



FOCUS ON SOCIALISM

The Political Journal of Canadians for Peace and Socialism

SPECIAL BULLETIN 3

AN OPEN LETTER TO:

**STEPHANE DION, LEADER OF THE LIBERAL
PARTY OF CANADA**

**GILLES DUCEPPE, LEADER OF THE BLOC
QUEBECOIS**

**JACK LAYTON, LEADER OF THE NEW
DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

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Focus On Socialism

FOS is the political journal of Canadians For Peace and Socialism (CPS). In it we address current national and international issues. We strive to bring a Marxist-Leninist viewpoint to the struggle of Canadians for peace, progress and socialism.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE OPPOSITION LEADERS

BY: DON CURRIE, CHAIR CPS, FEBRUARY 13, 2007

An Open Letter to:

**Stephane Dion, Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada
Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Quebecois
Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic Party**

February 20, 2007

Dear Sirs:

A stubborn reality of current Canadian politics is the fact that a majority of Canadians voted for policies they wanted in the last two federal elections and wound up with policies they reject. The minority Harper Conservatives upon taking political power seized the moment and recklessly committed Canadian armed forces to a US-NATO escalation of the war in Afghanistan. Redeployment of forces from a policing role in Kabul to a full scale ground offensive in Kandahar was a brazen betrayal by Prime Minister Harper of the peace consensus among Canadians who in their majority supported parties that rejected the Bush Doctrine of pre-emptive war, the prime cause of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Defense Minister General Gordon O'Connor, Chief of Staff General Rick Hillier and NATO Chief of Staff General Henault are openly campaigning to undermine that consensus and to win public support for an expansion of the war in Afghanistan and a rapid militarization of the economy. General Hillier's brazen intrusion into public debates on military spending violates norms of federal governance that explicitly exclude the military from participating in formulating government policy.

Strengthening the military is the pretext that will be used by PM Harper and Finance Minister Jim Flaherty in the upcoming spring budget to direct surpluses away from domestic needs to a foreign war. Guns will trump health care, child care, educating the youth, increasing pensions for the aged, aboriginal needs and job creation. Nothing will be denied the military. Prime Minister Harper is actively promoting public acceptance of a long war. The longer the conflict, the greater the amounts that will be transferred from federal budget surpluses to the military brass, the arms manufacturers and the investor classes that profiteer from war. A prolonged war will endanger the economy, consume the surplus and lead the government back into deficit. Canadian taxpayers in effect will be forced to shoulder the costs of the war in Afghanistan so the Bush administration can spend more on the war in Iraq. It is well known that the U.S. Government is in a serious economic deficit due to military spending and that will be the fate of the Canadian Government if the war goes on.

The Harper Conservatives stand alone in collaborating with the discredited Bush two front war. A majority of the people of the U.S.A. are in open struggle with the Presidency to bring the troops home. The "coalition of the willing" is falling apart and most NATO governments confront mass public disapproval for supporting the Bush policy. The Harper Conservatives are moving closer to the Bush administration as the world moves away from his disastrous policies.

The Liberal Party of Canada, The New Democratic Party and the Bloc Quebecois in convention, policy documents and public statements have rejected the Bush Doctrine and espouse variants of opposition to the war in Afghanistan. Taken together, the opposition parties represent in Parliament the broad peace consensus in Canada and Quebec. Prime Minister Harper could not have won the last election nor achieved the rapid transition in Canadian foreign policy from peace to war, if the combined opposition parties were united in their resolve to prevent him from doing it.



In the lead up to the next federal election, only months away, this is not the time to mute or distance your parties from your own policies of opposition to the war. This is not the time to broker deals using a bloody war as a political chip. This is not the time to elevate party agendas above the broad consensus among Canadians for peace and to end the war in Afghanistan and to bring the troops home. This is a time for declarations of unity to defeat the war party in Canada, the Harper Conservatives.

There is a better way to confront the conditions that give rise to international violence. In one way or another you have all spoken of and advocated peaceful alternatives to war as a means to solve the problems confronting humanity. None of them accord with the imperious views of Prime Minister Harper.

We call upon you to meet and declare in Parliament and to the voters of Canada that whatever else may divide you in your vision of Canada and Quebec, you are united in your resolve to end the Harper Government's war in Afghanistan and to return Canada to a foreign policy of peace.

We call upon you, while on the hustings, where we are certain you will campaign hard on other issues, that when it comes to the war in Afghanistan you will refrain from attacking one another and direct all of your political fire at the war policy of the Harper Conservatives. Such an electoral strategy will have the affect of winning votes for the peace policies of your respective parties and reduce the support for the Harper Conservative war policy to its hard core extremist base and ensure their defeat.

Canadians for Peace and Socialism will circulate this letter as widely as possible as our contribution to the public pre-election discussion already underway on how to unite Canadian peace sentiment at the polls to defeat the war policy of the Harper Conservatives.

Respectfully
Don Currie, Chair
Canadians for Peace and Socialism



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