

Quaker Concern

Alternatives to Military Violence

By Matthew Legge



Demonstration in Stockholm against the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Feb 27, 2022. CC-BY 4.0 Frankie Fouganthin

Many institutions and ways of doing things persist because of the wide-spread acceptance of TINA [there is no alternative].

— Geoff Harris, quoted in *Are We Done Fighting?*

We feel so many things when we see images of the suffering caused by war. They may include outrage, sorrow, confusion, and a desire to do something meaningful to help. When Russia invaded Ukraine, a question arose in the hearts of many who support justice and peace: “What are the alternatives to a violent response?”

“Thinking of military intervention as a ‘last resort’ assumes that it is inevitable [and] hinders non-military action.”

In 2005 the United Nations adopted the Responsibility to Protect doctrine. The stated aim was for the world community to never again fail to intervene in a situation like the Rwandan genocide, one where a government was unable or unwilling to protect its own citizens.

Quaker Meetings, with support from Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC), spent time in worshipful discernment around the Responsibility to Protect. Friends reached unity. The essence of what they told CFSC was this: we support the work of prevention. We

call on governments to put far more time, thought, and resources there. And we believe that governments must stop talking about military intervention “in the last resort.” Why? “Thinking of military intervention as a ‘last resort’ assumes that it is inevitable [and] hinders non-military action...” (Minute 57, Canadian Yearly Meeting, 2007).

While so many aspects of Responsibility to Protect were extremely important, since deploying the military remained an option on the table, Friends were concerned that it would keep dominating attention and resources. They called for these resources to go instead into violence prevention and peacebuilding.

But many wanted greater clarity about what this means. This led Gianne Broughton—CFSC’s Peace Program Coordinator at the time—to research and write a book: *The Four Elements of Peacebuilding: How to Protect Nonviolently*. Later CFSC asked me to do additional research, which ultimately led to CFSC’s 2019 book *Are We Done Fighting? Evidence for the power (and limitations) of active nonviolence* is woven throughout these books. Section five of *Are We Done Fighting?* is called “Structural Peace” and is most specific to the topics of war prevention, what can be done during wars, and peacebuilding.

CFSC does not claim to have all of the answers. There are no guarantees of success. Throughout the long

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Jerusalem Declaration

In a previous issue of Quaker Concern we expressed misgivings about the IHRA working definition of antisemitism. CFSC recently decided to use the clearer *Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism* to inform our work. <https://QuakerService.ca/JerusalemDeclaration>

Ancestors Voice podcast

Ancestors Voice is a new podcast hosted by Orrie Charleyboy and supported by CFSC's Reconciliation Fund. Orrie's vision for *Ancestors Voice* is to educate listeners about the history of Canada's residential schools and to share some of his personal story. Have a listen: <https://QuakerService.ca/AncestorsVoice>

Indigenous rights and sustainable development

CFSC is active in the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Coalition has released two new educational fact sheets:

1. *Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*
2. *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the UN Sustainable Development Goals*

The sheets explain what the Sustainable Development Goals are, where they came from, and their relevance to Indigenous peoples (in particular in Canada). Read them at <https://DeclarationCoalition.com>

Working to stop gender-based violence in Burundi

A three minute video from our partners at Friends Women's Association describes their work, with the assistance of CFSC, to address gender-based violence. Have a look: <https://QuakerService.ca/FWAVideo>

Together against apartheid

In a previous issue we wrote about the situation in Israel being recognized by human rights groups as apartheid. Since then Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have released further reports. There is now near-global consensus among human rights experts that Israel is committing apartheid. Our friends at Independent Jewish Voices have launched a new campaign to educate about what this means and

to call on Canada to accept this reality and respond accordingly. Find out more at <https://TogetherAgainstApartheid.org>

Newest posts for Psychology Today

CFSC's Communications Coordinator Matt Legge continues to blog for *Psychology Today*. His most recent posts are:

Thich Nhat Hanh, quantum physics, and relationships
Picked by *Psychology Today*'s editors as "essential reading" on the topics of religion, ethics and morality, and relationships, this post looks at an inspiring shift in understanding that can help to transform conflicts.

"Freedom Convoy" and the impacts of victimhood narratives
This post looks at research on both the benefits and drawbacks of feeling like a victim and how this relates to the "Freedom Convoy" that occupied Ottawa.

Humour and humiliation

Following a surprise act of violence at the Oscars this year, this post shares research on humiliation and on humour. The focus is on how to use humour nonviolently to deescalate (instead of fueling) conflicts.

Read these and more posts by visiting <https://QuakerService.ca/PsychologyToday>

Quaker Concern

Quaker Concern is the newsletter of Canadian Friends Service Committee, the peace and social justice agency Quakers in Canada. Since 1931, CFSC has been a small team but has achieved a great deal.

Donations are received with gratitude. The generous support of individual donors makes all of the work described here possible. CFSC issues tax receipts for donations over \$10.

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Breaking the Silence: 2020—2022

By Nancy Russell



A major concern of CFSC's in recent years has been the plight of children when their parents or caregivers are incarcerated. One way CFSC seeks to move this work forward is by using the United Nations as an avenue for advocacy and awareness-raising. Canada is a signatory to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. UN protocols include regular reviews of nations that have signed conventions, to assess their progress toward meeting the goals that the conventions lay out.

Looking ahead to the review of Canada, in 2019 CFSC hosted a unique Dialogue, a first-of-its-kind event, at Friends House in Toronto. The Dialogue brought together over 35 organizations and individuals from across Canada to discuss the often ignored and disturbing conditions facing children of incarcerated parents. Out of this Dialogue, we released the report *Breaking the Silence: Dialogue on Children of Incarcerated Parents* (<https://QuakerService.ca/BreakingTheSilence>).

A year after the Dialogue had taken place, I was hired at CFSC. The pandemic arrived shortly thereafter. While it may have changed the work environment, it did not change CFSC's strong commitment to the goal of advancing the rights and well-being of children and families impacted by incarceration.

In addition to the UN review of Canada's implementation of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, we and our partners have advocated for children to be considered in federal legislation intending to reduce recidivism in Canada. (Recidivism means new crimes committed by people trying to reintegrate into their communities after incarceration. This often happens as the result of systemic discrimination and lack of supports and resources.)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Alternative reports to the official government report are a significant part of the UN review process around a country's implementation of a Convention. Children, youth, and social justice organizations provide essential information and perspectives about the situation of children in Canada.

One of my first tasks when I joined CFSC was to write an *Alternative Report* for the UNCRC review process. This *Report* was submitted by CFSC to the UN review committee in 2020. Due to COVID-19, the review has been postponed ever since. Since 2020 we have been actively working in collaboration with the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children. The Coalition coordinated reports and perspectives brought forward by over 30 civil society organizations. Collectively, our goal was to take advantage of the postponed review process to work together and push for more progress in Canada.

The Coalition has brought these groups together for several meetings, including one in which we presented our concerns directly to the Heritage Minister. Through this meeting, and other efforts, we advocated for a revised government report—one that would better represent civil society concerns. We also asked the Ministry to organize transparent conversations with children and youth before and after concluding observations are received.

The final review for Canada is now scheduled for May. We're working with partners to strategize how best to raise public awareness and leverage these review sessions, and have submitted an update to our 2020 *Alternative Report*: <https://QuakerService.ca/UNCRC>.

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Working Group on the Federal Framework to Reduce Recidivism

CFSC is a member of the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice (NAACJ). The NAACJ brings together organizations from across the country that work with the Canadian criminal justice system, both from within and externally. The NAACJ has close connections to government and to Correctional Services Canada and provides channels of communication to advocate for changes.

Last year new federal law, the *Reduction of Recidivism Framework Act*, came into force. The Act instructs the Minister of Public Safety to “consult with a variety of Indigenous governing bodies” as well as “non-governmental, non-profit, faith-based and private sector organizations,” to develop and implement a federal framework to reduce recidivism.

The NAACJ established a working group of members interested in supporting and informing this new legislation. CFSC has been participating in this working group twice a month since August, 2021. We also took part in two afternoons of roundtable consultations with Public Safety Canada. The working group collaborated on a discussion paper to help shape the *Federal Framework to Reduce Recidivism* (see <https://QuakerService.ca/ReducingRecidivism>).

Through our influence, the paper includes strong statements about the needs of children with incarcerated parents. The *Federal Framework to Reduce Recidivism* is another opportunity for Canada to take a rights-based approach to improve conditions for children with incarcerated parents. The implementation of this new legislation will contribute to the perspective CFSC will bring to the UNCRC review.

The Canadian Coalition for Children of Incarcerated Parents

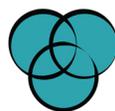
One key result of the Dialogue CFSC hosted in 2019 was participants being inspired to form the Canadian Coalition on Children with Incarcerated Parents. This Coalition helps organizations working with children impacted by familial incarceration to be more effective in their advocacy by coordinating their efforts. Having brought the organizations together in the first place, CFSC has been strongly committed to helping the Coalition build capacity and become more established. The Coalition has developed a written mandate, vision,

and formal terms of reference. Its Twitter account and website <https://ChildrenOfIncarceratedParents.ca> were launched in the fall.

The Coalition is making itself more visible through these measures, as well as public presentations and online social media campaigns. In February we facilitated a focus group and the premiere screening of the documentary *Bonds that Hurt, Bonds that Heal*. The film shares stories of lived experience to advocate for children with incarcerated parents.

The Coalition has many plans for 2022, including increasing access to information, promoting a child rights-based approach, counteracting the negative public discourse and stigma about criminalized people and their families, and elevating the voices of lived experience. There are also many opportunities within existing work to advance the rights and well-being of children with incarcerated parents.

CFSC is committed to promoting the use of best practices and resources for children of incarcerated parents at every stage of the criminal justice system. We are excited with how this work is developing, and look forward to sharing more in the months ahead!



Nancy Russell is CFSC's Criminal Justice Program Coordinator.



In any given year as much as *half* of the work you read about in *Quaker Concern* is funded through gifts that donors leave in their wills.

Long after you've passed on, you can still be a voice for peace. You can be present, creating a more just world for your children and grandchildren. Find out how:

QuakerService.ca/VoiceForPeace

Breathing Life Into Treaty Relationships

By Elaine Bishop



Settlers walk in from the Four Directions to be welcomed by Indigenous people of Treaties 1 and 2. Photo credit: Duncan McNairnay

We arrived at 7 am. The autumn sun warmed the Kapabamayak Achaak Healing Forest in North End, Winnipeg, Treaty 1 territory. We came to set up. Something was planned that had not happened for 150 years. We gathered to commemorate the 1871 making and signing of Treaties 1 and 2. As the sacred fire burned, we were renewing our commitments to being good Treaty partners.

What does it mean for a Settler or Newcomer to be a good Treaty partner? When I moved to Manitoba in 1957, no one talked about Treaty. I didn't learn about being a Treaty partner in school. I returned to Winnipeg in 2004 with new eyes for relationships between Settler/Newcomers and Indigenous people. I had lived on the unceded land of the Lubicon Cree Nation. Working for them, I experienced duplicity in Canadian and provincial governments negotiating land rights conflicts. I experienced the power of Indigenous peoples from around the world in Geneva negotiating the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. I learned how much my people, Settler/Newcomers, need to change our relationships with Indigenous peoples. I needed to learn to be a good Treaty partner.

It was 2015. Canadians had just received the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report with its 94 *Calls to Action*. Some Winnipeg Quakers gathered in circle. We came to reflect on how we could respond. The speaker, an Indigenous leader with deep wisdom, was holding the circle for us. I heard this: "We [Indigenous] Treaty people, we celebrate Treaty each year. You Settler people, you don't celebrate Treaty. You need to learn to, because you are Treaty people, too!"

What a challenge! Where to begin? We started exploring the idea. At an Indigenous learning circle we floated our idea to create a Settler-initiated Treaty celebration.

Our Mennonite friends responded warmly: "You do the planning! We'll bring the food!"

We learned during our first try that creating such an event needed more planning than we had imagined. We abandoned it because we needed more time. Yet we had created a vision. We wanted to honour our Treaty partnership by celebrating diverse cultures and sharing food. We wanted a safe place for Indigenous and Settler folks to gather and build relationships. The entertainment needed to be balanced between Indigenous and Settler/Newcomer performers. It must be family-friendly. We wanted to weave in learning about Treaty 1, its gifts to Settler and Newcomer peoples, and what it means to be Settler/Newcomer Treaty partners.

In 2017 we had our first *We Are All Treaty People Celebration!* The planning committee involved Mennonites and Presbyterians who shared the costs. We started work in January. We adopted the name from an education campaign of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM). We invited (and were thrilled) when the TRCM Treaty Commissioner accepted our invitation to speak! We chose a September date to not conflict with Indigenous Treaty days. We chose a site at The Forks, where the Assiniboine and Red Rivers meet.

On September 17, Quakers arrived mid-morning. We erected tents. We set up the sound system. The food arrived and the coffee was on. We had a large, grassy site. Our lead act, Don Amero, was a well-known Indigenous performer. We opened with a drum song, and an Elder's prayer and teaching. Loretta Ross, the TRCM Treaty Commissioner, spoke. We hosted singers and men's and women's Morris dancers. We shared

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Breathing Life into Treaty continued

food. Around the edges of the site were Indigenous crafters, puppet and button making tables, and a tent for Indigenous storytelling. After the food was gone, and the site cleaned, the feedback was great! We needed to do this again.

Since then we've broadened representation on the planning committee, with the TRCM becoming active in the planning. Our own understandings of being Treaty partners have deepened. In 2019 we created our vision statement:

To provide an opportunity for Settlers and Newcomers to join together with Indigenous people in celebrating the kinship relationship created by the signing of Treaty One (and other numbered treaties), to share the richness of these cultures through music and the arts, and to honour the treaty commitment to share this land together in a good way while acknowledging the pain caused by the many broken promises.

Kinship relationship: Treaty makes us relations! Aimée Craft's book *Breathing Life into the Stone Fort Treaty: an Anishinabe Understanding of Treaty One*, describes Treaty as relationship based on respect, reciprocity, and renewal. This provides a guide to Settler/Newcomers about how to build Treaty kinship.

We continued through the pandemic, pivoting by broadcasting our event. This included a powerful conversation between Indigenous youth activist Michael Redhead Champagne, our MC, and Loretta Ross.

We knew that 2021 needed to be special. It commemorated the 150th year since making and signing Treaties 1 and 2. In them, Indigenous peoples here agreed to share their land with Settlers and Newcomers.

We planned our usual celebration to be online, yet wanted more. We wanted ceremony on the land. We shared ideas with the TRCM Elders Circle. They took over planning. We raised more money than usual, including a grant from Canadian Friends Service Committee.

The TRCM invited the Indigenous participants. We invited the Settler/Newcomers. Modeled on 1871, this included the Lieutenant Governor. We prayed for good

weather. COVID regulations for vaccine passports and masks were respected, especially to protect participating Elders.

The day arrived. We gathered in the circle of the Kapabamayak Achaak Healing Forest for a moving, spirit-filled time. Rock sentinels mark the Four Directions, each painted with the sacred animal of their direction. Elders opened, offering pipe and water ceremonies to begin in a good way.

MC Jim Compton of the TRCM read greetings from Lieutenant Governor Janice Filman. Harry Bone, chair of the TRCM Elders' Circle, offered teachings on the meaning of Treaty. Then all Settler/Newcomer participants were invited to gather at one of the sentinels, the one close to them or the direction from which they or their ancestors travelled to Treaty 1 territory. I chose the east, the direction from England, my birth land. The Indigenous participants gathered inside the circle. We flowed into the circle from the Four Directions to the sounds of the drum—Settler faith leaders, youth, and Elders. We were warmly greeted by the circle of Indigenous people, leaders, Elders, and youth. It was a profound time of deep relationship.

We joked about merging as we're taught to do in traffic, one after another, as Settlers entering from the Four Directions joined those already walking inside the circle, so laughter merged with tears. Gifts were offered to everyone. Quaker potter Keith Barber provided smudge bowls for every gift, created with local clay that he dug himself. The commemoration ended with a feast.

The original peoples of this land welcomed us. We are invited into Treaty relationship, respectfully sharing the gifts of the land, sharing responsibility for its care. Planning for *We Are All Treaty People Celebration 2022* is well under way. Through celebrating together and annual renewal, we are breathing life into our Treaty relationships.



Elaine Bishop is a member of Winnipeg Monthly Meeting. She is a former coordinator of CFSC and currently an associate for both CFSC's Indigenous rights and criminal justice work.

See more pictures and watch videos in the online version of this article. Visit [QuakerConcern.ca](https://www.quakerconcern.ca).

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study of these issues, though, we've grown increasingly clear that militaries are less likely to achieve good ends such as protecting people. And what little good militaries can achieve comes at unacceptable costs: to human and nonhuman life, to environments and the climate, to our creativity and humanity, and to our societies, which could direct these resources and energies elsewhere. For these many reasons, and in keeping with the Quaker peace testimony as we understand and seek to live it, CFSC supports active nonviolence and does not support killing.

To follow are just a few points to consider in response to Russia invading Ukraine.

In every violent conflict there are creative and caring local people working for justice and peace. These efforts may not end wars, but they are so valuable. Internationals need to find local peace actors and support them. Unarmed civilian protection is also increasingly recognized by the UN for its ability to keep people safe during armed conflicts.

There are also always unarmed civilians engaged in creative noncooperation with systems of violence and injustice. In Ukraine right now many everyday people are bravely frustrating Russian military aggression through strategic noncooperation. We've been equally heartened to see many Russians taking great personal risks to oppose the war. Most people (including most journalists) completely misunderstand how powerful noncooperation is, so it doesn't get the attention it deserves. It frequently achieves more than militaries.

At the level of States, there are really not many ways to end fighting and bloodshed. Everyone knows what's needed: communication and negotiated political agreements. On this point *Are We Done Fighting?* says:

As individuals there are times when continuing a conversation may not make sense, or may even be dangerous for us—say, if we're trying to escape an abusive relationship. But, as much as dialogue can be frustrating and fruitless, governments or armed groups in conflict are always communicating anyway and aren't made safer by cutting off dialogue. Experienced negotiator Joshua Weiss explains:

During times of crisis and conflict, more communication is needed, not less... When negotiation is absent it is important to remember that communication does not stop,

but that messages are sent with actions open to multiple interpretations. During tense large-scale conflicts between nations, when mistrust is high, most actions taken are assumed to be belligerent.

In conflict situations, each side feels a sense of superior insight and morality. They filter their beliefs and decisions through this lens. Actions by each side appear aggressive to the other, and the other feels justified in responding in ways that they view as both moral and defensive, but that the other sees as hostile and provocative.

The formula we propose to governments, then, is what we would say for any war. Keep thinking and responses complex, let go of simple rhetoric and enemy images, and engage relentlessly in diplomacy and with good will actions that demonstrate a commitment to peace.

Some will say in response: "Yes, but Putin is _____." Fill in the blank: crazy, evil, impossible to negotiate with... The celebrated Quaker mediator Adam Curle asserts that in all of his mediation efforts he never met a leader, including ones waging very brutal wars, who was "crazy" or "pure evil." He felt that leaders are in very difficult situations with impossible competing interests to try to navigate. So he treated them as human beings with tough jobs who sometimes made decisions he strongly opposed, but who always did so for reasons (not for no reason or with no interests to negotiate about).

What the experiences of mediators and negotiators suggest, then, is to be very cautious about accepting the diagnosis that Putin is impossible to communicate with and therefore the only option is more violence. The best option is always prevention of violence before it happens. Even after wars have started, though, there are still always nonviolent paths forward. Tragically, these usually take time. They also require overcoming faith in violence and the desire to seek revenge.

Just remember: there are always alternatives.



Matt Legge is CFSC's Communications Coordinator. You can join free interactive workshops to study *Are We Done Fighting?* together in a group. Find out more at [QuakerService.ca/Register](https://www.QuakerService.ca/Register). A longer version of this article is at [QuakerConcern.ca](https://www.QuakerConcern.ca).



Since our last edition of *Quaker Concern* two new staff people have joined our small but vibrant team! **Kerry Grier**, CFSC's new Peace Program Coordinator, has practiced human rights law in Zimbabwe and been instrumental in founding and leading multiple nonprofits focused on human rights and healthcare.

Jeremy Vander Hoek joined CFSC in the role of Assistant, CFSC Events and Indigenous Rights. He is a recent graduate of the University of Waterloo with an MA in Global Governance. His research paper focused on the implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in Canada.

Matt Legge has moved into the role of Communications Coordinator. He continues to facilitate workshops using content from CFSC's book *Are We Done Fighting?* and gives talks about the book and conflict transformation. In March he again spoke via Zoom to a first year class at Furman College (South Carolina) to answer questions about the book.

In January CFSC staff **Jennifer Preston** and associate member **Paul Joffe** were invited to present

virtually at the Wet'suwet'en Peace and Unity Gathering (<https://QuakerService.ca/WetsuwetenPeaceAndUnity>).

February saw Jennifer virtually attend the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' meeting on the militarization of Indigenous land. She also Zoomed into the Indigenous Awareness Group at Christie Gardens (Toronto) to discuss the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and implementation of the new federal legislation.

In March Jennifer moderated a panel at the National Conference on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to look at the SDGs and Indigenous rights. She spoke on this topic again at the end of the month at the Assembly of First Nations' Special Chiefs Meeting. Both of those meetings led up to the *UN Declaration and Sustainable Development: Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights and Ecological Knowledge* a symposium that CFSC co-hosted in April at the University of British Columbia. Jennifer served as host for the symposium and she and Jeremy attended in person.

Jeremy says of the experience, "When I found out I would be attending the symposium I was excited not only to learn about how the SDGs and Indigenous rights could work together, but also because it would give me my first opportunity to engage with CFSC work in person! The depth of wisdom and knowledge shared in the panels and presentations was an excellent education for me.

"I'm eager to learn more about the opportunities and challenges the SDGs pose to Indigenous rights implementation in Canada. Alongside this learning I was able to chat with lots of different people as I assisted videographer Ellen Gabriel in conducting interviews. Ellen's interviewing skills allowed for deep engagement on the meaning of sustainability in community. Each of the experts Ellen interviewed expanded the meaning of sustainability in a way I hadn't thought of before. Plus, meeting Jenn, Rachel, Ellen, Keira, and many other of our partners face to face in Vancouver was wonderful! I look forward to continuing this work in such a supportive and engaged community."