

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## IS WITHDRAWAL THE ANSWER?

I always enjoy reading *Canadian Perspectives* and am encouraged by the great work that is done the Council of Canadians, both in terms of protecting our Canadian identity and in promoting international solidarity.

There is one item in the recent issue (spring 2007) that troubles me, however. I refer to the protests against the war in Afghanistan, and the photo of placards calling for the withdrawal of our troops there.

War is always horrible and creates many individual and collective tragedies. However, the reality is that if Canada and other NATO countries withdraw their troops from Afghanistan, the country will once again be taken over by the Taliban. We know that the Taliban are tyrants and that they impose all sorts of horribly oppressive conditions on people, particularly on women and girls.

I am quite concerned over the lack of real debate on this issue. I fear that many Canadians oppose the war in Afghanistan because they associate it with George Bush. That is a knee-jerk reaction that does not advance debate at all. We have to ask ourselves the following question: what would be the consequence for the Afghan people if Canadian and other NATO troops withdrew today?

Paul Sharkey  
Gatineau, Québec

### *Editor's Note:*

Thanks for your letter. The Council of Canadians believes that any withdrawal from Afghanistan would have to be accompanied by a plan to broker peace and ensure that aid and development reaches those who need it most. It is our belief that the Canadian military's current combat role in Afghanistan hampers genuine aid and peace-building efforts. We are troubled by the Canadian government's uncritical support for unilateral U.S. military intervention, and would like to see the Canadian Forces renew its commitment to UN-sanctioned peacekeeping. To read more about the Council's position on Afghanistan and other conflicts, download the report *Marching Orders: How Canada abandoned peacekeeping – and why the UN needs us now more than ever* at [www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org).

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Christina Riley

**The Council's Ariel Troster (right) and Donna James, at the Integrate This! teach-in on March 31.**

### **No trees were harmed in the making of this magazine**

I am thrilled to announce that this issue of *Canadian Perspectives* is the first one to be printed on 100 per cent post-consumer recycled paper, certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). We have worked closely with our unionized print shop to switch to paper that is produced in a mill fuelled with biogas and bleached in a chlorine-free process, using 80 per cent less water than conventional manufacturing.

No trees were cut down to produce this magazine. And we couldn't be prouder.

This is part of the Council of Canadians' commitment to ethical and environmentally friendly purchasing. While the switch to FSC-certified paper will add a modest increase to the cost of production of *Canadian Perspectives*, we know that our members share our strong commitment to the preservation and responsible stewardship of Canada's environmental and natural resources.

Happy reading!

**– Ariel Troster, Editor, *Canadian Perspectives***

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