

## PEACE AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 29, 2003

A meeting of the Peace and Justice Committee was held on Monday, September 29, 2003, at 4:30 p.m., in the Strathcona Meeting Room, Sub-Ground, Vancouver City Hall.

PRESENT: Councillor David Cadman, Chair  
Councillor Ellen Woodsworth, Vice-Chair  
Trustee Jane Bouey, Vancouver School Board  
Commissioner Lyndsay Poaps, Vancouver Park Board  
Thomas Anthony  
David Askew  
Ivan Bulic  
Amanda Camley  
Gail Davidson  
Sam Phillipoff  
Kyla Kinzel  
Christy Mori  
Cara Ng  
Beverley O'Neil  
John Price  
Peter Prontzos  
Judith Radovan  
Noha Sedky  
Al Wong

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Denise Salmon, Meeting Coordinator

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of July 28, 2003, were approved as circulated.

#### 1. Vancouver Citizen Peace Award

On July 28, 2003, after consideration of a nomination put forward by the United Nations Association in Canada, Vancouver Branch, for the Vancouver Citizen Peace Award, the Committee agreed to postpone decision to the September meeting to allow members to bring forward additional names worthy of consideration.

The Chair provided background on the award, and noted it has historically been presented to an individual. Discussion followed on the merits of the candidates and also the need to revisit the eligibility guidelines, with specific reference to inclusion of organizations.

A member suggested discussion on process for awarding the 2004 Citizen Peace Award be placed on the Committee's next agenda and further suggested a sub-committee be struck to come forward with recommendations on how to proceed with next year's award. Accordingly, David Askew, Al Wong and Ellen Woodsworth agreed to serve on the Citizen Peace Award Sub-committee.

After due consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed:

THAT the Peace and Justice Committee put forward to Council the name of Irene MacInnes for the 2003 Vancouver Citizen Peace Award.

## **2. Members Tasks/Projects**

At its July 28, 2003, meeting Committee members put forward projects/tasks they agreed to work on, for presentation to the September meeting. Accordingly, members provided the following updates:

### **a) Resolution Re Star Wars "Space-Based Weapons Free Zone"**

Councillor Cadman submitted, for the Committee's consideration, a resolution on this matter.

Discussion followed on wording of the motion, with specific reference to the word "cities" and the sixty (60) kilometre space limit. A Committee member advised this wording has been agreed to by various participants and would be submitted in Nanaimo today. The need to forward this motion to UBCM, LMMA and FCM was also noted, once approved by Council. Beverley O'Neil agreed to speak with the Musqueam and Squamish Nations regarding their endorsement.

After due consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed that the following resolution be forwarded to Council by Councillors Cadman and Woodsworth:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT it is the will of the City Council of the City of Vancouver, BC that the Prime Minister of Canada, individually or at an emergency treaty conference, sign the space preservation treaty, and that the House of Commons of Canada ratify it to permanently ban all space-based weapons and to preserve the cooperative, peaceful uses of space for all residents of this City and for all humankind; and,**

**THAT it is the will of the City Council of the City of Vancouver, BC that the House of Commons of Canada urge the government to immediately convene a treaty-signing conference for the space preservation treaty, as Canada has done in the treaty-signing conference in December 1997, where 122 countries signed the convention banning land mines, known as the Ottawa convention.**

**The City Council of the City of Vancouver, BC hereby declares that the space sixty (60) kilometres and above this City is a space-based weapons free zone; and**

**THAT this resolution of the City Council of the City of Vancouver, BC is hereby recommended to be adopted by all cities in Canada and worldwide.**

(NOTE FROM CLERK: Al Wong absent for this item.)

### **b) DataBase Directory of Peace and Social Justice Groups**

Al Wong referred to material circulated with the agenda, which provides the start of the database directory of peace and social justice groups, although more work is required to build the listing to a workable form. Mr. Wong suggested this database could be used for the series of "Citizens Forums" he had also put forward for consideration.

Members suggested the detail requested from the organizations was not necessary, other than the name of group, contact information and a brief statement about the group. BC Environmental Network book was also suggested as a resource for additional names (Lyndsay Poaps offered to circulate a copy).

**c) List of BC Municipal Councils  
Interested in Working Toward Peace and Justice**

David Askew advised responses are slowly coming in, with Nelson and the Cowichan Regional District signed on to date. He advised his next task is to prepare a comprehensive mailing list using the UBCM Network Book. Members also suggested the Council of Canadians would be a useful contact for this project, and the UBCM could be requested to distribute information through their mailing list.

**d) Peace and Justice Groups List**

Tom Anthony advised he has been unable to locate any such groups in the Berkeley, Oakland and San Francisco Bay areas.

**e) World Peace Forum and World Peace Forum Sub-Committee**

John Price advised he and Gail Davidson have been working on this project, and referenced an open letter dated May 8, 2003, (circulated at the meeting and on file) addressed to Councillors Cadman and Woodsworth, setting out a proposal concerning the organization of a World Peace Forum in Vancouver in 2005. Mr. Price suggested the Committee consider endorsing the idea in principle, with a report back in November, and advised he was seeking volunteers to assist with Sub-Committee work.

Discussion continued on related costs and options for the Forum. Comments noted included:

- consider an electronic conference, or web forum, with events leading up to the forum;
- events could be held over a week, or longer;
- Peace Forum could be "stacked" with The Human Settlements Conference "Habitat 3" planned for 2006;
- could be a key event building up to the 2010 Olympics;
- details of a rudimentary budget, and intended participants, need to be included in the report back to assist the Committee in its decision on whether to proceed;
- both the School Board and Park Board, as well as local art galleries could all provide possible alternatives to the standard "conference";
- important to gauge support from Committee members, and their contact groups, to determine level of support;
- other organizations must be made aware we are politically in agreement with the event; and
- any decision of the Committee related to this matter would be contingent upon Council's approval.

After due consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed

THAT the Peace and Justice Committee support in principle the concept of holding a World Peace Forum in 2005; and

FURTHER THAT the World Peace Forum Sub-Committee (Jane Bouey, Gail Davidson, Kyla Kinzel, John Price and Ellen Woodsworth) be delegated to further explore the possibilities of holding said Forum and provide an in-depth report back to the next meeting of the Committee on November 24, 2003.

**f) Korea Reader**

John Price referenced the Korea Reader (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office), a recent publication by the Canadian Resource Network on the question of North Korea, which was noted on the agenda, and made available electronically to all Committee members.

**g) Link with Cities Opposed to War Initiatives**

Noha Sedky advised she will begin work to identify links with cities opposed to war initiatives.

**h) Cities for Peace; and  
Iraq Motion**

Gail Davidson referred the Committee to two documents circulated with the agenda:

- i) document setting out counties/municipalities in the US and Canada that have passed resolutions opposing US military actions against Iraq, and actions by those counties/municipalities; and
- ii) motion for the Committee's consideration regarding the situation in Iraq.

Committee members discussed Council's jurisdiction in the matter, and the need to rework portions of the draft motion, and also noted the FCM, UBCM, Park Board and School Board would require condensed versions of the motion, as per their usual minuting practice. The Park Board liaison advised the motion would be forwarded to the Board once it has been approved by Council.

Accordingly, after due consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed the following motion be forwarded to Council after final reworking by Ms. Davidson:

WHEREAS inter-State use of force is strictly prohibited by the United Nations Charter except when authorized by a legally valid United Nations Security Council resolution or when in self-defense as provided by the Charter.

AND WHEREAS the use of force against another State is the 'supreme' international crime according to the principles laid down by the Nuremberg Tribunal and the terms of the Charter.

AND WHEREAS the prohibition of the use of force is the cardinal principle of international law upon which all other human rights are depend.

AND WHEREAS, the UN General Assembly in Resolution A/RES/39/159 condemns the policy of State terrorism and demands "...that all States take no actions aimed at military intervention and occupation, forcible change in or undermining of the socio-political system of states, destabilization and overthrow of their governments and, in particular, initiate no military action to that end under any pretext whatsoever and cease forthwith any such action already in progress".

AND WHEREAS, the General Assembly resolution 2625(XXV) entitled "Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations imposes on all member States, "...the duty to refrain from the threat or use of force to violate the existing international boundaries of another State or as a means of solving international disputes, including territorial disputes and problems concerning frontiers of States."

AND WHEREAS Canada and UN member States are bound by the Charter to:

- Use peaceful means to settle international disputes, and;
- refrain from the use or threatened use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, and;
- act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter to maintain international peace, and

AND WHEREAS, Canada's National Defence Act, R.S. 1985, C. N-5 stipulates that Canada may engage in military action only in the event that Canada or a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) ally is attacked or pursuant to an action taken under the Charter;

AND WHEREAS, the United Nations declared 2000-2010 as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World" (UN Declaration 53/25, November 10, 1998), urging all people and all levels of government to seek non-violent approaches to conflict resolution and wider education about international law and alternatives to war;

AND WHEREAS Canada declined to deploy troops to participate in the US/UK-led military attack on Iraq after 32 Canadian Municipalities passed resolutions opposing Canadian involvement in the illegal use of force against Iraq.

AND WHEREAS the our collective survival depends on acting to avoid, prevent and bring to an end the illegal use of force and to affirm the principle of the universality of human rights.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT members of the Vancouver City Council

- (a) Hereby express our opposition to Canadian involvement in the use of force against any state except in accordance with international law, the United Nations Charter and the Defense Act of Canada.
- (b) Hereby express opposition to the continued occupation of Iraq by United States and United Kingdom led military forces and any usurpation of the rights of the people of Iraq by the occupiers.
- (c) urge the Federal Government of Canada to take all diplomatic measures to urge the General Assembly and the Security Council to act to:
  - contain the threat to the rights of the State of Iraq and to the people of Iraq by the continued occupation. and;
  - establish the United Nations control over the removal of the invaders from Iraq, and;
  - ensure the sovereignty of the state of Iraq and the right of the people of Iraq to determine their own cultural, social, economic and political affairs.
  - Move the General Assembly to ensure that the rights protected by the Charter and by Geneva Conventions and the Hague regulations apply to the people of Iraq.
- (d) Hereby call on all governments, especially the Government of Canada, to:
  - comply with the United Nations Charter, and;

- call an end to the US/UK led occupation of Iraq, and;
- call for reparations to be made to Iraq in accordance with international law, and
- call for a halt to the any privatization of Iraq by the occupiers, and;
- act to ensure that the perpetrators of the crimes committed during the invasion and occupation be identified by investigation, prosecution and trial and punished.

FURTHER THAT this motion be forwarded to every member of Parliament for Vancouver, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and Cities for Peace.

**i) Aboriginal Justice Concerns**

Tom Anthony advised he will continue to liaise with Beverly O'Neil on aboriginal justice concerns, for report back to the November meeting. Ms. O'Neil advised both the Assembly of First Nations and the First Nations Summit will take place shortly; she will liaise with the Chiefs to explore possible roles each could play. Ms. O'Neil advised she writes for an aboriginal newspaper, and will work on a Peace and Justice article for the October issue.

**j) Council/Park Board/School Board Committees Working on Peace and Justice Issues**

Trustee Bouey advised the City Clerk's Office is currently undergoing a review of its Committees, Boards and Commissions, therefore her report back is a work in progress.

**k) Peace and Justice Web Site; and  
International Meetings and Conferences Related to Peace**

Peter Prontzos provided an update on setting up the Committee's WebPage. He has met with associates who are good at web site design, and will meet with City staff to work out additional details. Discussion followed on possible site content, the need to keep the main page simple, and the potential for links to conferences, local happenings and specific issues.

Noha Sedky volunteered to assist Peter on this project.

As a follow-up to his second task, regarding international meetings and conferences related to peace, Mr. Prontzos advised it is a work in progress, but noted Ryerson offers a progressive research portal. He will provide Committee members with the web address via email.

**l) Peace and Justice Committee  
Citizens Awareness/ Participation re the Committee**

Kyla Kinzel advised she has talked to many friends, and feels the idea of a social gathering party in a community hall or similar venue, where people can hear music, eat food and come together to learn what the Committee is doing would draw in and connect with people that generally are not interested in attending forums, conferences, etc. Ms. Kinzel targeted early 2004 for report back with a more tangible proposal, and noted additional ideas from members are welcome.

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Note was also made of an October 4-11 Global Network Against Nuclear Weapons in Space event - with the following website referenced: [www.space4peace.org](http://www.space4peace.org)

**m) Definition of the Term "Justice"; and  
Update on Liberia/African Situation**

Cara Ng noted her quest to define "Justice" has proved more difficult than anticipated, and she would leave this task open-ended.

Ms. Ng also provided details of the Liberia/African situation, and noted the need to approach the Federal Government on this matter. Members suggested Ms. Ng forward a draft a letter to each member, who can then work with their organizations directly on a follow-up letter to the Prime Minister.

As an additional effort to create an awareness of the African situation, Ms. Ng suggested the anticipated citizens forums would be an appropriate venue for discussions, with African speakers featured. She further noted she would provide additional details regarding African History Month (February 2004) at the November meeting.

**3. Election of Co-Chair**

Council, at its meeting on May 27, 2003, agreed that one of the citizen members of the Peace and Justice Committee be chosen as Co-Chair.

After discussion, members agreed it would be easier to decide on a co-chair once members have had an opportunity to work more together. Accordingly, the Meeting Coordinator was requested to place this item on the November agenda.

**4. Public Participation**

Due to lack of time at its July meeting, Committee members agreed to postpone discussion of this item to the September meeting.

Accordingly, discussion ensued on the Committee's role regarding public participation. Summary of points raised included the following:

- perhaps a specific time could be set for the hearing of delegations;
- background material would be required beforehand, so members can come to the meeting prepared to ask delegations questions;
- presentations could be spaced throughout the Committee's set meeting dates;
- Committee meetings should be more open, more inclusive - superior to closed session with internally generated issues;
- citizens forums, as earlier suggested, would allow people to bring up issues; members could take notes and report back to the Committee;
- preference to have groups contact individual Committee members, who could then make the decision on whether to bring the item to Committee for discussion;
- specific note made of Committee's role and mandate, specifically what it means to "work closely with peace and justice organizations";
- some kind of criteria is required, without opening the whole meeting to outside delegations;
- re upcoming events - they will go ahead anyway, need to examine what we want to get into and why;

- certain people could be invited to speak on topics Committee members feel important - perhaps at the beginning of the meeting; and
- need to investigate other ways of getting input from, and involving other groups -- perhaps an open house, forum or solicitation, and some way to manage that input without the need for delegations at the meeting.

In conclusion, it was agreed the Public Participation Sub-Committee, comprised of Tom Anthony, David Askew and Peter Prontzos report back in November with recommendations on how best to proceed with public participation.

## 5. Upcoming Events

### a. Last Spike Campaign

As a follow-up to an earlier delegation request as noted on the agenda, the Committee had before it for consideration a letter dated September 25, 2003 (circulated at the meeting and on file in City Clerk's Office) from Sid Chow Tan, President, Last Spike Campaign (Vancouver Association of Chinese Canadians and Chinese Canadian National Council) advising the Committee about their campaign which culminates on November 7, 2003, in Vancouver. This is the latest initiative in the ongoing efforts of the Chinese Canadian community to seek redress for Canadians who were affected by Canada's Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act between 1885 and 1947.

The Group sought the Committee's support for the Campaign and participation at the November 7<sup>th</sup> media briefing.

After discussion on the need for further consultation with the Chinese Community (Councillor Woodsworth advised she would follow-up), and note from the Chair outlining the need for Council approval of any Committee-endorsed events, the Committee agreed the request of the Last Spike Campaign be taken forward to Council, contingent upon the findings of Councillor Woodsworth.

### b. International Day for Alleviating Homelessness

A letter dated September 25, 2003, was received from Paul Houle, requesting to appear as a delegation and present information about the International Day for Alleviating Homelessness. Paul is a provincial government social worker and social justice activist who works with the homeless in East Vancouver.

With note on the timeline for this event, the Chair suggested a Proclamation could be prepared for the Mayor's signature. Ivan Bulic and Ellen Woodsworth agreed to draw up the Proclamation for the October 17<sup>th</sup> event. Councillor Woodsworth also advised she would attend the Conference.

### c. João Pedro Stédile - Vancouver Speaking Engagement

Peter Prontzos distributed, for the Committee's information, Mr. Stédile's speaking engagements in Vancouver as part of his Canadian Tour, as follows:

Vancouver: October 21. "The Agrarian Question in Brazil"  
Location: Alice MacKay Room, Vancouver Public Library  
Time: 7:00 p.m.

The Committee agreed this type of event would be suitable for the Peace and Justice Website. The Committee unanimously agreed Peter Prontzos attend this event, to provide his support as a member of the Peace and Justice Committee. Mr. Prontzos requested those interested in assisting with the event speak with him following the meeting.

## 6. Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

- a) Letter dated September 22, 2003, from Cole Dudley regarding a fundraiser for groups working to ban land mines.

Commissioner Poaps advised she would follow up with Ms. Dudley. Note was made this type of event would be a suitable addition to the Committee's Website.

## 7. New Business

### a. B.C. Legislature Bill 37

Correspondence dated September 23, 2003, from Tom Anthony, which included a recent press release from the BCTF regarding Bill 37 was circulated with the agenda. Bill 37 would significantly expand employers' ability to hire children aged 12-15 without any special consideration for their youth or their education.

Trustee Bouey advised the School Board has already written to the Province requesting reconsideration of Bill 37. After brief discussion, the Committee unanimously agreed Council be requested to support the request to rescind or withdraw Bill 37.

### b. Citizens Forum

As this item had not been included for discussion at today's meeting, Al Wong requested it be placed on the November agenda. Members agreed this should be the first item for discussion in November.

### c. Meeting Dates/Times

In response to a member's suggestion that the Committee meet monthly, rather than every two months due to heavy agenda load, the Chair sought input from those present. Members noted the start-up of a number of Sub-Committees would hopefully alleviate the amount of time spent on discussion of various items. It was also noted a lot can be accomplished with emails. Accordingly, the Committee agreed to continue meeting for three hours every two months.

**d. Agenda Deadlines**

The Meeting Coordinator highlighted the need to have the agendas complete for distribution a week prior to the meeting. After brief discussion, members agreed all material would be forwarded to the Meeting Coordinator ten days prior to Agenda mail out.

**e. Brief Wrap Up Evaluation of Meeting**

In response to a question from the Chair, members shared their thoughts on this evening's meeting.

**Next Meeting:**

Monday, November 24, 2003  
4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Strathcona Meeting Room, Sub-Ground, Vancouver City Hall

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The Committee adjourned at 8:05 p.m.