

CHAPTER UPDATE

by Brent Patterson

Council chapters have been very busy throughout this past spring and summer and will continue to make a difference on important issues throughout this fall.

ATLANTICA

On June 8, Leticia Adair and the Saint John chapter organized a major public event in opposition to the “Atlantica” deep integration initiative. CBC New Brunswick reported that “On Thursday night, around 300 people [the actual figure was closer to 500 people] attended an event with a keynote speech by Maude Barlow, chair of the Council of Canadians. Barlow said the conference promotes the interests of the business community at the expense of everyone else. ‘[Atlantica] promotes political integration with the U.S., political integration along the lines of this race to the bottom, lowest common denominator, what’s good for big business somehow will be good for the rest of us,’ she said. ‘You’ve heard that before,’ she told the audience, ‘and you know it’s not true and we’re not going to buy it this time.’”

WHISTLER WATER WIN

On June 19, the Whistler chapter scored a major victory when it succeeded, along with local unions and community groups, in convincing the city council of Whistler to abandon a proposal to privatize the community’s wastewater treatment plant. As part of the Whistler Water Watch coalition, the chapter exposed the city council’s intentions and managed to collect 1,848 ballots – double the required number to force the issue to referendum. The overwhelming majority of the people who signed the ballot were in favour of keeping the plant in public hands.



Regional Organizers Carleen Pickard and Eduardo Sousa, at an August event in Vancouver that lent support to U.S. war resisters.

PEACE EVENTS

This summer, Council chapters across the country lent their voices to calls for peaceful solutions to the bloodshed in the Middle East and in Afghanistan. Chapter events were covered in newspapers in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Nova Scotia. On August 2, Peterborough-Kawartha chapter activist Roy Brady spoke to a crowd of 50 people, saying, “We’re here because of the senseless killing. We must insist on no more civilian deaths.”

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On October 27, Council chapters from across Canada will be gathering in Charlottetown for the annual chapter caucus and the Council’s annual general meeting. This is a terrific opportunity for chapter activists to share their efforts, successes and ideas with other chapter activists and plan for the coming year. The Council’s organizing team looks forward to this day with chapter representatives.

BRING THEM HOME

The Council of Canadians believes that Canada must move away from its increasingly uncritical support for, and integration with, U.S. foreign and military policy and reclaim the more enlightened, valued role of an independent, neutral power committed to peacekeeping. Accordingly, the Council is calling for the immediate, safe and orderly withdrawal of Canadian troops from Afghanistan, and a return to Canada fulfilling its traditional international role of peacekeeper. Toward this end, Council chapters will be supporting the pan-Canadian day of protest on Saturday, October 28, demanding that Canadian troops be brought home from Afghanistan.

MONTREAL HOSTS BOOK LAUNCH

On November 17, the Montreal chapter will be hosting Maude Barlow for the launch of the French-language edition of her book *Too Close for Comfort*. This translated and newly updated book is titled *Dormir avec l’éléphant: L’avenir du Canada à l’intérieur de la forteresse de l’Amérique du Nord*. The book, to be published by Éditions du Boréal, should be in bookstores by October 12.

CHAPTERS IN THE MEDIA

Over the summer, Council chapters appeared in the media more than 30 times on stories relating to protecting local hospitals, stopping a proposed water pipeline that would extend from Lake Erie to Guelph, Canada Day activities at the Kamloops farmers’ market, opposition to pesticides and much more.

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