

Your Council Membership Makes a Better Canada Possible

by Brant Thompson

Take a moment to imagine Canada two or three years from now...

More and more communities and institutions across Canada have stopped using bottled water, which has stopped the depletion of important aquifers and prevented tons of plastic bottles from ending up in garbage dumps across the country. The proposed Dump Site 41, a landfill in southern Ontario, has been cancelled, saving one of the purest sources of drinking water in the world. The pressure on the Alberta and federal governments to stop the environmental devastation caused by the tar sands is becoming so intense that there is talk that an announcement of a moratorium on further tar sands expansion is a real possibility. And the latest version of deepened Canada-U.S. integration has just been scuttled, helping ensure that Canada can continue to maintain independent policies on the environment, the economy and national security.

As you think about this not-too-distant future, you take pride in the role you have played in these victories through your membership in the Council of Canadians.

Think this scenario is far-fetched? In fact, we're already well on our way to this future. Just look at what your Council membership has helped to achieve in the past year:

- Council chapters, staff and board members in St. John's, Charlottetown, Toronto, Vancouver and many other communities across the country have helped secure bans on the use and sale of bottled water in their city halls and other municipal facilities.
- The Council of Canadians has helped organize protests, rallies and public events in opposition to Dump Site 41, working in tandem with tireless community activists. Quoted in the *Barrie Examiner* newspaper, Simcoe North MPP Garfield Dunlop said opposition to the landfill has been "overwhelming," especially since the Council of Canadians and First Nations became involved. Thanks to these efforts, Simcoe County councillors recently voted for a one-year moratorium on the project. A permanent halt to the dump is now within reach.
- We turned up the pressure on the tar sands at our 2008 AGM in Edmonton when we toured the massive and environmentally devastating project with Council chapter activists and board members. During media interviews after the tour, Council Chairperson Maude Barlow called the tar sands "Canada's Mordor," referring to the bleak landscape in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* books. Our call for a moratorium on tar sands expansion is striking a chord with Canadians across the country.
- Thanks to the Council's leadership in raising awareness about the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP), the head of Canada's largest and most influential corporate lobby group recently admitted that the



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SPP is "probably dead" and a U.S. government website recently announced the SPP is "no longer an active initiative." The SPP agenda to further integrate Canada's economic, trade and national security measures with the U.S., while "harmonizing" our health and environmental policies to the lowest common denominator, would have further reduced Canada's ability to act independently of the U.S. and in the best interests of Canadians.

Thanks to you, we're on a roll, and momentum is on our side. As we reach the end of 2009, we hope you will take the time to make another contribution this year, and to renew your membership when you receive your membership card in the mail in early 2010.

And don't forget, if you're looking for a gift idea during the holidays, we offer gift memberships in the Council of Canadians. Share the gift of social justice with friends and loved ones.

Just imagine what we will accomplish together in the coming year.

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