

RECOMMENDATIONS

a) *M/S/ that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Canadian Foreign Policy Institute Open Letter

BECAUSE the VDLC has been invited to sign-on to an open letter calling for a review of Canadian foreign policy considering two unsuccessful UN Security Council bids; and

BECAUSE the open letter does not appear to conflict with previous policies established by the Council; and

BECAUSE the letter boast numerous high profile progressives and public figures such as Stephen Lewis, Naomi Klein, David Suzuki, Niki Ashton, Linda McQuaig, Alexandre Boulerice, Libby Davies, and many more (<https://www.foreignpolicy.ca/campaign>),

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL sign-on to the Canadian Foreign Policy Institute open letter, which reads as follows:

TIME TO FUNDAMENTALLY REASSESS CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

With Canada suffering two consecutive defeats in its effort to gain a UN Security Council seat, the time has come to fundamentally reassess Canadian foreign policy.

Ten years ago, the Conservative government's loss was largely explained as a rebuke of their support for Washington, mining and oil companies as well as anti-Palestinian policies. The Liberal government promised change, but the world is unconvinced.

Canada lost partly because of its support for controversial mining companies, indifference to International treaties, anti-Palestinian positions, climate policies and militarism. And in recent weeks, thousands of ordinary and prominent people were inspired to sign onto a grassroots effort that drew attention to the many flaws in Canada's foreign policy record.

The world's rejection of Canada's bid for a seat on the Security Council is a unique opportunity for a review of Canadian foreign policy.

These 10 questions must be considered as part of a foreign policy reset:

- Should we have a foreign policy driven by Washington or an independent foreign policy?
- Should Canada continue to offer financial and diplomatic support to arms exporters or refocus on demilitarization?
- Should Canadian foreign policy continue to be enmeshed with mining interests abroad?
- Why has Canada isolated itself from world opinion on Palestinian rights rather than standing for universal human rights?

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- How can we ensure Canada abides by all International treaties protecting Indigenous rights?
- How can we ensure Canada radically reduces its greenhouse gas emissions?
- Does Canada's sanctions policy respect International law?
- Why is Canada involved in efforts to overthrow Venezuela's UN recognized government, a clear violation of the principle of non-intervention in other country's internal affairs?
- Should Canada continue to be part of NATO or instead pursue non-military paths to peace in the world?
- How can we ensure Canada's foreign policy has a focus on peace, human rights and overcoming global inequities?

There has not been a formal review of Canadian foreign policy in fifteen years. Let's use this moment to usher in a new era in which our government's policies abroad reflect the desire of Canadians to be a force for peace and human rights in the world.

b) *M/S/ that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Vacancy Control in SRO units

BECAUSE on December 10, 2019, Vancouver City Council unanimously passed a motion to:

- 1) Ask the province for vacancy control in the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units, and
- 2) Investigate ways that the city can control rents, if the province fails to act, to slow the rapid loss of affordable housing in this stock and protect vulnerable Vancouver residents; and

BECAUSE SRO's are roughly 100 square foot rooms with no kitchen or private bathrooms, which are typically rented for \$300-\$500 per month to low income persons including welfare recipients; and

BECAUSE SRO's are often the last stop before homelessness, and therefore it is crucial that they are preserved until the homelessness crisis is ended; and

BECAUSE the city can legislate that rents in SRO's be tied to the unit, not the tenant, so that they remain affordable even when tenancy changes. This can be done by using the Business License bylaw to impose penalties on landlords who raise rents between tenancies; and

BECAUSE the City of New Westminster has implemented this form of vacancy control, and its right to do so was upheld by the BC Court of Appeal,

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THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call on the City of Vancouver to legislate rents tied to SRO units, not to tenants, and to enforce this with the use of fines, which can be collected via tax rolls if necessary, and expropriation in cases where a landlord refuses to adhere to the legislation or to pay applicable fines.

c) *M/S/ that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Save the PNE!

BECAUSE the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) and over 4,200 employees have been left out of Canada's economic recovery plan by being excluded from the Emergency Wage Subsidy; and

BECAUSE this has means 1,600 part-time workers without work, 100 full-time workers laid off, and the annual hire of 2,500 seasonal workers cancelled; and

BECAUSE the PNE contributes over \$200 million in economic benefit to the region each year and creates thousands of high-skilled jobs and youth employment; and

BECAUSE due to COVID-19, the PNE now forecasts \$16-19 million in debt by 2021 - threatening over 4,200 jobs; and

BECAUSE workers at the PNE are members of VDLC-affiliated unions including locals of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), and International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE),

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call on the Federal Government to expand the Emergency Wage Subsidy to include public and semi-public employers, placing particular emphasis on the case of the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE).