled. The program allowed pregnant inmates to keep their babies with them in order that they could breastfeed and bond with them. In response to the cancellation, a lawsuit was filed against the BC government and the Alouette Correctional Centre on behalf of four women whose babies were taken from them. The lawsuit cited the constitutional right of the women to keep their babies with them for safety and security of person. The government of BC applied to have the lawsuit dismissed but in February 2012 the BC Supreme Court ruled that the suit could proceed.

Following an internal audit in the fall of 2011, the BC government asked for a critical review of BC's justice system. Geoffrey Cowper, the lawyer



This cartoon, "A Child's Odessa-y", picturing two parents being taken away to "face justice" while their child careens down the stairs in a carriage, drawing our attention to the normally unseen victims of incarceration, children, and is inspired by an emotionally evocative sequence in the massacre on the Odessa steps in the film "Battleship Potemkin" (1925).

who had represented the four mothers from Alouette Correctional Centre for Women, was asked to chair the review. Bearing in mind Canadian Friends' concern for penal abolition and using research of the Quaker UN Office (QUNO) on the impact on children of parental incarceration, CFSC (via the Quakers Fostering Justice program committee) submitted a brief to the BC Review process which included 15 recommendations² in May 2012.

Since the 1600s, Quakers have been concerned about the effects of penal systems on individuals, families and communities. In 2000, Susan Hartshorne, a British Quaker who is a Justice of the Peace, noticed that the number of women being sent to prison was increasing. She also noticed that the children of parents who had been sentenced to prison were becoming involved with the criminal justice system themselves. She took her concern to Quaker Peace and Social Witness of Britain Yearly Meeting (the

equivalent of CFSC in Britain). Her concern was then taken up by the Quaker UN Office in Geneva (QUNO), by Friends' World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) representatives to the UN Crime Congresses and to the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna, and by the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA).

In addition to consultations and the production of briefing papers, this engagement led to Friends' participation in a Day of General Discussion by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (31 September 2011) on the effects of parental incarceration on children. According to *Collateral Convicts: Children of Incarcerated Parents*, Oliver Robertson's QUNO report on the recommendations and identified best practices arising from the day of discussion, this was the **first time** that any part of the UN system looked in

¹ Oliver Robertson "Collateral Convicts: Children of Incarcerated Parents" QUNO, March 2012

² http://quakerservice.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2012/06/CFSC_BCJI_submission_May_30_2012.pdf

KEEPING UP WITH FRIENDS

BC justice review – update

Last year, the BC government appointed Geoffrey Cowper to conduct a formal review of British Columbia's justice system, as Chair of the Justice Reform Initiative. The goals of the independent review are to look at the facts underlying the concerns raised by the government and public with regard to criminal justice issues, and to recommend solutions that would make the system more efficient and effective. In May 2012, CFSC made a submission to this process, and in April 2013, CFSC made a follow up submission following the release of two white

papers by the Justice Reform Initiative in February. Our submissions can be found at:

<http://quakerservice.ca/news-and-resources/public-statements/>. For more information, visit: <http://bcjusticereform.ca/>.

KAIROS issues interfaith call to action on climate

Canadian Friends engage nationally in work on climate change through KAIROS. Here is a detailed report on that work, and a call to renewed action: <http://bit.ly/XcBgq4>. The report details our current catastrophic direction in Canada, with the potential for 4 to 5 degree Celsius average temperature increases. KAIROS' analysis also lays out some of the concrete alternatives to pursue for a sustainable future.

Synthetic biology education package

Friends' Meetings will soon be receiving a package of materials to further and deepen an understanding of synthetic biology, an issue that emerged last summer at Yearly Meeting. The package will include a document from CFSC, along with several publications produced by the Quaker Institute for the Future. Packages are being sent via Friends at Representative Meeting, the rest will be mailed in May.

CFSC endorses QEW submission to ECOSOC

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs called on Civil Society Organizations to make submissions to the High Level Segment of ECOSOC on Science, Technology and Innovation. It will consider in developing a Ministerial Declaration on "Science, technology

and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals". CFSC has worked with long-time partner Quaker Earthcare Witness in response, and endorsed the letter they wrote. Their submission speaks to Quakers' concerns and provides questions for reflection. Read it online at: <http://bit.ly/QEW-ECOSOC>.

Resources on justice

The new web site of the Church Council on Justice and Corrections – www.ccjc.ca - is rich with information and opportunities for engagement. In addition to information open to all, individuals (or Meetings) that become members can engage in member-only conversation opportunities and access enhanced education materials. The site provides materials to use in engaging your Meetings in conversations related to the justice issues, including an introductory workshop on restorative justice in a church setting. CYM is a member of CCJC.

Small projects funded

The following groups received funds for small project work connected to Quakers Fostering Justice: York Region Elizabeth Fry – \$500.00 (help with the establishment of an E. Fry office in Newmarket, Ontario); Criminal Lawyer Duty Counsel Emergency Money – \$500.00 (funds to help those released by the court to return to prison to retrieve personal belongings, ID, etc.); Women's Shelter Taxi – \$500.00 (pays for taxis for children who otherwise might have to change schools as a part of relocation; enables continuity in their lives); and an Alternatives To Violence Project workshop focusing on trauma (to be held in Victoria, BC) – \$500.00.

QUAKER CONCERN

Canadian Friends Service Committee/Secours Quaker Canadien

Quaker Concern is the newsletter of Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers). Published three-times a year, it features articles on CFSC projects and concerns of Friends. CFSC's **Annual Report and Appeal** is sent to all donors in late autumn.

Canadian Friends Service Committee, founded in 1931, exists to unify and expand the concerns of Friends in Canada. Our work is carried out by three program committees (Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee, Quakers Fostering Justice, Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities Committee).

Donations are received with gratitude. We rely on the support of individuals to carry out our work. CFSC issues tax receipts for donations over \$10.

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The engagement of Friends across Canada in CFSC concerns

By Matthew Legge

In 2012, the Canadian Friends Service Committee reached out to Quakers across Canada through the wonderful people who make up the CFSC Liaison Network. An initial call went out in the spring, asking for information about the engagement of Meetings and individual Friends in various areas. By winter, 25 Worship Groups, Monthly, Preparative, Allowed and Executive Meetings had responded. For simplicity's sake, I'll refer to them all as "Meetings". What follows are some of the highlights from what we learned.

The full report is too long to reproduce here; it is available at <http://bit.ly/CanadianFriendsSurveyResults>.

The most active concern for Friends, both by number of Meetings involved, and number of individuals within Meetings is (drum roll)... climate change. 20 of the 25 Meetings (at least 53 Friends) are actively engaged on climate change issues; many through participation in the ecumenical justice coalition KAIROS, which is where this work has been "located" nationally for Friends (and other

churches) for many years.

The other top five areas of engagement for peace and social justice among Canadian Friends (ranked by number of Meetings involved) are:

- 2) Responding to emerging Indigenous rights issues (e.g. the Lubicon oil spill or the state of emergency in Attawapiskat) – 18 Meetings; at least 38 people
- 3) Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – 17 Meetings; at least 38 people
- 3) Restorative justice – 17 Meetings; at least 30 people
- 4) Learning about active non-violence – 16 Meetings; at least 49 people

The least active concern among the 18 options in our survey is prison or penal abolition, with nine Meetings currently engaged. However, work on restorative justice, prison ministry, and changes to federal justice legislation were all very active concerns, which are justice concerns closely related to penal abolition.

Generally speaking, all of the concerns with which CFSC is engaged appear to be alive and taken up at the Monthly Meeting level. However the survey does not go into great detail and the results were influenced by some interpretation by respondents, so it should be taken as an initial glimpse of the engagement of Canadian Friends. Further work will need to be done before we really understand the depth, types, and regularity of actions taken.

Ten Meetings (40%) have a Peace and Social Concerns Committee or something similar. The CFSC communications tools which are most helpful for Friends in encouraging them to take action are firstly this very document, *Quaker Concern*, followed closely by the monthly E-newsletter, and the information coming directly from the CFSC Liaisons in Meetings. From the survey, it appears that social media is not used extensively by many Friends and that CFSC's print resources, and the E-newsletter, continue to have the greatest reach. Facebook and Twitter ranked as the least useful communications tools, although many Meetings reported that individual members were very active on social media. However, given the number of Friends on Facebook generally - and the number that are actually accessing our Facebook page and "sharing" postings on their pages - it does seem that there is significant use of this tool. It is possible that the Friends collecting information were unaware of the degree of use. Some of the communications questions might be posed to social media users themselves in the future so we can gain a deeper understanding of individual access and use.

Matthew Legge is the Administrative and Communications Assistant at the Canadian Friends Service Committee.

Employment Opportunity – Program Coordinator

CFSC has a staff position available (location: Toronto area). The Quakers Fostering Justice (QFJ) Program Coordinator is a half-time position (17.5 work hours/week). S/he supports the work of the QFJ program committee which sets directions for the program, and is involved in program delivery. Work includes:

- Research, education and writing on justice-related issues
- Policy dialogue on justice-related issues
- Administer community-based grants program, workshops and training
- Maintain relationships with partners, meetings, policy makers
- Administrative support to the program

Compensation: \$22,500 – 25,000/year (starting), plus generous benefits package.

For detailed information, including job description and program committee terms of reference, visit: <http://quakerservice.ca/what-you-can-do/volunteer/>

How to Apply: If you have the gifts and skills required, we welcome your submission of a cover letter, three references (1 personal, 2 work-related), and a resume outlining your qualifications and your interest/leading to serve as staff within CFSC to hr-committee@quakerservice.ca. No phone calls, please. While we wish to acknowledge all applicants, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Application Deadline: 9 am (Eastern) on Monday 27 May, 2013.

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Remembering our roots in Indigenous rights

By Phyllis Fischer, Gini Smith, and Jo Vellacott

JoLeigh Commandant, a member of the Toronto Monthly Meeting, passed away January 15, 2013, in her 90th year, after a lifelong commitment to working for peace and justice. JoLeigh helped to lay the groundwork in the 1970s for what became CFSC's ongoing witness for the human rights of Indigenous peoples.

JoLeigh was born in Texas, married and had three children (Daniel, Arleigh, and James), and achieved a Masters in Psychiatric Social Work. After her marriage ended in 1961, she became involved with Friends. In 1963, she and her children participated in the March on Washington where Martin Luther King gave his iconic "I have a dream" speech. In 1968 JoLeigh immigrated to Canada, where she met and married Alex Commandant, a member of the Whata Nation (then known as the Gibson Reserve).

JoLeigh became concerned with the injustices toward Aboriginal peoples.

She was a spark that ignited Friends' work on these concerns. In 1973, while Canadian Yearly Meeting was in session, an armed standoff occurred at Anishinaabe Park in Kenora, Ontario, where Ojibwa occupied the park and were surrounded by police and racist vigilantes. JoLeigh brought this concern to Yearly Meeting and led a group of Friends there who camped between the police and the Aboriginal

people. They were successful in establishing communication, helping to calm the situation and bring resolution. One Friend remembers an Ojibwa person saying "We have complained for years and they never paid any attention until we picked up our guns."

Friends followed up with the Ojibwa to explore the situation, one of the

continued to the present. JoLeigh was one of several Friends who spent considerable time living at Grassy Narrows, working with the residents to document the damage done by mercury and to draw the attention of the media, the public and governments to the issue. Contact was also made with the Japanese scientists who were working on a similar mercury problem in Minamata. Exchange visits were made which helped publicize the issue.

JoLeigh travelled with the Native Caravan that crossed Canada in 1974 and occupied an empty building in Ottawa, declaring it a First Nations

Embassy. A Quaker remembers JoLeigh's courageous initiative when an impasse was reached with the First Nations people inside, the lights cut off, and the police cars outside. JoLeigh was deputed to go out into the headlights and speak with the police, facilitating resolution and the restoration of phone and utilities to the building. Efforts to meet with responsible government continued for some weeks. At one point JoLeigh staged a one-person sit-in at a Minister's office, remaining until she was carried out, still on the chair, and deposited, gently, outside. As one Friend remembers, JoLeigh had submitted her leading to commit this action to the discernment of a group of Friends who were supporting her, and only did it after her leading

was affirmed in a small impromptu Meeting for Worship. This was significant as, for JoLeigh, and many others, group decision-making was a real challenge.

Dedication to Aboriginal concerns led JoLeigh to work with those incarcerated. She was involved with Aboriginal Elders in starting the Native Sons group at Guelph Correctional Centre, the first in Ontario in a provincial institution.

The Roots of the Declaration: 1977 Rights Conference

From Quaker Concern, May/June 1977:

"Indigenous people from the Americas will gather this fall in Geneva, Switzerland, for what promises to be a landmark conference on the way to gaining international recognition of Indian rights and land claims ... The [International NGO] Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Peoples in the Americas ... CFSC would like to be able to assist in travel costs for some of the Indian delegates from Canada, or to enable Indigenous delegates from South America to attend the Conference. CFSC has been assured by people of South America ... that "this kind of help from Canadian Friends encourages international dialogue among Indigenous peoples – to set up new strategies for their own development."

From Quaker Concern, winter 1977:

"... the Conference had Native representatives of 60 nations, from 15 countries ... Over the 4 day period, delegates gave testimony about discrimination in the legal, economic, social and cultural spheres ... the conference proposed numerous actions be carried out to combat the human rights violations against indigenous people... Before the Conference, the CFSC office helped to disseminate information on the conference to Native people in Canada and it is now helping to publicize the results of the conference. Friends in attendance at the conference included: Philip Martin, JoLeigh Commandant, and Sam Legge. Friends also helped several Native people to attend the conference... Plans are underway to try to take issues raised at the conference before the UN General Assembly."

main issues being mercury pollution on the White Dog and Grassy Narrows Reserves from a mill upstream discharging mercury into the river leading to their source of fish. JoLeigh remained active in the ad hoc committee of Yearly Meeting that was formed to continue the work. This committee later became a program committee of the Canadian Friends Service Committee, which has

This brought Native spiritual and cultural practices, with teachings by Elders, ceremonies, and a sweat lodge, as part of the Chaplaincy service in the institution. This went on to expand to other institutions within the province. For a few years she also ran a home for newly released inmates to stay.

JoLeigh continued this work as long as her health permitted. She was a committed Quaker, expressing her faith in action, working a lifetime for peace and justice. Much of the work she began is continuing, carried on by those who never knew her. She had the ability to inspire commitment in others. We honour her service to human rights, peace and justice.

Phyllis Fischer and Jo Vellacott are members of Toronto Meeting. Gini is a member of Yonge St. Meeting. Phyllis is also an associate member of the Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee of CFSC.



We were delighted to receive this photo from JoLeigh's daughter, Arleigh, which helped us uncover some lost history – CFSC's presence at a landmark conference at the UN in Geneva in 1977 (see text box for details). Unfortunately we can only identify JoLeigh in the photo (4th from left, standing).

Repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery

By Rob Hughes and Jennifer Preston

CFSC's Aboriginal Affairs program committee is bringing a statement to Canadian Yearly Meeting, Friends' annual national business sessions, in August 2013 about the Doctrine of Discovery.

The Doctrine of Discovery originates from Papal Bulls (formal charters from the Pope) in the 1400s and was used as legal and moral justification for colonial powers taking away lands from sovereign Indigenous nations.

The Doctrine is invalidly based on the racial superiority of European and Christian peoples. It was used to dehumanize, exploit and subjugate Indigenous peoples and dispossess them of their most basic rights. Such ideology led to practices that continue unabated through modern day laws and policies.

Courts in Canada continue to rely on the Doctrine of Discovery in cases concerning Aboriginal title to land as recently as the BC Court of Appeal decision in *Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia* in 2012.

This contradicts the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

“... all doctrines, policies and practices based on advocating superiority of peoples or individuals on the basis of national origin or racial, religious, ethnic or cultural differences are racist, scientifically false, legally invalid, morally condemnable and socially unjust.” (*Preambular paragraph 4*)

The consequences of the past wrongs regarding the taking of Indigenous lands and resources are visible worldwide, through debilitating impoverishment and suffering endured by Indigenous peoples. In Canada, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples concluded in its 1996 Report: “Without adequate lands and resources, Aboriginal nations ... will be pushed to the edge of economic, cultural and political extinction.”

In keeping with Friends' testimonies on Peace, Justice, Equality, Community and Integrity, the draft statement asserts that we, as Friends:

- acknowledge that this Doctrine has had and continues to have devastating consequences for Indigenous peoples worldwide, including Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
- reject the Doctrine of Discovery as illegal and immoral, and affirm that it

can never be a justification for the exploitation and subjugation of Indigenous peoples and violating their human rights.

- actively encourage the Canadian government, in conjunction with Aboriginal peoples:
- to examine how Canadian history, laws, practices and policies have relied on the Doctrine of Discovery;
- formally repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery and reinterpret Canadian law in a manner consistent with the United Nations Declaration of the Right of Indigenous Peoples and other contemporary international human rights standards; and
- ensure that the violation of Aboriginal peoples' rights to lands, territories and resources that were unlawfully taken are effectively redressed.

Further information is available at www.quakerservice.ca.

Rob Hughes is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting and is Co-Clerk of the Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee. Jennifer Preston is a member of Hamilton MM and Program Coordinator of the Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee.

INVISIBLE VICTIMS

Continued from page 1

detail at the issues faced by children whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system³.

While awaiting the BC government's response to the Cowper Report, QFJ conducted a broad consultation of individuals and organizations working on child rights in Canada in an effort to understand where there are gaps domestically with regard to impacts of the justice system on children and to determine ways in which QFJ might effectively follow up. Identified gaps include: 1) the impacts of the justice system on children and youth, the need for more education on the relevant rights of children and youth and the potential for restorative justice in protecting and providing for affected children and youth; 2) the need for accurate data and data analysis on this issue; 3) the need to advocate for child impact assessments of justice and corrections policies and procedures; 4) the need to bring awareness of this issue and the knowledge gained through QUNO research to the attention of Canadian partners; 5) the need to work in partnership with others to follow up on the recommendations to Canada of the UN Child Rights Committee's 3rd/4th review of child rights in Canada; and 6) the need for preparatory work to be done toward the UN Universal Periodic Review of Canada to ensure that the issues of children and youth impacted by Canada's justice system are included.

As a first step, Quakers Fostering Justice will be working to facilitate a meeting of key individuals and agencies to determine what knowledge exists about issues faced by children and youth impacted by justice and

corrections, where that knowledge can be found, who is using it, how they are using it, and what more is needed. QFJ is aware of good work being done with children and youth in contact with the criminal justice system and will use this research to strengthen that work.

QFJ has also become a member of the International Quaker Criminal Justice Liaison Group, an ad hoc group of Quaker agencies around the world working on criminal justice issues.

Sarah Chandler is a member of Vernon Meeting and the CFSC board, serving on the Quakers Fostering Justice program committee. Sarah coordinates the Lillooet Restorative Justice Program in BC (<http://www.rjlillooet.ca>) and works as a human rights trainer/facilitator. Sarah also serves on the Board of Directors of the Church Council on Justice and Corrections.

³ <http://www.quno.org/geneva/pdf/humanrights/women-in-prison/2011Collateral-Convicts.pdf>

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Should a socially responsible investor divest of carbon stocks?

By Alan Harman

Given Friends' concerns about climate change, we asked Alan Harman, our investment advisor since the 1990s, to share some of his thoughts as per socially responsible investing. CFSC has worked with a stringent ethical screen of our investments for many years and sees our investment portfolio as an extension our program, not just a source of revenue.

Bill McKibben, the famous environmentalist, author and social activist (350.org) is on the road with his "Do the Math Tour" which reveals the most recent, alarming data on climate change. In it, he makes a number of suggestions including that investors divest of all so-called "carbon stocks" as a means of pressuring the oil and gas industry. People have been listening.

At Harvard University, students voted 72% in favour of the University's Endowment Fund divesting of their carbon stocks. Unfortunately the administration said no. Some smaller colleges, such as Unity College in Maine, have voted to divest of oil stocks and others such as Hampshire College in Massachusetts have adopted investment policy statements addressing the issue of climate change and oil/gas stocks.

The movement seems to be gaining momentum and with it some scrutiny. Two significant questions are being asked: (1) by eliminating carbon stocks, is an investor missing out on potentially profitable investments and therefore limiting his/her need (and in some cases, including charities, fiduciary responsibility) to maximize return, and, (2) does divesting actually change corporate behaviour - will divesting of carbon stocks help slow climate change?

In terms of return, it has been my experience that not owning oil/gas drilling companies has not had a material impact on returns. I have argued that, when one considers all of

the risks associated with this industry, it has not made them an overwhelmingly compelling investment. Our non-carbon portfolios have performed about the same as our portfolios that include carbon stocks over the past 10 years.

But does divesting of carbon stocks have a positive impact on the environment? This is after all the reason behind McKibben's suggestion. I think it is a hard case to make. Climate change can be affected by public policy which can be influenced by lobbying government. By divesting, there is theoretically less demand for a stock which negatively affects share price which may make it more expensive for a company to do financing. Also, there may be some negative publicity accruing to a company that is the target of a divesting campaign and this too may hurt a company's sales and profitability. But to actually change corporate behaviour I believe investors have more power through active shareholder engagement than through divestiture.

The Canadian Friends Service Committee's investment policy screens investment options using social, environmental, human rights, and non-violence criteria:

"[CFSC] seeks to invest so that our capital is used in ways that are beneficial and useful to people, peace-seeking endeavours and the environment. We seek to avoid investments which are harmful or of doubtful value in a well-ordered society. We refrain from investing in bodies whose activities include:

- the manufacture, sale, importation or distribution of military hardware
- association, openly or tacitly, with repressive regimes
- failure to adopt and administer effective pollution control and environmental protection policies
- failure to observe the human rights of all persons

- the manufacture and/or distribution of products that are harmful to health and society
- inefficient operation which wastes time and resources."

Canadian Yearly Meeting also screens its investments with this criteria. CFSC's portfolio contains no mining stocks and only one oil and gas stock. As your investment manager, our firm is working with the Shareholder Association for Research and Education (www.share.ca)¹, engaging several of the companies owned by CFSC on a variety of issues.

SHARE determines whether a company should be engaged based on an activity that they feel violates our socially responsible investment screen. SHARE also decides how to communicate with the company. Usually the communication begins with a letter of inquiry and depending on the response and ensuing dialogue can end with a shareholder proposal. Probably the best example of a successful outcome has been SHARE's engagement on executive compensation. They have been able to persuade several Canadian banks to furnish shareholders with a "say on pay" at annual general meetings. This at least allows shareholders to have a say on executive compensation and I believe it makes all corporations more aware of public scrutiny on the issue.

Alan Harman is a Director and Portfolio Manager at ScotiaMcLeod.

¹ CFSC supported SHARE in its establishment through two years of funding assistance, thanks to support from the Endswell Foundation. Friend Peter Chapman, former Coordinator of CFSC, is the Executive Director of SHARE.

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FRIENDS ON THE MOVE

Jennifer Preston, CFSC's Aboriginal Affairs Program Coordinator, was in Geneva in April to attend the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review of Canada. It is the opportunity at the HRC to review Canada's upholding and implementing of human rights – every country is reviewed every four years. CFSC participated in a joint submission with Indigenous partners regarding Canada's human rights obligations to Indigenous peoples.

Jenn is then off to New York, with **Monica Walters Field** (Toronto MM), to participate in the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (18 – 31

May). The Forum is an advisory committee of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It provides expert advice and recommendations on Indigenous issues to ECOSOC, and to programs, funds and agencies of the UN; raises awareness and promotes the integration and coordination of activities related to Indigenous issues within the UN system; and prepares and disseminates information on Indigenous issues. CFSC attends with regards to Friends' ongoing concern regarding implementation of the Declaration.

Tasmin Rajotte, interim Quakers Fostering Justice Program Coordinator, and **Philip Smith**, CFSC

board and QFJ member, will be attending a Symposium on Child Rights Impact Assessment occurring in Ottawa in May. This will be an opportunity to deepen knowledge and develop relationships that will strengthen aspects of QFJ's work.

In April, **Rob Hughes**, clerk of CFSC's Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee, did a two-day workshop on reconciliation and dialogue, hosted by Reconciliation Canada. The workshops create a safe place to engage Canadians in dialogue that revitalizes relationships, increases understanding of our shared history, and explores reconciliation.



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