



Canadian Friends Service Committee E-Newsletter

November, 2015



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Friends appalled at growing Islamophobia

Canadian Yearly Meeting and Canadian Friends Service Committee have issued a joint statement which suggests a number of steps to reverse the deeply disturbing trend of scapegoating and marginalizing Canadian Muslims. "Quakers are appalled at the bigotry and discrimination we see targeting the diverse members of the Muslim faith in Canada."

The statement also highlights commonalities between the Abrahmic Traditions and the important fact that, "When human rights are taken away for any Canadians, rights are effectively made vulnerable for all." The statement has been well received and picked up by a news site that focuses on Islamic issues, suggesting that many people are similarly concerned. Read the statement at: <http://quakerservice.ca/Islamophobia>

Time to visit your MP

With many new Members of Parliament taking office following Canada's 42nd federal election, this is an excellent moment to build relationships with incoming MPs so as to raise up issues of concern to Friends. CFSC has produced a simple double-sided handout full of practical tips that will help you prepare for a Friendly meeting with your MP. We encourage you to act soon before MPs leave local ridings for Ottawa. <http://www.quakerservice.ca/VisitingMPs>

New Truth and Reconciliation Commission Guide for Friends

As Friends across the country begin to respond to the *94 Calls to Action* issued by the TRC this summer, CFSC has compiled a *TRC Guide* to help us engage as fully as possible. We encourage Friends to use and share this guide within and beyond your Meetings and study groups. CFSC wants to hear how you are taking action, and we are glad to provide assistance or suggestions as we all walk along this journey of reconciliation. <http://www.quakerservice.ca/TRCGuide>

Update from CFSC members meeting

CFSC members were welcomed to Toronto October 23-25 for our regular autumn meeting. Program committees made progress on their many activities, and plans for the year ahead were made with great excitement.

Our Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities Committee (QPASCC) was renamed to Quaker Peace Committee (QPC) to more clearly reflect the committee's focus - support for work arising from Friends' testimonies which builds peace in Canada and overseas.

Quakers Fostering Justice welcomed new committee members, and is actively promoting penal abolition among Friends, and working in partnership towards implementing best practices regarding the children of incarcerated parents.

Quaker Indigenous Rights Committee remains focused on the full implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which was named by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada as the key framework for reconciliation between Canada and Indigenous Peoples.

CFSC part of panel discussion in BC on Nov 2

CFSC is co-sponsoring a public event, *Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Calls to Action and Imperatives for Change*, at the University of Vancouver Island, Monday November 2 in Nanaimo, 7- 9 pm. Panelists include CFSC staff Jennifer Preston, Doug White, Paul Joffe and Craig Benjamin. For more information visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/509989302509623/>

Update on work in support of Conscientious Objectors (COs)

Earlier this week COs and their supporters, including Friends, gathered in Toronto for an evening of education and letter writing. Can you believe it has been 12 years since the first Iraq war COs arrived in Canada seeking the right to stay?

CFSC encourages Friends to learn more about the Iraq war COs, and to contact Members of Parliament to ask that they take action to finally let COs stay!

For suggestions of a few key points to raise visit <http://resisters.ca> and for further detailed background see our webpage: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/CO>



Friends with members of the War Resisters Support Campaign after writing letters to MPs, Oct 26, 2015.
Photo credit: War Resisters Support Campaign



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