

JUNE, 2007



## → CUC IN ACTION →

**CURRENT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LETTERS, EVENTS, TOPICS & DISCUSSION**

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### **UNITARIANS CELEBRATE EARTH DAY**

April 22, 2007

A Message From: Ms. Vyda Ng, Past-President of the CUC Board

Canadian Unitarians affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. One of our sources draws from the spiritual teachings of earth-centred traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature. Earth Day provides an opportunity for us to celebrate our earth and its abundance, a time to reflect on how to meet challenges around preserving and harnessing our resources, a time for each of us to be 'spiritual,' and to remember those who are without the minimum necessary for daily survival.

As a religious community, we can embrace challenges as opportunities. Climate change, global warming and the related themes of social and economic justice around sustainability and distribution of resources are clearly challenges. While answers and action are clearly needed, there is first and foremost a need for dialogue, diversity, and the participation of many voices in the discussion for solutions.

People with widely varying perspectives need to come together; as Unitarians we can offer initiatives and ac-

tion based on our underlying values in working together to address the global issues of climate change. UUA President, Rev. Bill Sinkford, exhorts Unitarians to "put our faith into action, to help ensure that spring comes again," and suggests that congregations use resources such as the UU Ministry for Earth (<http://uuministryforearth.org>) as tools in our efforts. In Canada, valuable information is available at Earth Day Canada ([www.earthday.ca](http://www.earthday.ca)) and Ecokids ([www.ecokidsonline.com](http://www.ecokidsonline.com).)

In moving on together to address our global challenges, let us bear in mind that questions are as important as answers in helping us reach for solutions, and that a myriad of approaches may offer more ground for progress and co-operation. Embracing the challenges of today begins with you and me, with our homes, our congregations, our workplaces, and our communities. Change starts with one person at a time, but becomes a more efficient and effective system when we come together in our relationships to work towards a common goal. Our challenge then is to engage in the conversation, and each do our part in weaving together a network to protect and nurture our resources for the present and for the generations to come.

Enjoy Earth Day, celebrate, reflect, and have fun!

In faith,

Ms Vyda Ng  
Past-President  
Canadian Unitarian Council

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### **OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE 03/08/07 CUC SR LETTER: HARPER AND THE CBC**

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Ms Vyda Ng  
President  
Canadian Unitarian Council  
018 – 1179A King Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6K 3C5

May 18, 2007

Dear Ms Ng,

Thank you for your correspondence forwarded to me by the Office of the Prime Minister regarding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Please excuse the delay of my reply.

I appreciate being advised of your organization's views on this matter and have carefully noted your comments. It is government policy that the CBC is and will remain Canada's public broadcaster in both English and French.



## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO HARPER AND THE CBC CONTINUED....

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage is currently conducting a full investigation of the role of the national public broadcaster, including consultations with the public. The Committee has not yet indicated when it expects to complete its review.

As an important first step toward modernizing Canadian broadcasting policy, the Government directed the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to report on the impact of technological change on Canadian broadcasting as a whole. The Government is now studying the report to assess its implications for the Canadian broadcasting system, including Canada's national public broadcaster. The CRTC report and the work of the Standing Committee will inform the Government's ongoing policy deliberations to ensure that broadcasting policy is responsive to and reflective of the

changing nature of the broadcasting system and of audiences.

With respect to federal government funding to the CBC, the Corporation receives approximately \$1 billion in Government funding annually. In fiscal year 2006-2007 the Corporation received \$1.112 billion. Furthermore, for fiscal years 2001-2002 to 2006-2007, the Corporation received an additional \$60 million annually to assist it in meeting its Canadian programming objectives. On March 22, 2007, the Government announced that it had renewed its supplementary contribution of \$60 million annually to the Corporation for the next two fiscal years, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.

I trust that this information is useful. Please accept my best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Bev Oda, P.C., M.P.

## OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE 11/27/06 CUC LETTER OF RESPONSE TO: HON. PETER MACKAY RE- SPONSE TO SR LETTER *GAY PERSECUTION IN IRAQ & IRAN*

Ms Vyda Ng  
President  
Canadian Unitarian Council  
018-1179A King Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6K 3C5

May 9, 2007

Dear Ms. Ng,

Thank you for your letter of November 27, 2006, concerning the issue of homosexual Iraqi asylum seekers. I regret the delay in replying to you.

I appreciate the concerns raised in your letter. Canada is engaged in efforts to strengthen governance and respect for human rights in Iraq. However, security considerations have delayed our plans to open an embassy in Bagh-

dad and we do not have a permanent presence on the ground. This severely limits our ability to monitor events firsthand.

Canada is gravely concerned by the level of violence perpetrated against Iraqi civilians and the increasing number of refugees and internally displaced persons. We are committed, in close collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to accept a number of Iraqi asylum seekers for resettlement among those deemed to be most vulnerable.

Matters relating to Canadian refugee policy fall under the purview of my colleague the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. I have therefore taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your correspondence to her for consideration.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Peter G. MacKay