



Canadian Friends Service Committee **E-Newsletter**



Calling for diplomacy with Iran

Canadian Friends Service Committee is deeply concerned about the prospect of war with Iran. CFSC Clerk Lana Robinson has sent an open letter to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defence Minister.

The letter notes: "Opposition to war is not advocating doing nothing, it is advocating actively investing in and pursuing the many viable and effective alternatives, rather than imagining that alternatives must be impossible although they haven't yet been fully tried." Read our letter in full at: <https://quakerservice.ca/Iran>



CFSC associate member Paul Joffe, Indigenous Rights Program Coordinator Jennifer Preston, Kirby Muldoe of SkeenaWild Conservation Trust, and Hereditary Chief Na'Moks of the Wet'suwet'en at Friends House in New York City while attending the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2017

CFSC expresses solidarity with Wet'suwet'en People

Under the authority of Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs, land defenders are protecting inherent Indigenous title and rights and exercising the right of self-determination. This is recognized and affirmed in both Canadian and international law. Coastal GasLink is in the process of creating a pipeline which crosses territories of many Indigenous Nations, including the Wet'suwet'en.

Intimidation, arrests, and threats of armed violence have been used against this nonviolent gathering of Indigenous land defenders. CFSC has shared our deep concerns, called for respectful, good faith dialogue, and expressed our solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en: <https://quakerservice.ca/Wetsuweten>



Welcome our new program coordinator Nancy Russell!

CFSC is pleased to announce that Nancy Russell has been hired to fill the part-time staff position of Criminal Justice Program Coordinator. Nancy is also currently a part-time faculty member at Humber College and until recently held the position of Advocate at the Office of the Ontario Child Advocate for ten years.

Throughout Nancy's 30-plus-year career she has worked both front line and management positions in many settings: children's mental health centres, youth justice facilities, group homes, outreach and hospitals in both urban and rural environments. While at the Ontario Child Advocate, Nancy was involved with systemic reviews; presentations to groups across the province; the report "It Depends Who's Working" about the Roy McMurtry youth custody/detention centre; and was the Advocate Lead for youth advisory groups at the Jeffrey Baldwin and Katelynn Sampson inquests.

Nancy also taught the Community Resources and Legislation course at Humber College for 10 years. She continues to teach and supervise student community internships in the Child and Youth Worker Program.

Nancy is taking over at CFSC from Verena Tan, who has moved back home to Australia. We thank Verena for her service and wish her all the best for the future.



CFSC Clerk blogs from Israel/Palestine

Lana Robinson represented Canadian Quakers on a KAIROS Church Leaders' delegation to Israel/Palestine late last year. Each member of the delegation wrote one blog post and all of them were shared recently. Lana's post [Lost Harvest, Seeds of Hope](https://www.kairoscanada.org/lost-harvest-seeds-of-hope) touches on the differences she witnessed between bureaucracy and active nonviolence. It also highlights the reality that oppression and exclusion create a loss for us all: <https://www.kairoscanada.org/lost-harvest-seeds-of-hope>



CFSC supports evidence-based approaches to addressing hate

In the last edition of our newsletter *Quaker Concern* we discussed the difficult issue of addressing racism and hatred in Canada. The article touched on a new definition of antisemitism that has some significant flaws. In particular the definition is strikingly vague and may even confuse hatred with legitimate criticisms of the actions of the government of Israel (even while explicitly claiming that that is not the intention): <https://quakerconcern.ca/hate-anti-racism-ihra>

Stopping antisemitism will require Canada to address the root causes that contribute to this and other forms of racism and hatred. This demands a clear sense of who is taking antisemitic actions, why, and what can be done about it. It seems that antisemitism in Canada is intimately connected to white supremacy. We are concerned that the new definition does not help with making this clear, and may even obscure it and so sidetrack realistic approaches to stopping antisemitism.

This issue is pressing right now. The federal government included the definition in its new anti-racism strategy. Vancouver and Calgary have both considered adopting the definition but, at least so far, haven't done so. Ontario is considering it.

Now Independent Jewish Voices Canada is inviting signatures on their petition. It encourages

governments to address antisemitism by rejecting this new definition and instead seeing antisemitism as a form of hate that can best be addressed together with other forms of racism and hate. CFSC endorses the petition and encourages anyone so led to consider signing and sharing it: <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/fighting-antisemitism-is-essential-but-the-ihra-definition-is-the-wrong-approach>

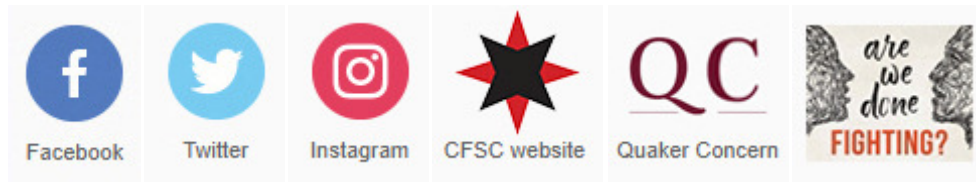


CFSC members and staff in front of Toronto Friends House, 2019

Thank you!

We were so grateful to everyone who showed their love and support for this work by sending in a donation at year end. Thank you for all the kind phone calls, notes, and cards. A small group of donors makes all of the work you read about in the E-News possible. We couldn't do this without you.

[**Donate Now**](#)



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