

In the News



Jamian Logue

by **Dylan Penner**

The Council of Canadians made headlines across the country in recent months opposing so-called free trade, health care privatization and wars without end. Two of our most successful recent media outreach efforts were the Unbottle It! speaking tour of 20 Ontario cities and *Boom for Whom?*, our 2008 annual general meeting (AGM) in Edmonton.

Unbottle It! generated more than 50 positive media stories, and our branding of the tar sands as Canada's "Mordor" garnered interest and attention across the country, demonstrated by more than 60 media hits at the time. Other major breakthroughs have included coverage in *The New York Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Time Magazine* and the *National Post*, and the tremendous ongoing work of Council of Canadians chapters across the country who ensure our message reaches local media on an ongoing basis. Here are some highlights:

Alta. oilsands is Canada's Mordor: UN water adviser

Maude Barlow, a longtime anti-globalization activist and newly appointed water adviser to the United Nations, has just one word to describe Alberta's oilsands developments: Mordor.

Energy Campaigner Andrea Harden-Donahue speaks to the media on parliament hill after delivering more than 300 copies of the Council's new video *Dark Side of the Boom: Canada's Mordor* to members of Parliament.

In describing the province's biggest economic engine, Barlow referenced the fantastical land of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* books – a dark, blasted landscape.

"I wasn't being cute," Barlow said Friday morning after a news conference for the Council of Canadians' annual general meeting in downtown Edmonton.

This week Barlow, the council's national chairwoman, made her first visit to the oilsands. She took a bus with a delegation of 25 people, then flew over the site in a helicopter.

She said she saw steam rising from the ground, no birds in the sky or animals below. "We were devastated by what we saw and smelled and experienced," she said.

The Council of Canadians is pushing for a stop to new development of the oilsands – like Jack Layton's NDP did during the recent election. The council

does not want a full-out stop on oil extraction but a pause for consideration of the environmental impact on surrounding areas like Fort Chipewyan.

Reprinted with permission of the *Edmonton Journal*, October 31, 2008

City applauded for efforts to cut back bottled water

"Ditch the plastic water bottle" is the message behind a province-wide speaking tour that hits Hamilton tonight.

The Council of Canadians and CUPE Ontario are heading the UnBottle It! campaign in hopes of banning bottled water sales in schools and government buildings.

"We are feeling a tremendous surge around this. Ontario is already taking the lead across the country," said Maude Barlow, national chairperson for the Council of Canadians.

School boards in Toronto and Waterloo, and 13 Canadian cities, have joined the UnBottle It! pledge.

"This is a no-brainer," Barlow said. "Bottled water is a marketing scam that got people thinking they need it. It privatizes water instead of thinking of it as a public service."

Jim Harnum, head of Hamilton's water and wastewater division, said people mistakenly think bottled water is safer than tap water.

Reprinted with permission of the *Hamilton Spectator*, January 15, 2009

Podcast This! Making our own news

The Council of Canadians recently launched our new podcast, *CPR: Canadian Perspectives Radio*, in partnership with the Rabble Podcast Network, and hosted on Rabble.ca/podcasts. With hard-hitting podcasts on water, energy, trade, health care and peace, CPR applies urgent action to make a better world. To contact CPR with questions, comments and story ideas, email cpr@canadians.org.

Dylan Penner is the Media Officer for the Council of Canadians.