

# IN THE NEWS

**With the launch of *Too Close for Comfort*, the Council's 20th anniversary celebration, Maude Barlow's Right Livelihood Award and various activities organized by chapters across the country, the Council of Canadians was very visible in newspapers, on the radio and on television over the past few months. Here is a brief sampling of how the Council made the news recently.**

## **AUTHOR URGES END TO U.S. INFLUENCE**

At the tail end of a national tour to promote her best-selling *Too Close for Comfort: Canada's Future Within North America*, Maude Barlow said her group is determined to make concern about Canada's future an election issue. She said her non-partisan group is encouraging voters to support federal parties and local candidates who oppose the ongoing drift into the American sphere, which she says imperils public health and social programs and Canada's world role as a peacekeeping force.

"I believe Canada must reserve the right to set its own rules and standards" and resist pressures from the "exceptionally dangerous regime" of U.S. president George Bush. Barlow said the biggest push to merge Canadian interests into "Fortress North America" is coming from big business in Canada, which wants to melt the border and has the ear of the government.

— *London Free Press*, December 2, 2005.

## **GREAT LAKES DRAFT DEAL WOULD ALLOW LARGE WATER WITHDRAWALS**

A draft deal among Great Lakes states and provinces would ban large-scale diversions from the lakes but permit withdrawals by the bottled-water industry and for other purposes . . .

"The current deal claims to protect the Great Lakes from the threats and impacts of diversions while allowing large withdrawals to continue," said



Susan Howatt, national water campaigner with the Council of Canadians.

— *Canadian Press*, November 24, 2005.  
*Reprinted in five newspapers.*

## **PROPERTY RIGHTS PLANK WILL TRAMPLE GREENBELT AND KILL GUN BAN**

Does legislation designed to benefit society as a whole outweigh the financial interests of the individual? When dealing with issues of the environment and gun control, the answer has generally been yes in Canada. The looming spectre of a majority for Stephen Harper's Conservatives, however, has put that value in jeopardy.

The question was sparked last week when the Conservatives added a proposal to their platform to entrench property

rights under the Charter. The idea has progressive groups worried.

According to Jean-Yves LeFort, a campaigner for the Council of Canadians, it would undermine the government's ability to protect the environment and public health.

"The inclusion of property rights in NAFTA led to an attack on our government's sovereignty in favour of corporate influence," he says. "Mr. Harper's decision to try this will open a Pandora's box."

— *NOW Magazine*, January 19, 2005.

## **IRATE CLIENT GIVES VISA PENNIES FOR HIS THOUGHTS**

[Kingston chapter activist] Don Rogers wanted to make a statement. A 32-foot credit card statement, to be precise, one he hopes will help him win a long-simmering privacy feud with his bank and at the same time nab a place in the Guinness Book of Records.

The 62-year-old retired city councillor from Kingston, Ont., paid his \$230 Visa bill last month in 985 instalments, often pennies at a time, to protest against the fact that his bank outsourced some of its credit card processing to a U.S. company. Mr. Rogers said he asked Vancouver-based Citizens' Bank of Canada several times to end the practice, because U.S. authorities could potentially gain access to his personal information under the wide-ranging Patriot Act, a piece of legislation designed to crack down on terrorism.

— *The Globe and Mail*, November 23, 2005.

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