

REPORT

COLONY OR COUNTRY: THE FUTURE OF CANADA U.S. RELATIONS STRATEGY SESSIONS – MARCH 8-30, 2004

I. SUMMARY

As part of the campaign against the so-called “deep integration” (more on that name below), the Council of Canadians embarked on a seven-city tour titled *Colony or Country: The Future of Canada-U.S. Relations*. The tour kicked off in Vancouver on March 8 and stopped in Edmonton, Saskatoon, Fredericton, Halifax, Montréal, and ended in Toronto on March 30.

In each of these cities, plus Winnipeg, a strategy session was held during the day with community activists, leaders and representatives of various organisations to share information about this issue and gauge interest in a concerted effort to fight it.

The tour and strategy sessions have been highly successful and demonstrated a clear concerns from most participants on the impacts of deep integration as pushed forward by the Canadian Council of Chief Executives and the C.D. Howe Institute.

March 8	Vancouver	Maritime Labour Centre
March 9	Edmonton	Faculty of Arts Boardroom – University of Alberta
March 10	Winnipeg	Union Centre Building
March 11	Saskatoon	St. Paul’s Hospital
March 15	Fredericton	NB Public Employees Association Building
March 16	Halifax	Pier 21 National Historic Site
March 26	Montréal	UQAM
March 30	Toronto	Larry Sefton United Steelworkers Hall

The structure of the strategy sessions was loosely the same in all eight venues: presentation of the issue and its relevance to today’s struggles, roundtable introductions, evening speakers giving a short summary of their speech to provide some food for thoughts, roundtable on the issue answering four main questions:

- (1) How is Deep Integration affecting your organisation or constituency?
- (2) How can this issue fit into your political/communication strategy?
- (3) How can we network effectively?
- (4) Where do we go from here?

II. STATUS OF ISSUE RECOGNITION

The title of the tour (Colony or Country?) has been the object of some criticism in certain venues, especially in Fredericton and Toronto. In Fredericton, a Native participant gave a presentation to the group on how this issue is perceived among First nations people (see Annex I). In Toronto, the title itself was contentious as there was several representatives from immigration and refugees organisations who raised the fact that speaking of Canada as a colony, even a possible one, is insensitive to the people of truly colonized countries. In only one instance (Vancouver) was the term neo-colonialism suggested.

For all the strategy sessions, the term “Deep Integration” was disliked in almost all venues. To most participants, it seemed fuzzy and vague... Once we mentioned this concept was brought up by the CCCE and the C.D. Howe Institute (along with the Big Idea and the Grand Bargain), most participants

understood the name had to be explained, but we should attach our own definition to it, to explain what it really means.

Suggestions varied as to renaming deep integration: Americanization, decanadianization, cancer and hawaiiization, and assimilation.

This need for our own term to explain this process also led to some slogans:

- Deep integration is disintegration
- Repeal Bill DI-1
- A Charter of Wrongs and Feardoms
- Antidote to Deep Integration is Deep Democracy
- CADI (Corporate Agenda of Deep Integration)

However, it was raised that we should be careful in establishing our own definition and strategy on deep integration, namely that:

- We should avoid the appearance of anti-Americanism (especially since the initiative is coming from our own Canadian business elite);
- We should be careful to avoid being anti-business, even in fighting the CCCE as this organisation doesn't necessarily represent the view of small and medium-sized businesses. It was suggested that we could approach some representatives of the latter to have a more complete perspective on the issue.
- We should address the issue, not in terms of nationalism but rather in terms of loss of sovereignty.

There were some mixed feelings about nationalism. For some, nationalism or insisting on a pro-Canadian message was desirable and even marketable. Others suggested that we demonstrate that deep integration constitutes a threat to Canadian identity. Participants in Winnipeg went to great lengths to define the issues where our values are different of those of the American (Canadian culture, environment, drug policies, prescription drugs, same-sex marriage, foreign policy, cooperation rather than competition, gun control, civil liberties, missile defence, nuclear-free policy, stronger labour, less arms trading, no GE patents).

However, there were some who felt that we cannot raise the nationalism angle without first addressing the issues of First Nations. For some others, nationalism is not the way to address the problem, as the root cause is the corporate power and the compliant governments.

III. IMPACTS OF CONTINENTAL INTEGRATION

Continental integration is widely viewed as a problem. While few participants from coast to coast were fully or even partly aware of the strategy of the CCCE, all of them recognized the issue as impacting on their work or their constituency. Hence, most spent this part of the session discussing the hurdles we are facing in fighting this issue (the session in Toronto was different as much time was spent discussing the relevancy of addressing deep integration rather than corporate power).

Most recognized that continental integration is not a day-to-day thought for most of us. However, the components of integration are elements we are all working on (privatization, militarization, regulation, health care, energy, trade, etc.) and as such, it is only a matter of time, effort and habit to link these components together to perceive what the Big Idea or Grand Bargain really is.

Continental integration is also perceived as an issue of confrontations: Capitalism vs. Democracy. Basic human and environmental rights vs. corporate greed. Citizenship vs. consumer status. Markets vs. Politics.

Participants of the Vancouver session noted that the difficulty was in the fact that continental integration is more of a 'macro' issue while activists are used to work at the 'micro' level. They also outlined the fact that continental integration is a democracy issue, much more than an antiglobalization one.

On that macro level, continental integration shifts power away from communities, is destructive of lifestyles, imposes a corporate view of society that is antithetical to the public, dismantles Canada's nation-building efforts and isolate individuals, like in the gated communities of the West Coast. The problem with CTPAC (Homeland Security) was also cited. Halifax participants were concerned that Canadian values and social programs could be swept away and observed that the debate surrounding continental integration doesn't account for the unsustainability of resources or for climate change.

Even though on most of these issues, the opposition will say we are fear-mongering, our analysis is mostly right, like it was when we highlighted the offshore issues related to the energy sector.

However, there were some implications at the "micro" level as well. Montreal participants constantly raised their own political situation with Jean Charest as the Premier and his like-mindedness with Paul Martin's federal Liberals. Charest has used a divide-and-conquer strategy with the union movement in Quebec.

Continental integration was viewed as a threat for many sectors of activity:

Arts and culture	Role of governments	Human rights
Immigration and refugees	Agriculture	Trade
Water	Ballistic Missile Defence	Environment
Health care	Foreign policy	Job security
Education	Civil liberties	Media & Telecommunications

From free trade to Continental Integration

Most participants in the strategy sessions clearly understood that the first step of free trade was the beginnings of the problems of continental integration. The most vivid image came from the Edmonton session, where one of the participants referred to the process as "the boiling frog challenge", leading to politics of greed with few people able to see what was going on.

While there was a recognition that freer trade benefited value-added businesses, many of the problems regarding the road from free trade to deep integration were raised: What exactly is free trade? How do we influence the architects of free trade and DI? Are we moving to an hemispheric empire with the FTAA and CAFTA?

Some of the visible consequences of free trade have been suggested, such as BSE disease, as an example of what could be in contention when criticizing free trade as well as the trend in favour of public-private partnerships.

Discussions on this aspect of continental integration proved hopeful for the future, as participants were looking at ways to use the experiences of the past to help improve on the struggles ahead. Halifax participants were of the opinion that we might have more economic power than we think we do and Edmontonians suggested that it would be constructive to finding those odd dissenting voices against free trade, such as Peter Lougheed to help fight back on the prosperity merits of free trade and deeper integration.

IV. STRATEGIZING

The strategies to counteract continental integration were varied and differed according to the provinces. All agreed that to raise awareness on this issue, local events or actions would have to be used and connected to this much broader issue. To that sense, participants in Vancouver put forward that the role of unions should be to interpret and simplify the meaning of current events that hit home. There was also some discussion on the need to put a human face on the issue, by raising the consequences of continental integration as they affect individuals.

In Vancouver, for example, there are many local issues that were linked to continental integration: the push towards P3 hospitals, the privatization of BC Hydro and the Liquor board and aggressive deregulation, CIDA INC, meaning the international development money being linked to trade and privatizations as well as the relatively new phenomenon of the gated communities. In Winnipeg, it was a growing unilateralism and the interlinking of the Canada Pension Plan and the arms trade that were put into question as well as the North American ID card and the question of police and private security.

The Winnipeg participants suggested that we might raise the efficiency of our awareness efforts by classifying our target groups in four categories: 1) the Unconvertible; 2) the Converted; 3) the Disinterested; and 4) the Convertible, and by crafting our messaging accordingly.

To Toronto participants, the language used is crucial and awareness of the current situation is key in the struggle against manifestations of continental integration, such as public-private partnerships.

It was also mentioned that continental integration could be a great issue to raise the number of activists in our ranks if most of us could commit to bringing uninitiated friends to the events we are organising.

The challenges

Many challenges are ahead of us: people and activists are overworked, petitions no longer seem to be working, politicians seem to have wised up to popular pressure, the power of pundits is impressive, deep integration might be too big an issue to swallow whole, police intimidation is rising, general public apathy, Corporate media brainwashing (Edmonton), people's increasingly short attention span and the fact that efforts to be inclusive have been unsuccessful so far: trade being more of a white left issue.

For most participants across the country, the federal elections will be an opportunity to raise the question with candidates. Some participants strongly encouraged the use of all-candidates forums. In Alberta's case, there will actually be three elections in 18 months (federal, provincial, municipal). Participants in Montreal suggested that we should demand of all parties that they clarify their position on continental integration, as well as NAFTA and its reopening. They have also outlined their desire to also get involved during the upcoming U.S. elections, in November.

In Vancouver, the suggestion was to use the model that was followed for the Romanow campaign:

1. Public rally seeking support on the issue
2. Endorsement of recommendations by organisations, bodies
3. Going to three main political parties for their response to the endorsements

To the Vancouver participants, for every breakdown, we can find an opportunity for a breakthrough. One of the key messages they outlined was that we should be standing for something, rather than against something, and Toronto as well as Saskatoon participants agreed by stating that we ought to be formulating a positive vision of the future. In that spirit, they suggested the need to reconstitute the Action Canada Network, at least in the short run during the federal elections, but possibly in a permanent fashion. A concerted strategy of letters to the editor in Canada's newspapers was seen as an efficient yet

resource-effective way to get the message across. Murray Dobbin's Word Warriors project was an attractive way of doing so.

Still on a positive note, Saskatoon activists were of the opinion any campaign of ours should be reflecting on the value we give to quality of life and should be presenting alternatives to communities, something with which Vancouver and Winnipeg participants were also in agreement. The new proposals to be formulated will have to be breakthroughs, and not simply a rehashing of what has been done.

Learning about the enemy

Much responsibility for the push for deeper integration rests with the think tanks. Participants who did not know about the C.D. Howe Institute were surprised to know the extent of the efforts they did put into legitimizing deeper integration as a purely economic issue, thanks to their 15 or so papers.

To fight their influence, it is crucial that we know more about them, that we understand where they are coming from so that we can spread this knowledge to activists. There was even talk of the need to "infiltrate the enemy" (Edmonton).

Montreal participants suggested that there is a need to actively debunk the work of organisations such as the C.D. Howe, the Fraser Institute and the Institut économique de Montréal and their pseudo-academic status. They also pointed out that this could be a component of a larger project for popular education, due to the pressing need to popularise the issue by making it more accessible. To this aim, they mentioned the project of an activist school, cosponsored by Alternatives and the Catalyst Centre, which should see the day as a pilot project as early as September.

There is also a need for the opponents of continental integration to undertake their own research, so that we are able to connect actions, issues and consequences.

On a more general level, it was mentioned that we should start taking part in some of the pro-continental integration events, to witness the rhetoric being used as well as trying to have our concerns voiced and heard.

Other opportunities for action

In many venues, events were suggested as opportunities for further actions. There were obviously the social forums (e.g. in Vancouver in October), various other large gatherings were submitted:

- Fringe and folk festivals (Edmonton, Winnipeg);
- Gathering against Bush on August 22nd and meetings of the Vigilance Network (Réseau Vigilance) (Montréal);
- 100th anniversary of the entry of Alberta (and Saskatchewan) in the Confederation – Alberta 1905-2005 (Edmonton)
- 2010 Olympics (Vancouver)
- May Day Week (Edmonton)
- Alberta Tour of Columbian trade unionists (Edmonton)
- NAFTA at 10 – September 17-19, 2004, an event cosponsored by groups in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico in which Alternatives, a group from Montreal, is currently involved.

V. NETWORKING

There were extensive discussions on how to network effectively, as there was a consensus that it will be an essential component of an efficient struggle against continental integration.

Various levels of networking were suggested. Some participants wanted to focus more on the local fight, such as forming local groups on continental integration (Vancouver), tapping into the arts and culture

communities and mobilizing Council's chapters. Most, however, looked at linking on a pan-Canadian level, either to fight components of continental integration (idea of a Pan-Canadian council opposing missile defence, use of the Solidarity Network upcoming Winnipeg meeting as part of national strategizing, etc.).

Montreal participants, who also raised the similarities between the Charest and Martin regimes on the issue of continental integration and the public-private partnerships, went a step further by suggesting the issue could be an opportunity to bridge organisations and analyses in both Quebec and Canada and to merge both struggles.

There were even suggestions on how to bring this issue on the international scene. Edmonton participants highlighted the need for international connections and globally linking issues while there was an interest in Montreal to form alliances in the U.S. and Latin America.

Other opportunities

Most of the participants in the strategy sessions saw the issue of continental integration as an ideal way to develop an extensive network of activists, tapping into constituencies that are perceived as having been neglected up to now.

In Winnipeg, the accent was put on the chance to develop and improve on generational relations (giving back, connecting with elders), with students, with the church communities, the community sector and the seniors to eventually move towards local constituency assemblies. In Edmonton, participants suggested links could also be made with farmers and by making lists of people and organisations affected by cuts. It was also thought that media representatives could be welcome as a constituency affected by continental integration (foreign ownership and concentration of media).

The Council's was also viewed as an important organisation to coordinate the networking (but by no means the only one). One suggestion made to Edmonton was a series of education forums on deep integration coordinated by the Council. This idea is actually pretty close to the Citizens' Hearings the Council is planning starting this Fall.

VI. CONCLUSION

All in all, some very good recommendations came from the strategy sessions. They weren't exactly put forth as recommendations, but most of them can be grouped into eight categories forming suggested ways to go ahead in the battle against deeper integration.

Recommendation 1 – The Electronic Guerilla

We have to start using the whole potential of the Internet and the electronic media to get our point across. Examples to follow are the MoveOn.org website for activists (although with a less partisan tone) and also using Web movies and Flash animations to attract a larger audience. One can think about the Spoof of the Union, which can be found at <http://www.fuckitall.com/bsh/>.

It would also be desirable to use the recent documentary craze (Bowling for Columbine, Fahrenheit 9/11, The Corporation) and use it to explain continental integration. But we should be using the same recipe that ensured the success of these productions by combining content with humour and shock value.

Recommendation 2 – Media Strategy and Tactics

We have to find a better way to use the media who are increasingly unreceptive to our point of view. A good question was asked at the Winnipeg session: do we want to concentrate more on a media strategy or on media tactics? According to most participants coast to coast, the interest is to develop media strategies that will encompass some tactics.

First, we need to define the message or messages in an efficient way and determine who we want to target with these messages. We are very often accustomed to the one-size-fits-all message, but we need to craft different messages to different constituencies.

A National Media Policy will have to include alternative medias, which we have been neglecting in the search for visibility in the mass media. This also includes the use of Internet as a source of news.

Humour is definitely a way to go. In Halifax, participants reminded us of the success the anti-free trade groups had with FTA cartoons.

Fundraising will also require a specific strategy to be appended to the more general communications strategy.

Recommendation 3 – Using Social Forums

Vancouver will have one in October. In both cases, it would be a great opportunity to reach people who were not at the strategy sessions.

Recommendation 4 – Education

Popular education will have to be developed as a component of the fight against continental integration. The idea of an activist school will be crucial, but we should also think of doing outreach in schools as well about deep integration.

Recommendation 5 – Research

One of the main conclusions around the country was the need for more research. The Vancouver session suggested a study on the consequences of abrogation of NAFTA, something we could ask the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives to undertake. There was also a need for research to debunk most of what constitutes the passage to a knowledge economy, which seems to be one of the underlying factors behind continental integration.

Also, to demonstrate that the trade agenda is not working, any future coalition work will require studies on how the economic trend is shifting public debt levels towards private debt levels and how social benefits are increasingly tied to having a job, following suit with the current U.S. model of a social safety net that excludes many citizens.

Recommendation 6 – Coalition Building

The need for coalition building and networking was obvious. In Winnipeg, participants suggested that the whole movement of opposition to continental integration could take form in a series of declarations and resolutions coming from an alliance of organisations. This alliance could actually keep informed of everyone's work on this issue through a common newsletter that would include a calendar of events.

Obviously, there are regional differences in how continental integration is affecting us, which will require customising the information for our communities to create pockets of resistance to deep integration.

Recommendation 7 – International Networking

As mentioned in the networking part of this report, there were suggestions on how to bring this issue to the international scene. Edmonton participants highlighted the need for international connections and globally linking issues while there was an interest in Montreal to form alliances in the U.S. and Latin America.

Moreover, in the Halifax sessions, the idea of insisting on a more active role for a neglected United Nations was seen as one of the ways to internationalise the issue.

ANNEX I

The Canada You Stole Suggestions from some People who already have been flattened on stopping an economic steamroller

HALIFAX (22 April 2004) -- As part of a nationwide speaking tour during March-April, 2004, the Council of Canadians has been holding "strategy sessions" with interested groups. These delve further into matters of mutual concern affecting the rights of individuals and collectives as Canadians and how to affirm themselves.

In Fredericton NB, a delegation from First Nations in that province put forward a perspective on their struggle to affirm their right-to-be on March 15th. As their brief (which we reproduce in full below) makes plain, this struggle continues to come up against a colonialist Canadian government which usurps their sovereignty and oppresses from every direction.

As a favourite fighting slogan a few years back put it, "you cannot fight the enemy with snakes in your pockets". Similarly, when it comes to opposing the strategy of "deep integration" of Canadian business, government policy, military planning, etc., with the United States that the Council of Canadians, among others, has targeted, no one can afford any illusion that the enemy of their enemy is suddenly their friend. Indeed, as a highly successful revolutionary organiser from the last century often pointed out: "the most dangerous enemy is the one against whom we have ceased to fight."

Canadians have never been so clear that the democracy is thoroughly unrepresentative and needs renewal. The rights of all citizens are not recognized, nor are the inalienable hereditary rights of the First Nations. This question is a component part of opposing integration with the United States and realising genuine sovereignty for the nation and all peoples resident in Canada, a sovereignty that is vested in the people, and not the Royal Prerogative and the state. Similarly the new Citizenship and Immigration Act must also be opposed and defeated, to bring about a modern citizenship law in Canada which recognizes the rights of all citizens.

The 1867 British North America Act did not enshrine the principle of sovereignty vested in the people since it clearly stipulated that sovereignty was vested in the British monarch. In all matters not spelt out in that document, Canadians were subject to the laws of the British imperial parliament and British courts, the latter provision only reverting to Canadian courts in 1947. What is extraordinary in the refusal of the present government and official circles to modernize the Canadian constitution is that even the Canada Act, 1982, which only added an amending formula in order to repatriate the constitution, has changed not a word in terms of expressing the modern notion of sovereignty vested in the people. This also explains the difficulty faced in Canada to define the Canadian people when the very notion of a people in whom sovereignty is vested is absent from the vocabulary of its constitution.

* * *

By a Group of Indigenous Nobodies in Particular*

We hope the irony hasn't escaped your notice that your group and like-minded individuals are organizing to resist precisely those policies visited upon US by successive Canadian governments, bureaucracies, and institutions. Here's OUR identity card, for example. And you should add "citizenship" to the immigration and refugee policies you worry are about to be overwritten by U.S. standards, since that is central to what your government is doing to us. In all events, however, indigenous peoples who continue to resist their enforced assimilation are as concerned as much as you are about the "Uncle Sam"-itization of Canada, if for no other reason than we can't see how adding another, higher level of arrogant

bureaucratic indifference (and one with its own track record of running roughshod over indigenous peoples) could possibly make our task easier.

However, this is no time to gloat that Canada is idiotically sinking itself, since we are in the same boat. But if ever one needed a refutation of "The enemy of my enemy is my friend," this is it. And there is a second irony in your inviting to a strategic planning session peoples who obviously have had no success whatsoever in bargaining with the legal, political, and economic juggernaut that has been flattening them. Maybe it's meant to be "inclusive" or "sensitive" (which are themselves assimilationist manoeuvres), but, frankly, what difference will it make to indigenous peoples who it is expropriating their property and forms of life?

After all, when there's a boot on your throat, the brand name of the boot isn't your main concern. In gauging whether our actions will have any effect at all today, we would find a demonstrated understanding of and commitment to our issues to be more comforting. However, that fact that we have been ineffectual in getting heard by the vast majority of Canadians, even those, like yourselves, in principle sympathetic to our situations, presages your own difficulties in overcoming the indifference and inactivity cultivated in mainstream Canadians. There may be some value in pointing this out.

Ironies aside, all we can suggest to you, here, today, is some of the strategy employed by those indigenous individuals and groups still resisting extermination (and, sad to say, this does not include the majority of "officially recognized" indigenous organizations). As ineffectual as it is, it is clear and it is principled and it is naive enough to presume Canadians can be expected to keep their promises, even if periodically they have to be reminded what those promises were.

1. Canada cannot barter away that which it does not own.

We spoke of a "sinking boat" above. We would like to call attention to whose boat it is that Canada is sinking. For "our" (as in "our water" and "our energy," in your literature) substitute "aboriginal peoples'." The resources you quite rightly regard as endangered by continental business interests are either contestably "owned" by Canada or frankly the property of different indigenous nations (whether or not they are recognized by the Canadian government). There are, for example, no surrenders at all of the land in the provinces you are standing on today and visiting tomorrow. One cannot sell someone else's property, at least without that someone else's participation and agreement. The ownership of huge swaths of Canada is precisely the issue the federal Land Claims tribunal is working so hard to evade. The status of this process notwithstanding, the Council of Canadians can work to educate the average Canadian on indigenous rights and the fundamental illegitimacy of the government's current negotiations with the United States. The Council can also work to compel federal powers to address questions of ownership before it pole-vaults into self-dissolution.

Not only would this be "social justice," it would effectively halt the political drive to harmonize North America that the Council of Canadians is trying to address.

2. Canada has pre-existing, binding international agreements (treaties) that restrict their freedom to act.

In places where due process can be established for land surrenders, indigenous contractual rights to housing, education, health care, etc. require Canadian governments to supply these. If Canada wishes to back out of these deals now, as creditors, indigenous nations get the property back (just ask your bank what will happen if you default on your car loan). The transfer of these obligations, even if acceded to by indigenous nations (and they must be asked), must be accomplished through due process. The interpretation of the nature, extent, and force of these pre-existing international agreements is not the exclusive business of one side of the contracting parties (i. e., Canadian governments) or its designates (i.e., Canadian courts). The federal government wishes to tie its hands with international agreements and tell its citizenry that it can't break treaties? Fine. Tell them to start with the ones already in existence, the ones that haven't been abrogated (by OUR side, anyway) and that have prior standing both legally and

morally. And let there be no mistake: treaty rights are not just aboriginal rights, for the right of the average Canadian to claim a plot of land or assert a personal autonomy is founded on what was negotiated between indigenous nations and Canadian or Crown representatives. Set aside aboriginal rights and you set aside your own.

3. Canada has pre-existing liabilities that must either be addressed beforehand or assumed by the "new order."

Canada has always treated its obligations under the international law of treaties as chances to insinuate its unilateral interpretation of those obligations and craft programs that actually carry out its totalizing policies against indigenous peoples. An uncounted number of grievances have arisen out of these policies and the programs established to implement them. This is neither the time nor the place to elaborate the full range of these grievances, but their status is comparable to that of Marley's Chain (Jacob's, not Bob's). What resolution is to come out of the depredations of the residential schools? How are nations to be compensated for the property (timber, oil, nickel, etc.) stolen from them with government connivance (and will that connivance be admitted to or can we expect again the governmental tactic of infinite temporization)? We could go on. But when something is sold, one has to be truthful about the encumbrances attached, and these must either be cleared or assumed by the new owner. How attractive is a property with, at the moment, 12,000 child abuse cases pending (and courts in the United States award millions of dollars in damages in such cases, not the pittance being forced on indigenous peoples by Canadian courts)? How will Canada clear its financial obligations to the Ermineskin Band, or the Lubicon, or the Innu of Voisey's Bay, Labrador, etc. ad infinitum? Some house cleaning must be done before any thought of transfer of authority can take place; remind the government and the people of Canada what that includes.

Conclusions

To us it's clear that addressing, in a serious and forthright manner, the past and its presence in the lives of indigenous peoples today would require an entirely different kind of government and an entirely different kind of Canadian.

Should Canadians face their responsibilities rather than ignore or weasel out of them, you would have the Canada you want rather than the one desired by the rapacious and the covetous. It's been clear to us all along that the rapacious and covetous have control of your government, and it seems to be dawning on many more Canadians these days.

We find this encouraging to the extent we can foresee that resisting multinational corporate tyranny leads to a recognition of and a fight against, in the words of Norman Bethune, "the fascist within." However, to the extent this remains a fight over which corporate elite vampires gets to suck us dry, we say: "A plague on both your houses."

If you consider our words today too harsh, too bad, but you did ask. Now we can see if anybody was listening.

* The Praxis Collective, Fredericton, New Brunswick