



CUC IN ACTION
**CURRENT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LETTERS,
EVENTS, TOPICS & DISCUSSION**

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IPSOS REID POLL ON EARTH HOUR, MARCH 28, 2008

Toronto, ON – Six in ten (60%) Canadians were either in the dark (51%) for Earth Hour or participated in some other way (9%), according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Canwest News Service and Global National. While four in ten (40%) did not participate, Earth Hour appears to have achieved its goal of raising environmental awareness, with three quarters (74%) ‘agreeing’ (21% strongly/52% somewhat) that it got them to think more about what they can do to help the environment, including 59% of those who did not participate in the event. But almost all (96%) Canadians ‘agree’ (70% strongly/26% somewhat) that ‘in order to help the environment we need to do more than turn off our lights for one hour each year’.

<http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/pressrelease.cfm?id=4334>

The Social Responsibility Monitoring Groups (MGs) have been variously busy in 2008-2009. The chair persons met almost monthly by teleconference to share their experience, perspectives and support of the issues each group was acting upon and to encourage each other.

In December, discussion reiterated the fact that the letter writing and research needed is time consuming and sometimes cumbersome. Collaboration between members of a monitoring group depends largely on the number of members, ability to keep discussion going in addition to editing and writing knowledge. As a result, they agreed to try a different model to work by. It is too early to state its effectiveness.

Structure and Processes for new SR (social responsibility)/SJ (social justice) Group model:

- s The SR/SJ Group would be made up of a pool of 20 people with interest in social responsibility and social justice. These people would come via an invitation to anyone who would like to join, and have a networking function.
- s A smaller group (suggested: 3 – 5) would be selected from the SR/SJ Group of 20 to act as a Screening Group for queries/requests that come in the CUC for action/letter.
- s For each request that the Screening Group moves forward, a request would be sent to the larger SR/SJ Group of 20 with a request to commit to work on an ad hoc task force (suggested: 5-8).
- s Time frames for responses would be tight and reasonable.
- s Recruitment for the SR/SJ Group would focus on finding folks who, rather than having narrow and specialized interests or knowledge in one SR topic area, would bring a broad interest in SR/SJ and skills/training that would augment those of the existing Group (e.g. legal, media relations, internal communications, external communications, popular education, policy, strategic planning, lobbying, direct action/grassroots organizing, etc.).
- s Subject matter expertise would be sought on an as-needed basis, thus drawing on existing knowledge in the SR/SJ Group, the CUC and on dossiers of material compiled from previous research/study.
- s For specialized issues that need quick responses, the SR/SJ Group would look to the CUSJ.
- s It was suggested that we set a 2 year trial period for this new model.

What would the new model offer that is different?

- s The current MG model would be used on an ad hoc basis, essentially through the setting up of a short-term task force to review a particular current issue and respond.
- s The current MG model allows for expertise and deep study of an issue; the new model allows for alacrity and flexibility of response.
- s The new model will lend itself to creating balanced teams that rely on skill sets (e.g. communications and outreach, policy development, law, writing) rather than common interest in the issue.
- s The current model fosters knowledge development over long periods; the new model will hone skills and foster enthusiasm and readiness.
- s The new model will require that existing expertise is captured for use in the future (e.g. through dossier creation, dbase creation, communications product creation).

Suggested Actions/Projects:

- s In future the CUC will send follow up letters to the original recipients to acknowledge when action has been taken by the recipient group (e.g. government) on an issue.
- s Collate the letters which went out from the CUC president. This could be in a booklet format.

Edited by Meg Gourlay.

**LETTER URGING GOVERNMENT OF CANADA TO USE THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY
NATO SUMMIT IN APRIL AS OPPORTUNITY TO ADVOCATE TOWARDS
REDUCTION AND EVENTUAL ELIMINATION OF ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

March 24, 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister

Current NATO strategy states that nuclear weapons are "essential to preserve peace" and are "an essential political and military link between the European and North American members of the Alliance." (NATO Summit: A Chance to Kick the Nuclear Habit. Ernie Regehr, EMBASSY Newsletter Feb 18, 2009)

The continued reliance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on nuclear weapons contradicts the obligations that Canada and all NATO member states have undertaken, as signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), to pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith. As a consequence of this fact and others, Canadian Unitarian Universalist congregations, through a peace resolution, and in keeping with our sixth and seventh principles (the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part) have directed the CUC to urge the Government of Canada to advocate within NATO, the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) and the UN (1) the reduction of the immediate danger posed by nuclear weapons and (2) urgent action on concrete steps for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The Canadian Unitarian Council therefore urges the Government of Canada to use the 60th anniversary NATO summit in April as an opportunity to fashion a new strategic doctrine that works to reduce the legitimacy and value of nuclear weapons as a part of NATO policy, to achieve the immediate removal of all nuclear weapons from the territories of non-nuclear weapon state parties to the NPT and to move us towards the goal of reduction and eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Yours sincerely,

Jean Pfleiderer
President, Canadian Unitarian Council

cc: Michael Ignatieff, House of Commons, Ottawa ON K1A 0A2
Jack Layton, House of Commons, Ottawa ON K1A 0A2
Gilles Duceppe, House of Commons, Ottawa ON K1A 0A2
Bruce Knotts, Executive Director, UU-UNO
Bob Stevenson, CUSJ

LETTER TO GOVERNMENT LEADERS REGARDING ATTACK ADS

April 7, 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Michael Ignatieff,
Leader of the Liberal Party
House of Commons,
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Jack Layton,
Leader of the New Democrat Party
House of Commons,
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Gilles Duceppe
Bloc Québécois Party Leader
House of Commons,
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Greetings

On behalf of the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC), I am moved to express concern about the use of attack ads against other parties -- particularly their leaders. The time seems right to remind all political parties of the Golden Rule: "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them." [The Bible, Revised Standard Version, Luke 6:31] -- a rule that appears in most of the religions and cultures of the world. [See Appendix.]

Attack ads such as those used in the last election fall dangerously close to the jurisdiction of defamation of character laws and are contrary

- not only to the Golden Rule in all its forms
- not only to our Unitarian First Principle which affirms *the inherent worth and dignity of every person*
- BUT also to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights introductory statement and Article 1:
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

We urge each of you as the leader of your party to abandon the use of attack ads. In this period of economic and social hardship, we need you to act as a model of the cooperative spirit that will move Canadians to be our brothers' and our sisters' keepers.

Yours sincerely,

Jean Pfleiderer
President, Canadian Unitarian Council

The Canadian Unitarian Council/Conseil unitarien du Canada (CUC) is an association of forty-five congregations located across Canada with 5,200 individual members. The binding covenant of the CUC includes support for the individual in his or her search for meaning and truth.



Buddhism

One who, while himself seeking happiness, oppresses with violence other beings who also desire happiness, will not attain happiness hereafter.

– Dhammapada

Baha'i Faith

And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou choosest for thyself.

– Baha'u'llah.

Classic Greek

May I do to others as I would that they should do unto me.

– Plato

Confucianism

Never impose on others what you would not choose for yourself.

– Confucius, Analects XV.24 (tr. David Hinton)

Hinduism

One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's own self. – – – –
Mahabharata, (Anusasana Parva, Section CXIII, verse 8)

Islam

Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you.

– Muhammad, The Farewell Sermon

Jainism

Just as pain is not agreeable to you, it is so with others. Knowing this principle of equality treat other with respect and compassion.

–Suman Suttam , verse 150

Judaism

The Sage Hillel formulated the Golden Rule in order to illustrate the underlying principles of Jewish moral law:

That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn.

Taoism

Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss.

– T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien

Wiccan

Do no harm.

Zoroastrianism

That nature alone is good which refrains from doing unto another whatsoever is not good for itself.

– Dadistan-i-dinik 94-5

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