



Canadian Friends Service Committee E-Newsletter

June, 2015

Friends in the news over boycott of products of illegal Israeli settlements



Graffiti in Aida refugee camp, Occupied West Bank.
Photo credit: Matthew Legge

Canadian Quakers were cited in an article on the front page of CBC News Online on Monday, May 11th, which reported that Canada may try to criminalize the participation of Friends and others in a nonviolent call for the boycott of products made in illegal Israeli settlements. The Government of Canada called the article "ridiculous" but has not clarified what it meant by telling the United Nations that Canada would adopt a "zero-tolerance" approach to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which it labels "the new face of anti-Semitism".

As the story was picked up worldwide, Canadian Friends Service Committee responded by releasing a statement to the media that called on the government to recognize the right to nonviolent protest. CFSC also released answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Friends' positions on Israel/Palestine and wrote to opposition parties for clarification on their position on BDS being "anti-Semitic".

Our media release: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/MediaReleaseMay14>

The FAQ: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/FAQ>

The letter to opposition parties: <http://bit.ly/1Dblyh>

The CBC news article: <http://bit.ly/1KhXFcr>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission closing events

As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) comes to a close, CFSC, Ottawa Monthly Meeting and others will join closing events from May 31st – June 3rd.

CFSC is a part of two events on June 1st: From 9 AM – 10:30 AM we will be part of a panel titled *Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery* happening at City Hall (110 Laurier Avenue West); from 1 PM – 3 PM we will be moderating a panel titled *The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Justice, Reconciliation and Hope* at the Delta Ottawa (101 Lyon St N).

For more information on these and other TRC events or to watch the events online visit:

<http://www.quakerservice.ca/news/truth-and-reconciliation-closing-events>

Update on synthetic biology

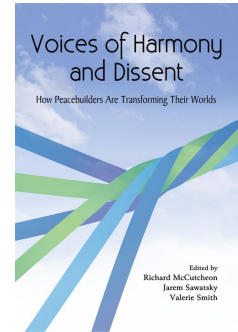
By combining biology, computer science, and engineering, synthetic biology (SB) promises to produce "designer life forms". Quakers, grounded by our testimonies, can play a significant role in shaping policy regarding this rapidly expanding field. We are one of the few faith communities actively following developments in SB.

At Canadian Yearly Meeting in 2014, Friends asked CFSC for annual easily accessible updates on the field of SB. Based on the amount that's happening, we're putting out a first update early and will follow up with another one later in the year. <http://www.quakerservice.ca/SBUpdate2015>

New book on peacebuilding with contributions from Friends

Voices of Harmony and Dissent: How Peacebuilders are Transforming their Worlds is new from Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Press, co-edited by Rick McCutcheon (Winnipeg Meeting) with chapters written by Friends and other peace leaders who've taught at CMU. Together with the book, CMU has launched a series of four free peace talks which we believe you will find helpful and inspiring! The talks will only be online for a limited time so watch them as they are released:

<http://csop.cmu.ca/video-training-1>



The publishers of *Voices of Harmony and Dissent* have kindly agreed that if you buy an eBook (\$19.48) from this link: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/PeacebuildersBook> CFSC will receive half of the proceeds.

World Uranium Symposium 2015

Dale Dewar (Prairie Monthly Meeting) attended and volunteered at the 2015 World Uranium Symposium in Quebec City in April with the support of a CFSC individual grant. The symposium discussed the mining of uranium in relation to themes of health, environment, ethics, human rights, Indigenous rights and more. The three day conference engaged speakers from around the world with various expertise. For more information and news from this event visit: <http://www.uranium2015.com/en>

To apply for a CFSC individual grant download this form: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/grants>

Institute for Creative Conflict Engagement and Transformation

Pendle Hill Quaker Center will be offering an institute about ways to deal with conflict from July 15 to August 9. The 25 day institute will provide skills and tools needed by anyone interested in creating peace and justice – at home, in schools, in communities, and in the world. The workshops will engage topics like love, nonviolence, forgiveness and reconciliation, through exercises like restorative circles and practices, mediation and training. For more information see: <http://bit.ly/1GyAM25>

CCJC writes of concerns with Bill C-53

The Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC), of which CFSC is a member, has written to the Prime Minister regarding recent amendments to the Criminal Code as part of Bill C-53. The amendments would make life imprisonment mandatory for anyone who commits crimes of high treason or planned murder. CCJC argues that the current criminal process is sufficient to assess the risk posed by criminals and whether their time and growth in prison warrants release. Sentencing life imprisonment without the possibility of parole negates “the human capacity for positive change”.



Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)

60 Lowther Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5R 1C7

Tel: 416-920-5213 Email: info@quakerservice.ca Website: www.quakerservice.ca

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