

A *Peace Alternative* for Canada



*for a fundamental re-alignment of
Canadian foreign and defence policies*

from the
Canadian Peace Congress

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A Peace Alternative for Canada

Introduction

The Canadian Peace Congress is convinced that Canada can make a difference in helping to end the scourge of militarism, aggression and war around the world and set an example for others to emulate.

The defeat of Canada's bid to win a seat on the U.N. Security Council in 2020 has once again brought wide attention to the need to 're-think' and reorient Canada's foreign policies and practices in the international arena. In our view, this reassessment must address the fact that for far too long, Canada's foreign policy has been rooted in its adherence to the western alliance led by the USA, and which serves the economic, political and strategic power interests of a select influential group of Canadian wealth and privilege at the expense of the social and economic needs of the people of Canada, and the cause of peace.

In our view, cosmetic changes and public relations efforts simply will not suffice. ***A fundamentally new path is required.***

Canadians are increasingly concerned about the proliferation of local and regional wars, bloated arms budgets, the cancellation of disarmament accords, and a disturbing turn to hawkish, 'cold war' rhetoric which fills the air waves and news feeds daily.

People are alarmed by the slow but relentless drift toward nuclear calamity and environmental devastation. But even though Canada is, at best, a second-tier player in international politics, there is a lot we can

do if we are prepared to boldly take our country in a fundamentally different direction, and adopt policies – both at home and abroad – based on mutual respect and understanding which promote peace and disarmament, not militarization and war.



Below we outline some of the essential policies and principles which we feel must form the basis for an *independent Canadian foreign and defence policy* based on peace and disarmament, not aggression and war; not one dictated by foreign governments, foreign or domestic armament

corporations or transnational corporate interests. This requires making a complete break with the U.S.-led drive to war which poses a growing threat to the very future of humanity, and Canada's willing participation in this dangerous course through our membership in NATO and NORAD. Militarization siphons off massive public resources into bloated arms budgets instead of creating employment, raising wages and pensions, fixing our public healthcare and education systems, building affordable housing, and meeting the other social needs of the people.

Our "Peace Alternative" does not include a comprehensive critique of *existing* Canadian foreign policy as it has evolved since the end of the Second World War – this is a task which our Congress will undertake over the coming period. But it does present an overview of the fundamental principles which SHOULD inform that policy if Canada is to serve the cause of peace and disarmament in the future, and advances specific proposals for immediate action which would help to begin realigning Canadian policy and practices to such a qualitatively new direction.

The world peace movement is gaining momentum as indicated by the global support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Its ratification by over 50 countries now brings this historic treaty into force. The Canadian

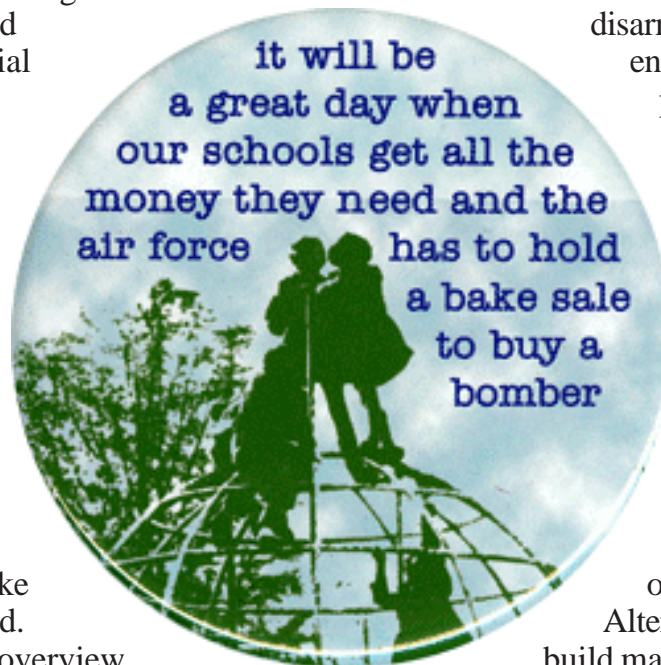
government must also ratify this treaty, and campaign for its universal implementation and enforcement as a first step in putting Canada on the right side of world history.

We hope these proposals will be discussed broadly and contribute to building a grassroots 'peace constituency' in this country made up of working people, women, youth, indigenous peoples, environmental and social activists and all those who

cherish the cause of peace, disarmament, environmental protection and social justice – one that is powerful and united enough to win majority support for these goals and demands.

We welcome your comments and suggestions to further strengthen our "Peace Alternative" and ways to build mass support for this new direction for Canada's

foreign and defence policies. Please contact us at info@canadianpeacecongress.ca. If you agree with our proposals, we invite you to share this document widely, to support the ongoing work of the Canadian Peace Congress, to join our e-contact list, and to consider making a donation to assist our work. We also encourage you to get involved with one of our Peace Councils across the country, or to organize a new affiliated chapter in your community or locality if one does not already exist. For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.canadianpeacecongress.ca/>.



Key Components of our “Peace Alternative” for Canada

1/ Nuclear Disarmament

Canada must be a strong and consistent advocate for the Comprehensive and Universal Disarmament of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) including chemical and biological weapons. Canada must support international action to prohibit research, production and deployment of new (or modernized) nuclear and other WMDs, and the dismantling and destruction of existing stockpiles and related infrastructure *by all countries*, subject to international verification.



As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Demand that current nuclear powers abide by Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), requiring them to reduce and eliminate their nuclear arsenals;
- ◆ Sign and ratify the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW);
- ◆ Publicly oppose the actions of the United States to unilaterally cancel existing disarmament agreements and treaties, such as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly referred to as the ‘Iran Nuclear deal’, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, the “Open Skies” Treaty and other disarmament agreements and protocols, and call for their immediate reinstatement;
- ◆ Support the negotiated extension of the Non-Proliferation (NPT) and START treaties;
- ◆ Close Canadian foreign military bases abroad, and demand the closure of all foreign military bases around the world (the overwhelming majority of which are US/NATO bases);
- ◆ Renounce and publicly condemn the “nuclear first-strike” policy of the US and the NATO alliance; and
- ◆ Declare Canada a “Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone”.

2/ Cutting the Arms/Defence Budget

According to the recently tabled federal budget, defence spending will balloon from the current level of \$25.3 billion (2021) to over \$32.5 billion by 2026-27, a staggering 28.5% increase in only five years.

A new foreign policy based on peace and disarmament, not war and aggression, must by definition include immediate measures to drastically cut military spending, and redirect public funds to socially necessary and productive purposes.

As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Abandon the 2017 decision to significantly increase (by 73%) allocations to military spending up to 2030. Rather than increasing military allocations, Canada must significantly reduce the arms budget;
- ◆ Cancel the procurement of new F-35 (or comparable) fighter jets, new frigates and other warships, battle tanks, and weaponized drones;
- ◆ Guarantee the creation of new jobs in civilian workplaces and re-training services for military personnel and associated workers displaced as a result of reduced defence spending; and
- ◆ Re-direct funds from military budgets to social needs, including the public healthcare system, the provision of affordable housing, public childcare, environmental protection and enhancement, and other public and social services.



3/ Upholding International Law

Canada must respect and be a staunch defender of the UN Charter and the principles of International Law. It must advance a foreign policy based on peace, friendship and cooperation with all countries, and recognize the full equality of all states – large and small alike – including the right to independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It must rigorously uphold the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.



As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Reject any Canadian participation in ‘regime change’ operations directed against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicaragua, Syria, Cuba, and other countries;
- ◆ Immediately remove illegal, unilateral and punitive economic sanctions against Venezuela, Nicaragua, Syria, Iran, Zimbabwe, the DPRK (North Korea) and other countries;
- ◆ Take steps to restore full diplomatic relations, including the re-opening of embassies, with Venezuela, Syria, Iran, and the DPRK; and
- ◆ Actively oppose policies and actions that worsen international relations and the peaceful co-existence and cooperation of all states. Canada must speak out against the promotion of a new Cold War directed against China, the Russian Federation or any other country, which would only exacerbate international tensions, stimulate a costly and dangerous new round of the arms race, and bring the world closer to thermonuclear calamity.

4/ General Disarmament

In addition to supporting nuclear disarmament, Canada must support international efforts for general and comprehensive disarmament of so-called ‘conventional’ weapons and war-making equipment and supplies. Canada must therefore end its involvement in the international arms trade.



As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Prohibit the extraction, refinement and export of fissile materials for end-use in nuclear weapons production;
- ◆ Cancel the export permit for weapon sales to Saudi Arabia;
- ◆ Cancel the *Defence Production Sharing Agreement* with the U.S.;
- ◆ Shut down CANSEC, the annual Canadian arms trade show, and prohibit the marketing and sale of Canadian-made military hardware and equipment;
- ◆ End Canadian participation in the training of foreign military forces, which in too many cases has contributed to the repression of civilian populations in other countries; and
- ◆ Demand the environmental cleanup of military sites and accidents.



5/ Oppose the Militarization of Space

As an essential part of its disarmament agenda, Canada must oppose the militarization of space, including the development of anti-ballistic missile systems (which are extremely destabilizing and serve to drive the arms race), the construction of near-space orbiting platforms for military/strategic purposes, and the use of satellites for the use of military spying and/or disrupting purposes.

As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Refuse to participate in the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system;
- ◆ Oppose plans to “modernize” NORAD, and instead withdraw from NORAD;
- ◆ Condemn the unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and support international efforts to reinstate this treaty.



6/ Support International Efforts to Achieve Peace in the Middle East (West Asia)

Canada's foreign policy in the Middle East deserves special attention, because local and regional conflict in this region is particularly sharp and dangerous, and could trigger a global confrontation. Central to any genuine and enduring peace in the region is a just resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Demand that the State of Israel finally adhere to standing UN Resolutions demanding an end to the illegal occupation of all Palestinian (as well as Syrian and Lebanese) lands seized in 1967. This must include condemning the illegal annexation by Israel of occupied territories on the West Bank and the Golan Heights. Canada must call on Israel to remove all Israeli settlements on the West Bank, end its ongoing siege of Gaza, restore East Jerusalem to Palestinian control, and accept the formation of a viable, independent and sovereign Palestinian state. This must also include recognition of the right of Palestinians to return to their lands confiscated since 1948, and /or providing restitution for their losses;
- ◆ End all participation in the 'proxy war' on Syria, end its punitive sanctions, and restore full diplomatic relations with Syria. Canada should call for the withdrawal of all un-invited foreign occupation forces which violate Syrian sovereignty, and support reconstruction efforts after a decade of Western-financed and orchestrated war on its territories; and
- ◆ Refuse to participate in or support the U.S.-led military build-up directed at the Islamic Republic of Iran, and instead support a negotiated resolution of the conflict between the U.S. and Iran. As an essential contribution to easing tensions, Canada must immediately end all economic and diplomatic sanctions on Iran.



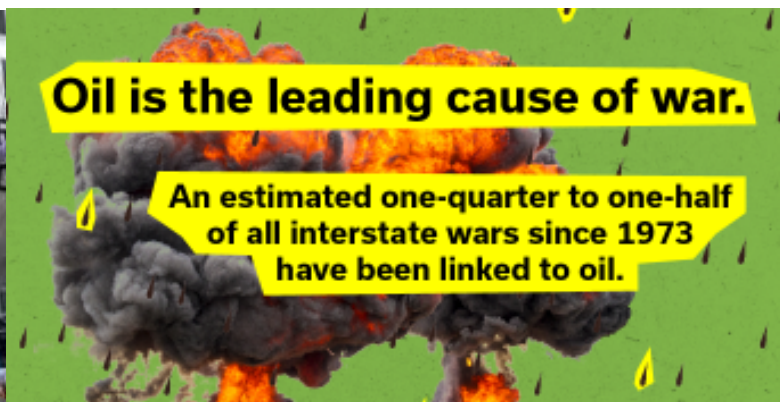
7/ Defend the Environment; Support Climate Justice

Efforts to achieve a new foreign policy for peace, disarmament and cooperation must also address environmental degradation and the impact of global warming. Not only are nuclear war and climate catastrophe the greatest twin-dangers facing humanity; they are closely interconnected. A nuclear conflict would quite obviously have massive global environmental consequences, not to mention the very survivability of humanity and other life forms on Earth. Environmental destruction and galloping climate change will force mass migrations and desperate scrambles for threatened resources (such as clean drinking water, arable land, etc.) which in turn could lead to both regional and global military conflict.



As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Adopt measures to achieve absolute reductions in the production of carbon emissions, the main contributor to global warming. This must be achieved through sharp restrictions on reliance on fossil fuels, and the punishment of institutional and corporate violators;
- ◆ Make significant new investments in research and development of renewable energy, and energy-efficient products and processes, and share these advancements with the international community;
- ◆ Support the adoption of an International Treaty declaring the High Arctic as a military and resource extraction-free Zone; and
- ◆ Immediately end the current practice of excluding carbon emissions from military operations in determining Canada's 'carbon footprint' and insist that all other countries do the same.



8/ End all Canadian Participation or Membership in Military Alliances

Canada can never hope to have an independent foreign policy or put in place a “Peace Alternative” when it is tied, at the wrists and ankles, to military alliances such as NATO and NORAD that are in the forefront of promoting the expansion of nuclear and conventional armaments, engaging in aggressive wars and occupations, pressuring its member-states to increase military allocations, and actively working to undermine global disarmament measures.

As immediate steps, Canada must:

- ◆ Give immediate notice, as stipulated in the NATO Charter, of its intention to withdraw from the NATO Alliance;
- ◆ Inform the U.S. of its decision to withdraw from NORAD;
- ◆ End Canadian participation in the notorious “Five Eyes” (FVEY) espionage and intelligence alliance, a creature of the old Cold War to spy not only on the Soviet Union but also on the citizens of its own member countries, including Canada (exposed by Edward Snowden in 2013);
- ◆ Cancel all agreements permitting entry of foreign military forces onto Canadian soil;
- ◆ Call on all countries to dissolve military alliances as a necessary step to global peace and disarmament; and
- ◆ Support international action, under the auspices of the United Nations, to combat global poverty, illiteracy, famine and forced migration due to war and/or environmental devastation. Such actions must place the interests of the world’s people – especially the most impoverished and marginalized – ahead of corporate interests and the drive to profit.

