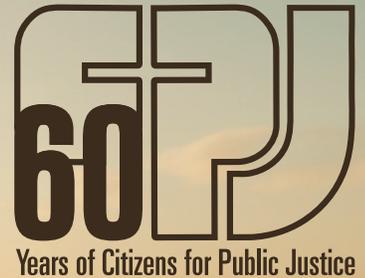


the Catalyst

Citizens for Public Justice

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Reviving Foolish Hope

By Willard Metzger

When hope is considered to be foolish, it opens the door for apathy and despair.

Yet hope and confidence are partners. They are dual ingredients for an atmosphere of optimism and assurance. It is when skepticism seeps in that the feeling of hope begins to wane. Soon, doubt grows and overwhelms the ability to anticipate a desired end.

When trust is dependent on one's own ability, hope can feel quite vulnerable—especially when facing societal and systemic forces like climate change, poverty, or refugee and migrant rights. Individual actions can seem desperately inadequate, giving apathy plenty of space to occupy feelings.

When facing systemic forces, it can also be disheartening to focus on government and corporate entities. Government action is constrained by popular opinion and corporate vision is restricted by profit.

So, for public justice advocates—those bold enough to seek systemic

change—from where is hope derived?

Because hope is feeling that desired change is feasible, it is important to base this anticipation on something that is achievable. God loves creation. God adores that which divine passion has given life. So the Spirit of God is active in restoring, reconciling, and redeeming all of creation.

I am thankful that God's passion is not limited to humanity. If it were, hope would be fragile because it would be dependent on humanity. However, God's creator love is expressed to all of creation. And God can be trusted to continually and consistently express that divine passion.

But trusting in God does not give permission for inaction. It is important to note that hopeful trust does not result in individual inactivity. Rather, individual activity becomes empowered by hopeful trust in the loving action of God. Indeed, individual activity sheds the weight of indi-

vidual inadequacies. It also becomes unaffected by government and corporate constraints.

Bold action can be taken with confidence because it relies on God's unwavering love for all of creation. The seemingly impossible can be pursued because what is possible is defined by the ability of God's passion. And that passion is unstoppable!

This is the time for all people of faith to unleash their expectant aspirations from the inactivity of government and corporate interests. Instead, this is the perfect time to align our bold actions of confident hope with the passionate power of creation and the Creator.

When desperate need arises, it is foolish not to actively join hope to God's abundant passion.

Willard Metzger serves as executive director at CPJ



An Offering of Hope

By Natalie Appleyard

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

Proverbs 13:12

In 1989, the federal government passed a unanimous all-party House of Commons resolution to end child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. Even at its lowest estimate in 2020, however, there have never been fewer than 999,110 children living in poverty in Canada.¹

Hope deferred.

In 2015, after years of advocacy by CPJ and many partners (including through our Dignity for All campaign), the Prime Minister tasked the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development with developing a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. Tens of thousands of postcards, surveys, and consultations offered up in hope and good faith were received, including our own rights-based, comprehensive model national anti-poverty plan. And while we do celebrate the landmark release of Canada's first Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the acknowledgment of the federal government's critical role in addressing poverty, it fell far short of the plan we had hoped for.

Hope deferred.

I think of the tears and trauma laid bare during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the resulting 94 Calls to Action. Seven years later, the Yellowhead Institute reports "13 Calls have been complet-

1 Poverty rate according to the Low Income Measure, using tax filer data. Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0018-01. Retrieved May 3, 2023, at <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110001801>

ed. At this rate, it will take 42 years, or until 2065, to complete all the Calls to Action.² I think of the subsequent National Inquiry Into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the ensuing calls for action on the disproportionate rates of poverty experienced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada, which themselves echoed reports and recommendations dating back to 2003 (and many generations of advocacy before).

Hope deferred.

I don't think it's fair of us to ask or expect others to hope. People have shared their deepest tragedies, life-or-death needs, or brilliant solutions, and those listening have failed to implement what was asked of them. Instead, people are left with broken promises and half-measures. Even when we celebrate progress, it is often with a sense of deferred hope for the full realization of peoples' rights and the transformative policy changes needed.

But I do think we can ask one another to be people who *offer* hope—a kind of hope that goes beyond optimism and strives for a better way, a hope that is convinced a better way is possible, and one that is committed to demonstrating it is possible in the here and now.

Offering hope requires us to embody and practice the vision—the *hope*—we want to inspire in others.

This is how my work with CPJ brings me hope: not in promising that we'll win every campaign, not in sugarcoating incremental changes when systemic shifts are needed, and certainly not in telling people to "just

2 Yellowhead Institute. Calls to Action Accountability: A 2022 Status Update on Reconciliation. Retrieved May 3, 2023 at <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/trc/>



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Citizens for Public Justice's mission is to promote public justice in Canada by shaping key public policy debates through research and analysis, publishing, and public dialogue. CPJ encourages citizens, civil society, and Canadian governments to support policies and practices which reflect God's call for love, justice, and the flourishing of creation.

the Catalyst, a publication of Citizens for Public Justice, reports on the intersections of public justice issues in Canada.

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be patient,” but in getting to practice and experience glimpses of the hope we envision for our world.

I get to see these changes firsthand in myself and in those I engage with through CPJ. I get to work alongside people whose every decision is imbued with a commitment to justice. I meet church and community groups who are showing what it looks like to be led by those most impacted by policy decisions related to housing needs, food security, and income security.

When CPJ members join together with advocacy partners, churches, community groups, and schools across the country, we are sending a message to elected officials and to civil society at large about our hope, as well as our expectations. This witness is powerful.

In our pursuit of a society in which all peoples’ rights and dignity are respected, we must remember that it’s not just today’s elected officials we’re trying to reach. It is anyone and everyone within our own overlapping spheres of influence, whether we realize it or not. I truly

believe that the faithful witness of a more just way of seeing and interacting with the world, should never be underestimated. Changing hearts, minds, and habits takes time and it takes proof of impact. We often need to see what an idea looks like in real life before we’re willing to adopt new perspectives or ways of doing things. By watching others live into their hope, and seeing the difference it makes in people’s lives around us, we are emboldened to hope and act for something better.

This is why CPJ engages not only in political advocacy, but in public education and engagement. We need an informed, committed, and expectant civil society to show elected officials there is sufficient support (and demand) for our policy recommendations. It’s hard to have an engaged civil society if everyone has lost hope.

But when people offer a glimpse of how things could be—perhaps by rallying to stop renovations in their community, choosing green energy options for a local church building, or even countering anti-immigrant sentiments in a casual conversation—

others take notice. And as these personal and local changes take root and grow, so too do others’ appetites and hope for systemic change.

So please: keep coming and bringing everyone you can to rallies, sign petitions, and vote, even when the results leave some (or even all) of our hoped-for outcomes deferred. Please keep reading and discussing CPJ reports and articles with others in your networks, even if the conversations are hard and the topics heavy. And please keep celebrating with us the victories big and small, even while there is so far yet to go. Because it is in faithfully doing these things that we witness transformation and can offer one another hope that change is possible.

I may take every political promise with a bucket of salt, but I thank God for those who continue to offer me *hope* through their faithful pursuit and practice of justice.

Natalie Appleyard is the Socio-Economic Policy Analyst at CPJ.





From Where to Here

By Walter Neutel, for CPJ's 60th anniversary

To know what CPJ is, and why it exists, we have to look back to the 1950s. More particularly, we have to look at the Dutch immigrant community, part of millions of post-war immigrants who transformed the Canadian landscape, both physically and socially.

The Dutch presence in Canada dates back to the time of the American Revolution, represented in individual families and people like Egerton Ryerson. Some small Dutch communities with their own churches appeared early in the 20th century. However, the real growth of the Dutch Canadian community dates from the post-World War II decades.

It was then that about 200,000 Netherlanders chose Canada as their new home. The largest subgroup of them was Roman Catholic. Protestants joined various churches, mostly United or Presbyterian, but soon thousands established Reformed churches. In less than two decades, the Christian Reformed denomination grew from a handful of churches to more than 100; most of which were in Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. Other Dutch immigrants

founded smaller Reformed denominations.

These emigrants left a country still in post-war economic distress, with a severe housing shortage, for a land of freedom and opportunity—a land that supplied an army to liberate them from Nazi oppression. Before emigrating, they were used to accepting people with a diversity of religious expressions in public life. There, public schools existed alongside various Christian schools, which consisted of both Roman Catholic and protestant schools, some broadly Christian, and others more closely aligned with a denominational viewpoint.

Similarly, farmers, workers, and sports groups were mostly aligned according to their worldview or affiliations. They were members of political parties that gave expression to their religious allegiance and ideals. Now, imagine their surprise and disappointment when, in this land of freedom—Canada—only their Roman Catholic compatriots could send children to a Christian school of their choice, at least in some of the provinces. Protestants had to make

do with the public schools, which might or might not show a nominal acknowledgment of Christianity by permitting the Lord's Prayer in the morning. Labour unions were secular, and many of them had a bent for class struggle: violence was not unusual on the picket lines. Where was the public expression of Christian values, of biblical norms for behaviour for public life, of Christ's lordship in daily life in schools and in the workplace?

These Reformed people longed for Christian schools, where their children would be taught that all of life is religious. In the model of Abraham Kuyper, these people strove to see and use every activity and occupation as an expression of grateful service to their creator, an acknowledgment that only Jesus Christ is lord of their lives.

In furtherance of their ideals, where possible, they soon established Christian Schools, and in as early as 1952, these formed an alliance for mutual encouragement and support. In Ontario they appealed to the public and to politicians for fair treatment, equal to tax-supported

Catholic schools, and, failing that, appealed to the courts for justice.

Also in 1952, the first groups established a Christian Labour Association (CLAC), hoping to share in the shaping of the work environment in business and manufacturing industries. However, they met the closed shop environment, where secular unions, organized by trade, demanded support for their union as a condition of employment.

Christian school supporters sought justice and equal standing with Catholic schools at the political level and via the courts. Workers who joined the Christian Labour Association appealed for freedom: freedom not to join and give financial support to unions which did not subscribe to biblical norms for behaviour, unions which often saw owners and management of businesses as opponents, rather than as co-workers for the common good. They wanted the CLA to be recognized as a legitimate labour union which could organize and represent the employees at their chosen workplace. The struggle for such recognition required both political engagement and legal argument before the Labour Relations Board and in the courts.

Because the supporters of Christian schools and of the CLA were often the same people, by the late 1950s they set up a joint Committee for Justice and Liberty to coordinate their common struggle and aims. By the early 1960s this included not only schools at the elementary and secondary level, but also the effort to obtain a charter for a university level institution. In 1962, the Committee for Justice and Liberty decided that they could more effectively work towards their goals by becoming an incorporated body. They drafted a charter and bylaws and sought incorporation both at the federal level and at the provincial level. Federally, their effort was rejected because their aims were directed too much at educating the public, for which

a Canadian (federal) not-for-profit corporation was deemed ill-suited. Provincially, their effort was not accepted because the name Committee for Justice and Liberty was deemed “meaningless,” then again as “too general” in character.

In the spring of 1963, the effort to become a Canada corporation was abandoned, after meetings with the civil servants and the Minister of National Revenue proved futile. However, Ontario officials and politicians agreed to permit incorporation if the name was modified to CJL Foundation, although that name seems even less meaningful. It must be noted that, 60 years ago, incorporation as a not-for-profit was considered a privilege, not a legal right.

Thus, the CJL Foundation became a legal body in 1963 with the following objects in its charter:

a) TO carry on a programme of education, based on the Word of God, for the promotion of justice and liberty in the field of labour relations;

b) TO promote the recognition of the God-given right of all persons to employment and the provision of employment;

c) TO secure those rights by appropriate legislation;

d) TO advise governments, organizations and persons of situations where justice and liberty in the field of labour relations are infringed;

e) TO promote, assist in and advance such research as will further the cause of justice and liberty in the field of labour relations; and

f) TO assist, advise and educate all persons who experience difficulty in exercising their right of employment;

Gerry Vandezande, who at that time was president of the CLAC, became part-time executive director of the Foundation. CJL had nearly 200 members signed up at the end of 1963, who were urged, if they were able, to contribute double the membership fee of \$10. Its major activities in those first years consisted of as-

sisting persons at Labour Board and court hearings who sought the freedom not to join or support financially unions which offended their freedom of conscience. Through diligent work with politicians and other supporters, a big victory in this regard was Ontario’s Bill 167. When enacted in 1970, it made a legal provision for diverting the equivalent of union dues to a registered charity. During its first five years, the Foundation also struggled to gain status as a charitable corporation, finally granted in 1968 after the CJL removed from its charter the aim “to secure those rights by appropriate legislation”. This was deemed political—not charitable.

In 1961, CJL spent \$1,200; in 1962 it spent nearly \$4,000, and in 1963 more than \$5,000. By 1970, its budget was \$30,000. A decade later, it was about \$200,000. For reference, in the mid-sixties, \$4-5,000 was considered a good starting salary for university graduates. Much of CJL’s income came from church support. In the sixties, most of the budget went towards legal expenses in pleadings before Labour Boards and courts.

Money was essential, but more important than raising funds was sharing the message and growing supporters. At the time of incorporation, CJL had about two hundred members. About 100 attended the first AGM a few months later. During its first decade, the Annual General Meeting was usually a day-long affair, some attended by as many as 300 members. The highlight was a keynote address and discussion groups on the activities and direction of CJL. Literature on the topics presented was often printed and distributed afterwards to educate not only the members who could not attend the meetings, but also to politicians and the interested parties as well.

Those who addressed the meetings included academics, theologians, and politicians. Dr. Paul Schrotenboer, Prof. Martin Vrieze, Robert Thom-

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The Power and Hope of Art in Advocacy

By Rena Namago

In this digital age, where news of catastrophes and injustice around the globe can reach us within seconds, it is easy to feel overwhelmed to the point of apathy. As much as I enjoy research and writing, I sometimes find myself feeling like I will never know enough to effectively advocate for change. It can feel like there's too much to know and too much to do.

Nevertheless, as an artist, I believe there is more to facilitating a just and equitable future than convincing arguments and compelling statistics. Throughout history, art has been a powerful tool to facilitate social change—often one that is much more effective than words and numbers. Art provides an invitation to bring what energizes and inspires us into advocacy efforts. Art requires creativity and allows us to imagine what a different world might look like. Similarly, it meets us where we are and allows us to express the humanity and complexity of lived experience in ways that written information may not be able to accurately

relay. Art has the ability to disrupt assumptions and ask us questions about the cultural values and priorities that lie behind matters of injustice.

The process of making art also requires me to slow down and practice embodiment. When I create my oil paintings it requires patience and the use of my hands. An oil painting is done one layer at a time, serving as a way to counter the sense of urgency that can overwhelm me and leave me feeling apathetic. The process reminds me of the importance of pausing, clearing my mind, and giving myself grace. Change may not take place overnight, but bringing what you have to the table of advocacy and working steadily will bring about change, one step at a time. While justice work is critical and urgent, we also need the balance of rest and self-care to be effective and sustainable in our efforts.

Communal art projects also allow for creative collaboration through which people can feel connected to others and a part of something big-

ger. Collaborative art can create a deeper sense of participation and facilitate the vision of new possibilities.

In 2018, I completed an internship with Community Peacemaker Teams in Palestine. While meeting with grassroots organizers in Bethlehem, we walked along sections of the Apartheid Wall that stretches for hundreds of kilometres between the occupied West Bank and Israel. Along the wall are the creative expressions of the Palestinian people and other activists who use the wall as a canvas to display their art of lament, hope, and creative resistance. While the wall is a very real source of suffering and injustice, the art on the wall is a refusal to accept the injustice: it laments lives lost to the occupation, celebrates resisters, displays messages of nonviolent resistance, and dreams of freedom. While there are many different emotions and philosophies of justice captured, the art is all unified on the same wall, calling for justice and dreaming of a free Palestine.

Art can also invite us to consider an issue from a different perspective and ask hard questions of ourselves and about our complicity in injustice. I recently had the opportunity to engage with Farrah Miranda's *Speaking Fruit*, an interactive art installation exploring the lived experiences of migrant farm workers. Farrah worked with academics, community organizers, migrant workers, and other artists to amplify the voices of migrant labourers and raise awareness about the injustices they face. One component of the installation takes participants through a video of a dance by migrant workers, creatively portraying their daily labour. In the other part of the interactive experience,

participants are given a paper bag with a fruit or vegetable along with a piece of paper with a migrant worker's response to the question, "if the fruits you grow and pick could speak from dinner tables, refrigerators, and grocery aisles, what would you want them to say?"¹ The installation evokes questions about where the participants' food comes from and the exploitative conditions behind their produce. It brings a human face to an issue and connects the participant to migrant workers more effectively than merely hearing statistics

1 Farrah Miranda, *Speaking Fruit*, 2023, performance and interactive installation, <http://farrahmiranda.com/speaking-fr>.

likely would. The art tells a story and demonstrates consumers' relationship to the issue in a way that is difficult to forget.

Advocacy benefits from diverse and multifaceted approaches; it should not be completely draining or unsustainable. Use what you love and what inspires you as a tool for advocacy. What is it that energizes you, and that you can bring to the table and sustain your efforts for justice?

Rena Namago was recently the Public Justice Intern at CPJ. She has a bachelor's degree in social sciences and has particular interest in crisis, trauma, and refugee and migrant rights.



continuation from page 5

son, M.P., Rev. H. Van Anandel, Brian Kelsey, CJL's able lawyer, Dr. Bednard Zijlstra, Mario DiGangi and, of course, Gerry Vandezande and John Olthuis. Their presentations were intended to focus not on the immediate aims of educational and union causes, but to stimulate and broaden the Christian consciousness, to challenge members and readers with the need to bring the claims of the gospel to bear on all of life.

Although founded in Ontario, in the sixties the foundation also supported court cases in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and British Columbia. The Dutch Reformed community in Alberta had its own organization dating from the fifties, the Christian Action Foundation (CAF), and soon published its own monthly, *Vanguard* magazine. Because of their complementary aims, in 1971 CJL and CAF agreed to a merger, maintaining staff and offices in both Toronto and Edmonton.

The AGM in 1971 also approved a resolution directing the Board "to take whatever legal and other action necessary to restructure the C.J.L. Foundation so that it becomes a Christian civil-rights movement con-

cerned with the Government's task to promote justice and liberty for all in every area of life." By then, CJL was truly a national organization with more than 1000 members throughout Canada, extending its aims to promote justice far beyond schools and the workplace: assisting Indigenous groups with their search for justice, studying and trying to redirect Canada's energy policy, the need to support the increasing numbers of homeless people, the abortion issue, and Sunday shopping. These issues, among others, engaged the attention and resources of staff and CJL's board in the seventies. As one of their pamphlets said, "justice is not for just us, but for everyone." At the end of the seventies, CJL adopted a new banner, Citizens for Public Justice, and had become largely the CPJ as we know it today.

During CPJ's existence, Canadian society has changed, much of it for the better. CPJ is less conscious of its roots—however, the need to carry the banner for Public Justice in our nation continues. Those who attended CJL's AGM in 1968 were reminded that "we must practice—not just preach—God's justice". Nevertheless, in 1963, the year of our found-

ing, doctors in Saskatchewan went on strike against the introduction of Medicare.

Now, we struggle to keep it. In 1968, the Quebecer Pierre Vallières famously published a book to protest the failure to recognize French Canadians' language and economic rights. Now, we have protests to maintain some English language rights in Quebec. That same year, the London Hunt and Country Club was in the midst of a two-year debate about whether Jewish persons, even those with respectable sponsors, could join as members. A decade later, we welcomed 60,000 Vietnamese refugees. Now, we brag about how open and welcoming Canadian society is. Yet immigrants still find all too often that the practice is not consistent with the preaching. Canada still needs CPJ to remind us to let justice roll on like a river!

Walter Neutel retired after nearly thirty years of service in Canada's national archives. He has supported Christian education by serving on four boards, as well as his church and other agencies. He is currently finishing the organization and description of CPJ's paper archives.



Book Review: Valley of the Birdtail

By Ian Van Haren

How well do settlers understand the experiences of Indigenous people in present-day Canada? An excellent new book provides a comprehensive overview of the government's treatment of both populations and concludes with suggestions on how historical wrongs can be corrected through a fresh approach to public policy in Canada.

Valley of the Birdtail, a non-fiction book by Andrew Stobo Sniderman and Douglas Sanderson, provides an in-depth and multi-generational study of Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of the valley surrounding the Birdtail River in Manitoba. Two communities are on opposing sides of the river: Rosssburn, a small town with a significant Ukrainian population, and the Waywayseecappo Indian reserve, an

Anishinaabe community. Their histories, like Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities across this country, are markedly different due to government policies.

This disparity comes to life through a detailed account across generations of two specific families. The book opens in 2006, with Maureen Twovoice crossing the valley to go to school in Rosssburn, taking a bus from her home in Waywayseecappo. At the same time, readers meet Troy Luhowy, a teacher who lives in Rosssburn and works in Waywayseecappo. Then, across the pages of the smoothly narrated book, readers learn about Maureen and Troy's ancestors, as the experiences of previous generations inform present-day realities.

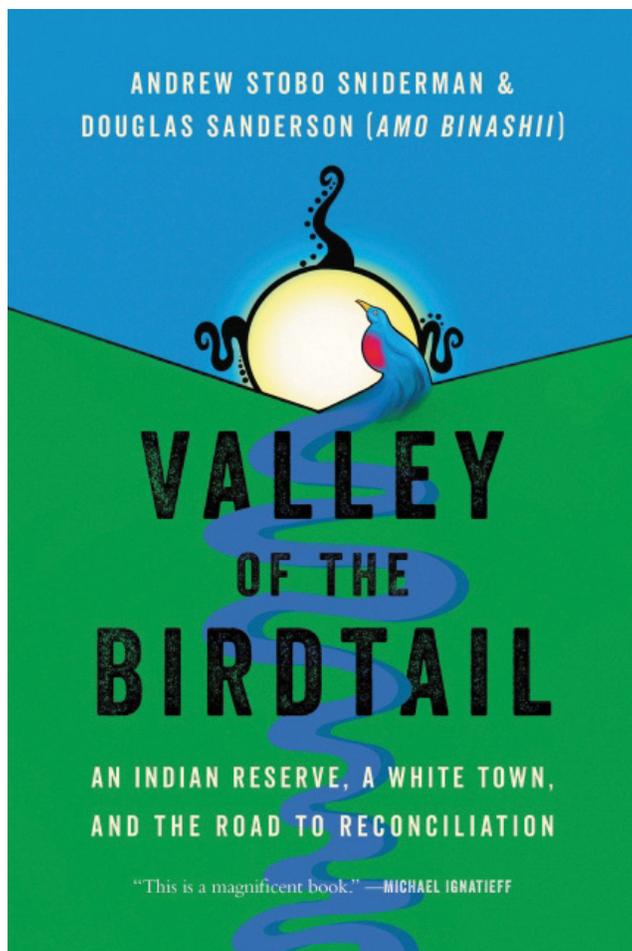
The strength of the book is in connecting the past to the present through personal and historical accounts. Troy's father, Nelson, has some mobility concerns from childhood polio but worked as a teacher. Coming from a Ukrainian immigrant family, he believed hard work led to success in a new country, and that others should be able to do the same. Nelson learns in semi-retirement that many prejudices he previously held were unfounded, as the challenges adults in Waywayseecappo faced were very different from his upbringing.

Maureen's mother, Linda, was sent to the Brandon Indian Residential School as a child, but after grade four studied at Rosss-

burn Elementary. Maureen's paternal grandfather, Michael, was a community leader and author who had advocated for integrated education, while others in his community wanted a separate school system.

These personal accounts reach back to the 1800s and are put into context. The book discusses Louis Riel's activism and Clifford Sifton's vision for settling the West with European farmers while policing Indigenous communities. Other prominent historical figures in Western Manitoba are described, with particular attention to the pass system, residential schools, and education policy. The authors do not shy away from complexity, revealing debates about how to best provide education to First Nations communities. At the same time, the harms done by underfunding education and residential schools are clear.

The concluding chapter of the book turns towards clear policy proposals to grant greater autonomy to Indigenous communities by increasing their taxation powers, particularly over resource revenues, and by expanding the jurisdiction of Indigenous governments. The policy proposals may seem bold if read on their own, but when they come after a careful account of the historical development of crown-Indigenous relations, they are compelling. Sniderman and Sanderson emphasize the need to better understand the experiences and histories of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. However, "listening more is one thing, but acting differently—as individuals, as a country—is another" (282). Actions that provide justice for Indigenous people require radical rethinking of taxation and jurisdiction in current-day Canada.



Ian Van Haren is the Executive Director of Action Réfugiés Montréal the Chair of CPJ's Board of Directors..



Hope-filled Energy

Sandra Chukwudozie is harnessing the sun to create 'affordable power for all.'

By Candice Goodchild

Forbes Africa named Sandra Chukwudozie a trailblazer in their 30 Under 30 Class of 2022. Chukwudozie is the founder and CEO of Salpha Energy. "This was a company born out of a desire to tackle injustice," wrote *Forbes Africa*. Salpha Energy addresses energy injustice by working towards a future where solar energy is accessible to everyone. The organization is based in Nigeria and "on an aggressive mission to bring clean and affordable solar energy through the design of innovative solar products across the African continent, while at the same time growing African talent." Salpha Energy's mission is rooted in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a call to action and guide for all countries. Each of the 17 goals focuses on sustainable growth, protection of the planet and the end of poverty. Goal 7 states that affordable and clean energy plays a part in and impacts all SDGs; the UN describes energy as "central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity."

Billions of individuals

Salpha Energy agrees, stating on their website, "Energy poverty is an

area of concern that ... affects billions of people globally. Those affected are forced to resort to alternative methods that have proven harmful to human life and the environment... Nearly 9 out of 10 people now have access to electricity, but reaching the unserved 789 million around the world - 548 million people in sub-Saharan Africa alone - that lack access will require increased efforts." Lack of electricity often results in a scarcity of clean water. Women and girls spend hours collecting drinking water. Energy poverty results in the inability to store vaccines, to do schoolwork in the evening hours and limits progress for countless businesses. Maaiké VanderMeer stated in a *Christian Courier* article called "Net Zero Ethics" that the continent of Africa and other regions of the Global South are significantly more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than the Global North, while contributing significantly less emissions - the continent of Africa contributes only two to three percent of global emissions.

Light up the world

Harnessing the energy of the sun and implementing business practices to serve the underserved and more vulnerable populations in her native Nigeria, Chukwudozie aims to provide sustainable, equitable energy; "I watched people in my country suffer inhumane treatment, because a flawed system, which should have protected their interests, was set up in a way that only benefited those at the top of management. This fueled a passion within me to want to change



the status quo and break the cycle of injustice," she told *Forbes*. Salpha Energy offers solar products ranging from various home fridge and freezer systems to energy kits which include lights, radios and charging stations for phones. Images on their website show these solar systems at work in small businesses: a barber shop, a chicken farm, a small grocery store. As we seek how to live out justice and creation care, let us look for ways to partner with organizations like Chukwudozie's. As Salpha Energy's mission states, "Together we can light up the world."

This article was recently published in *Christian Courier* (CC). Candice is a freelance writer who contributes to CC. She lives in Bracebridge, Ontario with her husband and three children.



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Broadview

SPIRITUALITY, JUSTICE AND ETHICAL LIVING



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Canada's Path to Climate Action Can and Must Deliver Economic Justice

By Maryo Wahba

Across the country, we are faced daily with the converging crises of global heating and widespread unaffordability. Sometimes, these crises are put at odds with one another: products that are 'green' are often more expensive, and environmental policy is unfairly blamed for the rising cost of living.

The reality is that some of Canada's best climate solutions offer promising co-benefits in making life more affordable. Of course, everyone will reap the benefits of climate justice, but it is particularly those who are most impacted by the climate crisis, poverty, and inequity that stand to gain the most from a just transition.

Ending fossil fuel subsidies and transitioning to renewable energy

This year, the Canadian government gave the fossil fuel industry approximately \$12.672 billion in subsidies. Canada provides subsidies like this each year at the expense of funding a just transition to a low-carbon economy. Resourcing the 'Futures Fund'—a program that aims to expedite the shift of workers in fossil fuel-dependent regions towards sustainable, innovative, and equitable industries—is just one way the government could offer significant relief to those most impacted by the climate and affordability crises.

A fair transition to a low-carbon economy also promises long-term

savings and energy reliability. Wind and solar have now emerged as some of the most cost-effective energy sources in Ontario and Alberta, and offshore wind holds potential to supply us with abundant renewable and reliable energy.

Implementing windfall taxes on oil and gas companies

The EU and the UK have implemented taxes on excess profits of oil and gas companies, which have generated significant public revenues. If Canada were to do the same by implementing a one-time tax, set at 15% of the average corporate income exceeding \$1 billion during 2020 and 2021, it could yield approximately \$4.2 billion for Canada over five years. These revenues could then be redirected to support key aspects of Canada's transition, such as income supports and job and skill training, as well as incentivizing low-income households to undertake deep energy retrofits via the Canada Greener Homes Grant.

Enhancing the efficacy of Canada's carbon pricing system

Canada's carbon pricing system is a vital instrument in combatting the climate crisis and providing financial relief to low-income households—but only if the full price of pollution comes about quickly. In 2023, the national carbon pollution price is \$65 per tonne of greenhouse

gas (GHG) emissions, and is set to incrementally increase to \$170 per tonne by 2030. Increasing the price of pollution sends a powerful market signal disincentivizing polluters, and it also often results in increased rebates for low-income households—but waiting until 2030 to hit the \$170 per tonne cost of GHGs will fail to nudge the market quickly enough to ease the financial burden of the climate crisis on lower-income Canadians.

A time to come together for climate and affordability

The most impactful climate solutions are those that also foster the democratization of affordable and reliable energy and food systems, and hold polluters accountable, particularly those profiting billions from trading fossil fuels while leaving others to deal with resulting environmental and social destruction. By intertwining the pursuit of climate justice with that of social justice, we bolster each movement's advocacy for sustainable, rights-based, and equitable public policies.

Head to cpj.ca/climatesolutions to read the full article and the sources.

Maryo Wahba is the Climate Justice Policy Analyst & Communications Coordinator at CPJ.



Hope For A Just Future

By Joash Thomas

When I worked at an International Justice Mission (IJM) field office in South Asia, I thought justice work was depressing. As our staff gathered to pray every day, the prayer requests felt way too heavy.

“Pray for this survivor we helped law enforcement in rescuing from a brick factory a few weeks ago. She just tried to commit suicide.”

“Pray that we find the survivors of labour trafficking who were transported to a hidden location after the traffickers were alerted that local police and our partners were on their way.”

And on and on they went.

But our staff prayers at IJM Canada feel a lot less depressing. I think this is because of the different vantage point we have as an advancement office that is slightly removed from the thick weeds of justice work in our programs offices.

When it comes to justice work, it's important to build in intentional moments throughout the day, week, quarter and year where we temporarily shift up our vantage points, lift up our eyes and come up for air. Perhaps you reading this is a “coming up for air” moment today. Great!

When hope seems bleak, we must remind ourselves that all justice work—the work of making all things new—is ultimately God's weight. That's right - God cares way more about this work than you and I ever will. He cares way more about people who are marginalized than we ever will. And he invites us into this holy work.

The Spirit is still at work today in making all things new – even our public justice systems. The life-changing work of CPJ over the past 60 years points to this reality!

Over the past 25 years, we at IJM have also gotten to see God restore



Photo courtesy of International Justice Mission Canada

justice systems that were once considered “too broken” by local authorities – justice systems that were set up centuries ago by colonial powers to protect colonial interests by excluding women and girls—especially women and girls in poverty.

Still, we've seen God do the impossible through our government & church partners. We've seen child sex trafficking reduce by 72% in Cebu, 75% in Manila, 78% in the Dominican Republic and 86% in Pampanga. In Guatemala, we've seen court convictions for perpetrators of gender based violence increase from 3% to 34% in just over a decade. These once “broken” justice systems now protect millions of women & girls from ever being exploited.

Even here in North America, we've seen increased awareness and repentance for centuries of systemic racial injustices against our Black & First Nations neighbours. This too is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Because this is the world that God is actively ushering in – a world where every broken public justice system is restored so all marginal-

ized peoples are protected from violence, poverty & climate change.

The words of God spoken through the Prophet Isaiah centuries ago still ring true today:

“Behold, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

- Isaiah 43:19

May we not miss out on beholding the “new thing” that God is doing in our public justice systems – especially through the work of CPJ.

Joash Thomas is the National Director, Mobilization & Advocacy at International Justice Mission Canada.

