

AUGUST, 2007



## →CUC IN ACTION→

Current Social Responsibility Letters, Events, Topics & Discussion

~Letters of Social Responsibility~

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### **Afghanistan Mission: Allegations of Files Being Blocked for Release**

August 15, 2007

The Right Honourable Steven Harper  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Dear **Prime Minister**,

Recently there have been allegations that General Rick Hillier is over-stepping his role as Chief of Defence Staff by blocking release of all files on the Afghanistan mission requested under the Access to Information Act and by conducting secret surveillance of the peace work of Steven Staples of the Ottawa-based Rideau Institute on International Affairs (Ottawa Citizen, July 13, 2007: "Military tried to cover up file on outspoken critic").

Canadian Unitarian and Universalist congregations actively affirm and promote the use of democratic process. We believe that it is the role of Parliament,



Peace Rally, Toronto, February 2003  
photo by Sue Hammond

not of non-elected government officials such as General Hillier, to decide policy issues and their implementation. As President of the Canadian Unitarian Council, I urge you to address this alleged breach of democratic process. As a military advisor, General Hillier can and should provide advice directly to the government concerning military needs, but should not contravene existing laws granting citizens access to information, nor intimidate citizens presenting opposing views.

General Hillier's alleged withholding of lawfully-requested information and secret surveillance of citizens are of great concern to the Canadian Unitarian Council. We are looking to you, as Prime Minister of Canada, to maintain legislative authority over our military forces, to ensure that General Hillier's actions are monitored closely, and to ensure that the rights of citizens to hold their own views are not restricted.

We await your response.

Yours sincerely,

*Jean Pfleiderer*

Jean Pfleiderer, Ph.D.  
President, Board of Trustees

cc. Rideau Institute

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### **National Aboriginal Day/ National Day of Action**

In June, statements were sent by the CUC initiated by our Racial, Religious and First Nations, Metis & Inuit Social Responsibility Monitoring Group related to National Aboriginal Day and National Day of Action. You can view these statements at: [http://www.cuc.ca/social\\_responsibility/diversity.htm](http://www.cuc.ca/social_responsibility/diversity.htm)

Contact Chair, Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes at [diversity@cuc.ca](mailto:diversity@cuc.ca) or join the discussion group by sending a blank email to [cuc-diversity-discussion-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:cuc-diversity-discussion-subscribe@yahogroups.com)



## ~Announcements~

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### **A Call to Action from the Continental Youth Social Action Coordinator**

This fall presents us as Unitarian Universalists with several ways to live out our values of working for a world with peace, liberty and justice for all. Issues of Peace, Poverty, Hunger, and Consumerism are highlighted with several dates and events in the next few months.

Please consider participating in any or all of the following events as individuals, families, groups and congregations:

**-September 21 – International Day of Peace (Peace Day)** <http://www.peaceoneday.org/home.aspx>

Work for peace in your community, and in the world on the UN's day for Peace. Hold a vigil, a forum, meditation, letter-writing campaign, or anything else to support peace in our troubled world.

For more resources/ideas: <http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org/>

**-October 8 – Interfaith Fast for Peace** <http://www.shalomctr.org/node/1269>

What better way to spend thanksgiving Monday than giving thanks for the peace we experience here in Canada, and calling for peace for the rest of the world?

Join our cousins in other faiths and our American neighbours in a dawn-to-dusk fast in protest of war (particularly the War in Iraq), and in a call for peace. Gather in interfaith vigils and events, and break the fast with thanksgiving dinner held after dusk.

(If you're on Facebook.com , let us know you're attending the event, hosted by Young UU Peacemakers)

**-October 16 – World Food Day “The Right to Food”**

<http://www.oxfam.ca/what-we-do/campaigns/world-food-day>

Most of us in North America take food for granted, but many people – both in Canada, and in other countries – are not so lucky.

Hold a forum about poverty and hunger, an empty bowls meal (<http://www.emptybowls.net/>) or a hunger banquet (<http://www.hungerbanquet.org/>).

**-October 17<sup>th</sup> – Stand Up and Speak Out against poverty** <http://www.standagainstopoverty.org/>

“In 2000, world leaders from 189 countries signed up to the [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs) ([www.millenniumcampaign.org](http://www.millenniumcampaign.org)), a global plan to halve extreme poverty by 2015. Last year, more than [23 million people in 87 countries](#) stood up and took action to remind them of this promise. It was the largest single coordinated mobilization in the history of the Guinness World Records.”

-Millennium Campaign

Let's make it bigger and better this year!

**-November 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> – Buy Nothing Day** <http://adbusters.org/metast/eco/bnd//>

Refuse to participate in the rampant consumerism of our culture by abstaining from buying on the biggest shopping day of the year. Hold a protest, a stuff-swap, or simply refuse to purchase anything.

~ Chris Michell  
[continentalsac@gmail.com](mailto:continentalsac@gmail.com)