

PROJECT
PLOUGHSHARES
CALGARY

Peace News

JANUARY 2008



We are located:
**Parkdale United
Church**
2919 8th Ave NW

270-7366

Office hours:
Mon, Tue, Thurs
10:30am - 3pm

Wed 2 - 6pm

January 9th 7pm Parkdale United Church

Joyeux Noël is a 2005 film inspired by a true story about the World War I Christmas eve truce of 1914 in many different places along the frontline.

The film was written and directed by Christian Carion, and is 115 minutes long. There will be a short discussion time after the movie.



A Note from Ploughshares Calgary Executive...



It is with great regret that we say goodbye to Tracey Pickup, our Program Coordinator for more than four years. We thank Tracey for the gifts of community building, generosity and peacefulness, among others, which she brought to the position. We wish her well in her new full-time position with the RespectEd program at the Red Cross.

A warm welcome to former Ploughshares Executive member, Diane Janzen, our new Program Coordinator! Diane has a degree in computer engineering, but prefers to work for peace. She has been a volunteer with Christian Peacemaker Teams for several periods of time in Palestine and has spoken about her experiences there and offered workshops on non-violence.

Ploughshares Calgary 25th Anniversary Celebrated!



On November 2, members and friends celebrated 25 years of "extraordinary achievement" in peace work.

Guest speaker and Project Ploughshares national co-founder Ernie Regehr looked back through the years and reminded us of achievements that have occurred. "There has been growth in energy and activity within states and internationally in promoting constructive policies on disarmament, controlling the arms trade, small arms, and on nuclear disarmament. Engagement has gone beyond the local to the international, to affect the international community's response to such things."

In looking to the future, Ernie predicts a "nuclear renaissance," the increase in nuclear power as a response to global warming, with "a critical element in the debate needing to be the proliferation dangers that attend the spread of nuclear technology and nuclear materials." There is also the dilemma of intervention for humanitarian purposes balanced with the respect for the sovereignty of states under the theme of the Responsibility to Protect that the international community continues to wrestle with.

"It will be audacious hope that moves us along, built on a sober assessment of reality, an unswerving commitment to action, and persistence in the search for common ground."

Ploughshares Calgary News

Parhad Programmes Annual Conference



The November 22-24 Dr. Irma Parhad Programmes' conference on Global Citizenship was an inspiring event. Paul Loeb guided the participants on how to take action, and Frances Moore Lappe and Dr. Mary Wynne Ashford showed examples of how an important shift in the world's desire and capacity for peace is just around the corner. Parhad students reported on their significant work overseas, the plans for the Calgary Centre for Global Community were outlined and the conference ended with an energizing drum circle. Many thanks to Parhad Programmes!

Thanks to our many Holiday Peace Fair volunteers!!

The 23rd annual Holiday Peace Fair on November 17th was another wonderful success raising over \$4000 for Ploughshares and thousands of dollars for the twenty-five organizations who attended. Our volunteers made it happen! Nancy Hetherington-Peirce coordinated the event with volunteers (organized by Shanin Bhura) helping in many ways; food provided by the kitchen crew (with Karen Dickson & Penny Young), sales by the Ploughshares table (with Larry Kennard), staffing the admission table, money changers, set-up and take down crews and many many more. Your work is peace in action!

Ploughshares National News

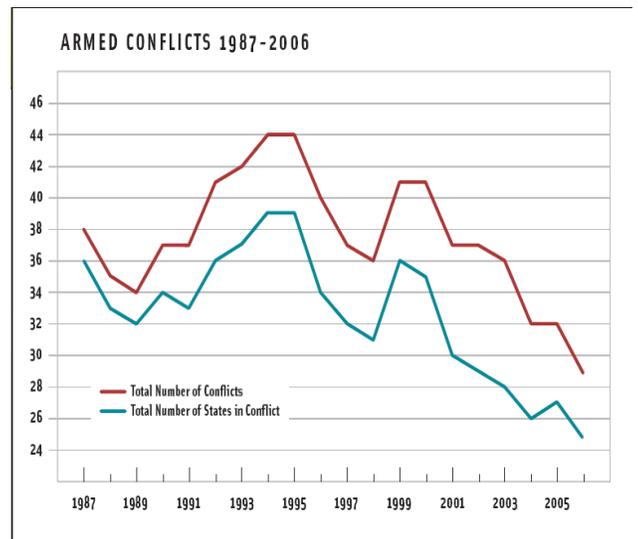
The Winter edition of *The Ploughshares Monitor* is available at www.ploughshares.ca. Here are a few excerpts:

Twenty years of Ploughshares' *Armed Conflicts Reports: 1987–2007*

In 1987 Project Ploughshares began documenting major armed conflicts with the publication of the first armed conflicts map in *The Ploughshares Monitor*. For the past 20 years the annual map and related information have informed people around the world on the nature and extent of violent conflicts. Although one conflict is too many for those being killed and wounded, there has been a significant decrease in the number and intensity of armed conflicts over the past 10 years.

The Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan

In keeping with his spring statement that a new consensus among Canadians and in Parliament was needed on Canada's role in Afghanistan, Prime Minister Harper announced on 12 October 2007 the creation of the Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan to "review, analyse and make recommendations on Canada's engagement in Afghanistan beyond February 2009". On 27 October a delegation of 17 representatives of nongovernmental organizations, including John Siebert from Project Ploughshares, met for two hours with the panel to convey the need for alternatives to the four options presented in the panel's public mandate. The primary message from the NGO spokespersons was that Canada needs to reframe its role in Afghanistan from participation in a "war on terror" to peacebuilding, and military efforts must shift from anti-insurgency fighting to supporting comprehensive peace negotiations facilitated by the international community. The NGO presentations focused on security, diplomacy, humanitarian aid, development, gender, and human rights.



Global News

The **Human Security Report** provides news headlines by e-mail or on-line. To sign up, go to: www.humansecurityinstitute.ca.

US Secretly Helping Secure Pakistani Nuclear Weapons

In November, the *New York Times* revealed that the US has secretly been assisting Pakistan in guarding its nuclear arsenal. For the past six years, the Bush administration has spent almost \$100 million on a secret program that provided supplies and training to Pakistan in order to help secure its nuclear materials, war-heads and laboratories. According to US officials, one of the biggest problems with this program has been that there is no verification that the training and supplies are improving security. Often the Pakistani government has been hesitant to show American officials how and where gear is being used. The program was created after 9/11 in response to fears that terrorists could obtain Pakistan's nuclear weapons.

The Bush administration debated whether or not to provide Pakistan with nuclear protection technology called permissive action links or "PALS." This technology prevents the use of a nuclear weapon without using security codes. Also, Pakistanis were fearful that the US would be able to put a "kill-switch" on the weapons, rendering them useless. While the *New York Times* has been aware of this program for more than three years, they have delayed publication of an article on it at the Bush administration's request. Given the recent political turmoil in Pakistan, questions over the security of Pakistan's nuclear stockpile have once again come up.

Source: www.wagingpeace.ca - Sanger, David E. and William J. Broad, "US Secretly Aids Pakistan in Guarding Nuclear Arms," *New York Times* November 17, 2007

Cluster Bomb Ban Talks Open in Vienna

Representatives from over 130 countries met here Dec.5 in an effort to ban cluster bombs, which continue to maim and kill civilians worldwide through scattered bomblets that can explode years after they were dropped. "The presence today of over two thirds of countries in the world is in itself a strong and encouraging sign. It's a significant push towards awareness" of the problem, Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik said at the start of the three-day meeting in Vienna.

The conference, organized by the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), is part of a Norwegian initiative launched in February when states agreed to conclude a new international ban treaty to be signed by 2008. Some 83 nations have voiced their support for the move, but key countries such as China, Russia and the United States — the main makers of such munitions — remain opposed to an outright ban.

Plassnik, who received a petition with some 1.5 million signatures calling for the complete ban of cluster bombs, described the document as "a clear and unmistakable message: ban cluster munitions!" Cluster bombs are especially deadly as they contain smaller bomblets which they scatter over a wide area and which sometimes explode only decades after a conflict has ended. No figures are available on how many people have been maimed or killed by cluster munitions, but the non-governmental organization Handicap International estimates about 98 percent of victims are civilians, usually children.

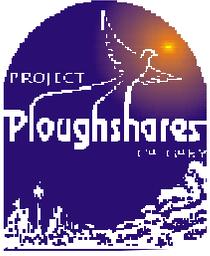
Source: The Human Security Report - Agence France-Presse December 5, 2007

Iraqi Courts Mired in War's Chaos

Iraqi judges and their families live behind 12-foot blast walls. Hundreds of lawyers have fled the country. Critics complain about rapid-fire trials in an overburdened court system. This is the fractured state of Iraq's criminal-justice system — the destination for many of the 25,000 detainees now in U.S. custody and often held without charges for months or years. Iraqis and rights activists familiar with the Iraqi courts complain of trials lasting less than an hour followed almost immediately by a verdict. Some say the court backlog reaches into the thousands of cases, including regular criminal prosecutions not involving U.S. detainees.

The United States hopes to cut the number of detainees it holds in Iraq by about two-thirds by July 2008. Still unclear is how many will be freed and how many will be handed to an already overburdened Iraqi legal system. Forty-four percent of the 5,625 U.S. detainees who have faced trial since the Iraqi courts were established in 2003 have been convicted, according to military figures. It isn't known how many death sentences have been handed down, but they are believed to be fairly common for security-related offenses.

Source: The Human Security Report - Associated Press December 7, 2007



Project Ploughshares Calgary

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Special Thanks to Diane Janzen, Sally Hodges, Tracey Pickup, Sylvia Hawkins and Larry Kennard for editing & writing this issue of the newsletter.

Nuclear Power in Alberta

Dr. Gordon Edwards from the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility is coming to Calgary to talk about the issues around nuclear energy in our province. **January 15th 7pm** at Knox United Church, 506 4th St. SW Calgary, hosted by CAUSE

Yes! I want to become a Project Ploughshares Calgary donor and partner in building peace.

Here is my one time donation

\$35 ___ (includes 1 yr to newsletter)

\$50 ___ **\$100** ___ **\$500** ___ **Other \$** ___

I'd like to become a Friend of Ploughshares

And give a monthly donation

(include void cheque)

___ **\$10** ___ **\$15** ___ **\$20** ___ **\$25** **Other \$** ___

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Letter from Tracey Pickup (see page 1)

Dear Ploughshares Friends,

As some of you know, I have left my position as program coordinator of Ploughshares Calgary and have passed on the work to the very capable hands of Diane Janzen. I very much enjoyed my years at Ploughshares and hope I contributed to the spirit of peacework in Calgary. Though I thoroughly appreciated the work and the community I found it increasingly difficult economically to stay in this position. I am now working at the Red Cross in RespectED: Violence and Abuse Prevention. You are all more than welcome to visit me there. I'd like to thank everyone I've worked with at Ploughshares for their inspiring spirits.

There is nothing quite like working for peace. In my heart I have always been a true pacifist and I always will be. I won't be that far away and my work for peace will continue.

Peace work means many things and I have come to realize that there are many people who contribute to a world without war in many different ways. Before I came to Ploughshares, though I believed in peace and the necessity to work for it, I really did not have the faith that it was possible. Over the past four years I came more closely in contact with the terrible realities of violence in every corner of the planet. At the same time I met, listened to and read about those who are challenging the status quo of militarism and those who believe in a world without violence. In meeting those people and knowing their work I have become convinced that peace is possible. In fact I now believe it is inevitable because of all of us who believe in peace. It is truly a radical vision.

Ploughshares Calgary is a unique organization which has freedoms and opportunities to do things and say things that are violently opposed in some places and denigrated in many places. That this organization exists at all is truly hopeful. I hope you take the opportunity to continue to be a part of this community, to do the impossible and make others believe peace is possible. Thank you so much for the friendships and the community.

In Peace, Tracey