

# BOUNDARY PEACE INITIATIVE

## BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition Conference—Oct. 28, 2017

By: Hannah Hadikin (First published in the USCC Doukhobor magazine the Iskra)

Approximately every six months for the past couple decades or longer, a dedicated group of peace activist members and supporters gather to attend the BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition (BCSIPC) Conference. This bi-annual Conference alternates between the Okanagan, Boundary and West Kootenay regions. This time around the Conference was hosted by the West Kootenay group with the MIR Centre in Castlegar serving as the venue. As usual, the excitement of seeing familiar faces and the pleasure of meeting new attendees and catching up over coffee and muffins is the order of the day!

Folks from Kelowna, Kaslo, and Grand Forks, Nelson, Castlegar and the surrounding areas all participated in creating a circle of trust, friendship, mutual respect and acceptance. Along with representing an array of diverse views, faiths, cultural traditions, experiences and peace activism, there was a strong thread that wove us together as we all envisioned a world free of wars, conflicts, inequality, poverty and violence.

The agenda was filled to the brim! Individuals from BCSIPC member groups shared their peace and social justice activities since the last conference in April. As the reporting flowed, I marveled at the dedication and creativity of the conference participants. We learned about a broad realm of social justice efforts, the strength of grassroots organizing and how working at the regional level, a bridge is built to link to the larger global network.

We were thrilled to learn that the Nobel Peace Prize 2017 was awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). ICAN is a coalition of partners in a hundred and one countries. ICAN has worked tirelessly in getting the historic Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted by 122 countries. The next stage is strengthening the resolve for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

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It is very exciting to know that the efforts and voices of individuals and organizations all over the world were heard! And equally as exciting to hear that Setsuko Thurlow, Hiroshima survivor, will be in Oslo to join ICAN executive director in accepting the Nobel Peace Prize. Setsuko was a 13-year-old schoolgirl in Hiroshima when in 1945 the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb killing thousands of people. Setsuko crawled out of the rubble of her demolished school, where some 30 other school girlfriends perished. Setsuko has dedicated her life urging nations, including Canada, to abolish nuclear weapons. Now at 85 years of age, she is hoping to pass the torch to a younger generation. "By harnessing the power of the people, we have worked to bring an end to the most destructive weapon ever created – the only weapon that poses an existential threat to all humanity." This prize is a tribute to the tireless efforts of many millions of campaigners and concerned citizens worldwide who, ever since the dawn of the atomic age, have loudly protested nuclear weapons, insisting that they can serve no legitimate purpose and must be forever banished from the face of our earth. (<http://www.icanw.org/action/nobel-peace-prize-2017-2/>)

Following a very enjoyable pot luck lunch and time for a bit of socializing, the afternoon focused on critical issues of the day. A presentation on the Leap Manifesto provided a vision of what Canada could be. (<https://leapmanifesto.org>). An overview was presented about the work of Project Ploughshares which is supported by the Canadian Council of Churches. Friends from the Baha'i community offered a lens into the Peace Education Curriculum for students at both the elementary and high school levels.

A highly informative presentation on the interaction between war and the environment by a member of Citizens Climate Lobby led to a thought-provoking discussion about the climate impacts of the military. Wars by their very nature reap horrific destruction on the environment and burn and release massive amounts of greenhouse gases. Canada's military mobilizations are responsible for releasing huge quantities of new carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

In light of Canada's ever increasing militarization, a considerable amount of time was dedicated towards sharing up-to-date information, about Canada's new defence policy and the 'hard power' global affairs posture promoted by Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland:

(<http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/freeland-says-canada-needs-hard-power-to-support-global-order-1.3445788>).

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There was also great concern about the governments' 'Operation Honour which is designed to accelerate a recruitment drive with a focus on attracting young women and students.

I took the opportunity to discuss the Voice of Women for Peace (VOW) concerns that women's voices and the voices of peace are minimized in the recent Defence Policy Review (DPR). In the description of board member Tamara Lorincz, this public consultation paper provides a masculinised and militarized perception of defence and security. VOW submitted a Gender-based, Eco-feminist, Nonviolent Approach to Canadian Defence & Security Policy Review document as a response to the invitation for public input. VOW calls for realization of gender equality, protection of human rights, adherence to the rule of law, land investment in social welfare and environmental protection that will positively offer security for our lives. According to Public Accounts of Canada, last year the federal government allocated a consolidated \$28 billion to the Department of National Defence and only \$1.5 billion to Environment Canada.

Participants held in-depth discussions about the recent record of the government's policy positions with respect to conflict zones around the world, the infringement on the sovereignty of certain nations and military intervention in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Consensus among the members expressed their deep concern and disapproval of uncritically aligning our government with the foreign policy and military actions of other countries.

Resolutions are key components along with the initiatives, strategies and actions arising from the Conference. *{Ed. Note: In January we will publish the minutes of the conference}.*

My inspiration comes from the shared emphasis on the value of peace, which is not just the absence of war, but the presence of justice. The energy of these shared values of respect for others and Mother Earth help to keep me grounded in the work of `valuing diversity, difference, inclusiveness and open-mindedness. Respect, acceptance and celebration of our individual and collective differences, including those based on age, race, culture, ability, sexuality, geography, religion, politics, class, education and image, among others` (Feminist Principles and Practices for Canadian Voice of Women for Peace).

**Resolution on Canadian Foreign and Defence Policy**

Dear Right Honorable Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and all Members of Parliament,

The B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition, at our conference on October 28, 2017, reviewed the recent record of the foreign and defense policy positions of the Canadian government on conflict zones around the world and we express our deep concern and disapproval of uncritically aligning our government with all of the foreign policy and military actions of the US NATO alliance.

The current US government, the leading state in NATO, has adopted a confrontational stance in international relations, resorting to military ultimatums and threats to destroy entire countries, (The Democratic Republic of Korea) advancing its military presence to the borders of Russia and China, refusing to respect democratic elections in Venezuela, refusing to participate in or sign the UN Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons, threatening to install the illegal Ballistic Missile Defense system, perpetuating its economic blockade of Cuba, and aggravating friendly relations among the common people of the USA, Canada and Mexico.

There is growing international opposition to the belligerence of US foreign, military, trade and diplomatic actions which are condemned as blatant violations of the UN Charter and the sovereign equality of states as provided by Article One of the Charter.

We note the fact that Canada was excluded from a seat on the Security Council for being perceived by other member states as being equivocal on respect for the principle of self determination in particular the right to choose economic and social systems without first asking the approval of the US NATO alliance.

The Canadian government's practice of giving uncritical support to US foreign, military and diplomatic policy reduces the independence and security of Canada by enmeshing our military in foreign wars and adventures and sets Canada against other states that have expressed no hostility to our country or people.

We call upon your government, on all Members of Parliament, to respect the desire of the Canadian people, as expressed in the last federal election for an independent Canadian foreign policy of peace, based on resolving international disputes by negotiations as provided for in the lofty principles of the UN Charter.

In Universal Kinship and Loving Peace on behalf of the B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition,  
Laura Savinkoff, Coordinator

## Why Social Progress Matters

By: Michael Porter, Professor at Harvard Business

CAMBRIDGE – Economic growth has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and improved the lives of many more over the last half-century. Yet it is increasingly evident that a model of human development based on economic progress alone is incomplete. A society which fails to address basic human needs, equip citizens to improve their quality of life, protect the environment, and provide opportunity for many of its citizens is not succeeding. Inclusive growth requires both economic and social progress.

The pitfalls of focusing on GDP alone are evident in the findings of the [2015 Social Progress Index](#), launched on April 9. The SPI, created in collaboration with Scott Stern of MIT and the non-profit Social Progress Imperative, measures the performance of 133 countries on various dimensions of social and environmental performance. It is the most comprehensive framework developed for measuring social progress, and the first to measure social progress independently of GDP.

Drawing on 52 indicators of a country's social performance, the SPI offers a practical tool for government and business leaders to benchmark country performance and prioritize those areas where social improvement is most needed. The SPI thus provides a systematic, empirical foundation to guide strategy for inclusive growth.

The data reveal that many aspects of social progress, not surprisingly, tend to improve with income growth. Wealthier countries, such as Norway (which holds the top spot on this year's SPI), generally deliver better social outcomes than lower-income countries.

But a striking finding is that GDP is far from being the sole determinant of social progress. Costa Rica, for example, has achieved a higher level of social progress than Italy, with barely a third of Italy's *per capita* GDP.

And Costa Rica is not an isolated case. Across the spectrum of countries, from rich to poor, we see examples, such as New Zealand and Senegal that are far more successful at translating their economic growth into social progress than others, such as the United States and Nigeria. Many of the fast-growing emerging economies, including China and India, have also not yet been able to attain the level of social progress that their economic progress enables.

Where there is an imbalance between economic growth and social progress, political instability and unrest often arise, as in Russia and Egypt. Lagging social progress also holds back economic growth in these and other countries that fail to address human needs, build social capital, and create opportunity for their citizens. Countries must invest in social progress, not just economic institutions, to create the proper foundation for economic growth.

In my own experience, I have seen how Rwanda made investing in social progress – including gender equity, a 61% reduction in child mortality in a single

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## (From last column) Why Social Progress Matters

decade, and 95% primary school enrollment – integral to its economic development strategy. Rwanda's positive economic performance would not have been possible without improvement in these and other dimensions of social progress.

Focusing on social progress in this way leads to better development strategies, and builds political support for the controversial steps sometimes needed to increase prosperity. Rigorous measurement of social performance, alongside traditional economic indicators, is crucial to starting the virtuous circle by which GDP growth improves social and environmental performance in ways that drive even greater economic success. And, by avoiding narrow debates, such as GDP versus income inequality, the SPI provides an essential tool with which to craft a feasible agenda that does just that.

Interest in the SPI has grown exponentially since its beta release in 2013. Findings are being shared among millions of citizens around the world, making it a tool for citizens to hold their leaders accountable.

Moreover, strategic initiatives to drive improvement in social progress are underway in more than 40 countries. Paraguay, for example, has adopted the SPI to guide an inclusive national development plan for 2030. And the SPI is being used not just at the national level, but by regional and municipal authorities as well. States such as Para in Brazil, along with cities like Bogota and Rio de Janeiro in Latin America and Somerville in the US state of Massachusetts, are starting to use the SPI as a measure of development success.

This year, the European Commission will roll out regional SPIs across Europe. And companies, such as Coca-Cola and Natura, are using the SPI to inform their social investment strategies and build collaborative relationships with public and private partners.

GDP has been the benchmark guiding economic development for more than a half-century. The SPI is intended to complement (not replace) it as a core metric of national performance. Measuring social progress offers citizens and leaders a more complete picture of how their country is developing. And that will help societies make better choices, create stronger communities, and enable people to lead more fulfilling lives.

## Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honor, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

**BPI web site:** [www.boundarypeace.20m.com](http://www.boundarypeace.20m.com)

***BPI meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet regularly monthly. For information call (250) 442-0434 or email [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).***



## What's Up?

The **BPI thanks** all our volunteers and supporters for your generosity and kindness in 2017. We wish you and yours joyful celebrations over the holidays and a peaceful, honorable, non-violent world for the New Year. It is by joining our hands and our hearts, guided by the Spirit of love, kindness, compassion and empathy that we will put an end to the penchant to **resolve conflicts** born out of misunderstanding, and miscommunication, political and resource based greed by military means and force. We can stop this drive to destruction when we say No to the power brokers who manipulate and control our lives. We will because we want a better world for ourselves, our children and grandchildren. I offer you a **challenge for 2018**—act in concert with others around the world that stand up and say NO to the oppression by the few of the many and work to resolve all conflict through negotiation, mediation, understanding and compassion.

**Video** of the Sept. 21, 2017 Walk the Drum and Peace Concert are available. To order call Laura at 250-442-0434 or email Laura at [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net)

The BCSIPC endorsed the **Leap Manifesto** and encourages you to do the same by going to <http://www.leapmanifesto.org>

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage:  
{Name of MP}, Parliament  
Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A  
0A6

Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>

## Book Recommendations



### **ATOMIC COVER-UP: Two U.S. Soldiers, Hiroshima & Nagasaki, and The Greatest Movie Never Made**

By: Greg Mitchell **Publisher:** Sinclair Books (July 12 2011)

In his latest book Greg Mitchell probes a turning point in U.S. history: the suppression of film footage, for decades, shot by a U.S. Army unit in Hiroshima and Nagasaki—with staggering consequences even today. This is one of the last untold stories of World War II, and has far-reaching impact. The shocking cover-up even extended to Hollywood—with President Truman censoring an MGM film. How did this cover-up happen? Why? And what did the two military officers, Daniel McGovern and Herbert Sussan, try to do about it, for decades? There was no WikiLeaks then to air the film. "Atomic Cover-up" answers all of these questions in a quick-paced but often surprising narrative.

Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, these ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Robert Kennedy

I am only one, but still I am one.  
I cannot do everything, but still I can do something;  
And because I cannot do everything  
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

Helen Keller

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-442-0434** or [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).

The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.