

Science for Peace

March 22, 2021

President's Column



Dear Members,

Science for Peace is busy during the third wave. The webcast of ***Join Forces To Overcome the Climate Crisis*** on Feb. 23rd had a record registration of 333 people. The panelists - Ian Haney Lopez, Susan Ruddick and Avi Lewis - gave stimulating presentations. leading to an avalanche of questions from attendees. The feedback from a questionnaire and individual emails was overwhelmingly positive. The interspersing of music, slam poetry and video with the talking heads added an emotional note and relevant information to the intellectual content. Our partners in the climate and peace movements - Toronto 35.org, Canadian VOW for Peace, World Beyond War, Climatefast, and Climate Pledge Collective, with support from Toronto Fridays for Future - provided useful advice and promotion through their own social media. Thanks to Gary Topp, lifelong entertainment promoter in Toronto, for all his intensive work on programming and to our interns, Sara Beiruti and Daniel Hoogsteen for their good work with student organizations.

If you missed the webcast, just press the link below to watch the recording.

Upcoming on April 29 is a joint webcast with World Beyond War on ***Militarism & Climate Change=Disaster in Progress***. Please follow the link provided below for full details and please register!

I have an important request: please pay your **membership fees** on our website (**Donate**) and, the next time you review your will, include a **bequest** for Science for Peace. Even as a volunteer organization, we have expenses, and we are running a deficit. Webcasts are relatively expensive with a tiny budget, as are running a thriving internship program and installing a more

engaging website. If it were not for the interest earned from the generous gifts of fondly remembered members, we would not be able to operate. *A little money goes a long way at Science for Peace.*

Richard Sandbrook
President, Science for Peace
Professor Emeritus of Political Science
University of Toronto

Upcoming



APRIL 29 2021 | 7:00PM ET

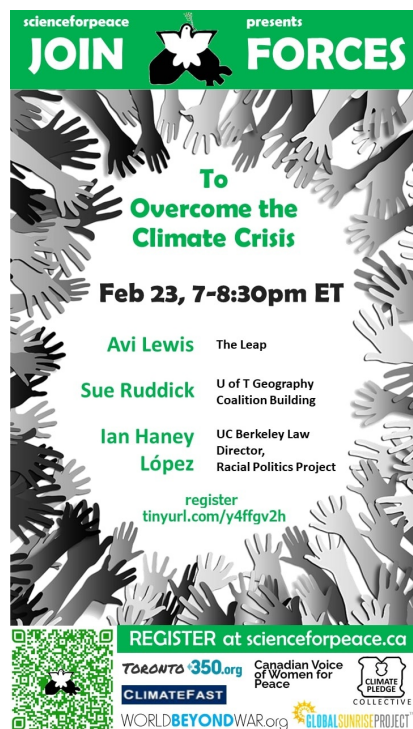
**MILITARISM &
CLIMATE CHANGE:
DISASTER IN PROGRESS**

tinyurl.com/DisasterInProgress

 **WORLD BEYOND WAR.org**
a global movement to end all wars

 **SCIENCE FOR PEACE**

Recent Activities



scienceforpeace presents

JOIN FORCES

To Overcome the Climate Crisis

Feb 23, 7-8:30pm ET





Avi Lewis The Leap



Sue Ruddick U of T Geography Coalition Building

Ian Haney López UC Berkeley Law Director, Racial Politics Project

register
tinyurl.com/y4ffgv2h

REGISTER at scienceforpeace.ca

Join Forces: To Overcome the Climate Crisis

To view the full recording of our



The Campaign for Canadian Accession to the UN's Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons

Science for Peace has been involved, with its partners, in this multifaceted campaign, of which the SfP webinar in October on the global dimensions of the nuclear-weapons campaign was a key element. For further information on this campaign, refer to Pierre Jasmin's blog post.

[Read more](#)

second climate symposium webinar,
please click the button below.

Webinar 2

Nuclear Weapon Notes:



On 16 March, the United Kingdom announced that it would increase its limit on its nuclear arsenal for the first time in decades. Instead of decreasing its nuclear stockpile to 180 warheads as was its plan, it will increase the stockpile cap to 260 warheads – more than a 40% increase.

This projected increase in UK nuclear warhead numbers is globally destabilising, is illegal because it violates Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Article VI disarmament obligations and reverses fifty years of progress on disarmament, however halting and hesitant it has been. It could well provoke increases in the already formidable Russian arsenal, in China's more modest nuclear stockpile, and could lead to adverse reactions in Iran and in the DPRK.

As shocking and disheartening as this development is, it only shows how completely out of touch governments are with the true needs of the people and how necessary it is to continue our work for a just and sustainable world. There has been a massive public outcry against the UK's announcement, and we must remember that most of the world nations are working for a world free of nuclear weapons. There continues to be a steady increase of states parties and signatories to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Yes, much work remains but we remain hopeful and resolute in our efforts.

In other news Dr. Sylvie Lemieux and Robin Collins have succeeded Earl Turcotte as Co-Chairs of the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. We thank Earl for his leadership and look forward to Science for Peace working with Sylvie and Robin in the coming years. It is encouraging so necessary to have the support and insight provided by this well-connected network.

Focus on Members: Paul Hamel



*Professor, Faculty of Medicine &
Director, Health Studies, University of Toronto
Former President of Science for Peace*

A Commentary- The Paradoxical Practices in Global Health

A new focus of Science for Peace is consideration of how the destruction of biosphere and climate crisis, predicted to arise due to fundamental alterations in the levels of green-house gases in the atmosphere, will give rise to violence and conflicts. These outcomes are predicated on the nexus of i)

militarism, ii) hyper-capitalism which is based upon untenable levels of consumption, resource extraction and extreme global inequalities and iii) the (il)logic of our current trajectory of growth and development on a planetary scale.

This nexus has been a central focus in a course on The Nature of Global Health I have organized for fourth-year students at University College. I believe that the essence of some of its deliberations fit in well with the ideas and good work of the members and my mentors at Science for Peace. I outline here one strand of a central dilemma that we face, in the context of global health, climate justice and a just and sustainable future. It is unlikely that anyone at Science for Peace needs to be reminded of the current trajectory of GHG emissions on this planet. Close reading of the data published by the IPCC and some recent commentaries in a number of academic journals reveal that a high probability exists that even the best case scenarios put the level of GHG far above those needed to prevent warming of even 2°C. Indeed, it is quite possible that humans will produce up to 4°C increase over the next 100 years.

A curious paradox arises when the limits to growth are juxtaposed to the current thinking in global health.

Embedded in the practice of global health is the idea that countries that are considered “developed” tend to have populations with more favourable health indices, such as longevity, under 5 mortality, maternal mortality, etc. Apart from the very significant differences in the burden of disease among distinct socio-economic classes within states, populations in these “developed” countries tend to suffer from non-communicable diseases rather than infectious diseases. Promotion, therefore, of increased economic activity (i.e. development) form the basis of much of the efforts and funding of the principal organisations that attempt to reduce the disproportionate burden of disease. These include the World Bank, the WHO, agencies of the United Nations and various other agencies. Thus, the work of these organisations is predicated on the notion that i) alleviating poverty will decrease the burden of disease and that ii) the means to alleviating poverty is promotion of “development”, particularly in the context of economic activity.

This scheme of development for the purpose of decreasing preventable morbidity and mortality leading to better health and well-being globally, is articulated through the United Nations “Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs). This program, while mentioning the idea of “sustainability” and environmental considerations, remains predicated on the notion of economic growth. This mechanism to decrease the burden of disease globally, generates an essential dilemma. Increased development is closely related to increased energy requirements to support increased economic activity. For example, a very close relationship exists between measures of economic activity, such as GDP, and energy consumption - countries with higher GDP use proportionally more energy.

However, the main source of energy continues to be fossil fuels. Furthermore, all trends show that the use of fossil fuels for energy is predicted to increase substantially certainly in the near future, even with the introduction of alternative/renewable sources. These latter sources of energy, while increasing, are dwarfed by sources based on fossil fuels. For example, the largest coal producer in India (soon to be the most populous state in the world) has produced their business model around a 200 to 300% increase in the use of coal in order to generate energy needed to promote “development” of this country. With few exceptions, this sort of trend can be applied across the majority world.

Furthermore, the rabid, unsustainable levels of consumption (products and energy) in the richest countries remain highly dependent on the use of fossil fuels, both due to fossil fuels used in the countries that produce these consumer goods as well as by fuelling the standard of living of the populations in rich countries. It should also be clear that, despite the stated intentions of rich countries and the fossil fuel industry, there remains little evidence for reductions in Green House Gas emissions. Even if one were to take the best case scenario in the ideas promoted by Bill Gates in his recent much-discussed book, the linear decrease in emissions he promotes still adds more CO₂ to the atmosphere than is compatible with a less than 2°C increase in global temperatures.

Herein lies the essential dilemma. In global health, its current approach is to stimulate increased economic development of less-privileged countries in order to decrease poverty and its resultant inequitable levels of morbidity and mortality. The consequence of this increased development is the increased use of energy which remains demonstrably dependent on fossil fuel use. This in no way is meant to suggest less-privileged countries should not pursue developmental goals as they see fit. However, global health work, as currently taught and practiced at, for example, the University of Toronto and other similar academic institutions, promotes development and growth as a means to reduce the global burden of disease but simultaneously this development contributes to, indeed, promotes climate change/catastrophe. In turn, the global populations least able to mitigate the harsh consequences of

climate change are precisely the same marginalized (majority) populations that are the focus of the development work of people engaged in the practice of global health.

One of the current consequences of this the radical human-induced alteration of the climate (indeed, the entire biosphere), which also informs the work of our fine colleagues in Science for Peace, is the mass migrations of populations predicted to increase to levels never before experienced. As is well documented, these sorts of migrations have already generated the conditions for major conflicts across the globe. Likewise, they produce the conditions to justify massive increases in military spending to “defend” state borders for these increasing numbers of climate-induced migrants.

It is apparent, then, that our work to promote a just and sustainable future becomes more difficult over time and is fraught with contradictions. The two Swords of Democles – nuclear annihilation and climate catastrophe – are certainly enough to engage our efforts for the foreseeable future. However, I suggest that the causes of the issues against which we toil have remained constant. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Articulated in 1967:

“I am convinced that this new life will not emerge until our nation undergoes a radical revolution of values. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people the giant triplets of racism, economic exploitation and militarism are incapable of being conquered.”

Recent Articles



Pierre Jasmin, Phyllis Creighton, Tamara Lorincz: Nine Canada Breaches Of U.N. Peace Policies

Financing Big Pharmas, instead of favouring a just and free distribution of vaccines worldwide through the ACT Accelerator, launched by the World Health Organization and supported by partners such as the Agora of the Earth's Inhabitants..

[Read more](#)



Pierre Jasmin: Trudeau's Canada Censors the United Nations

On the eve of the crucial and historic Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty (TIAN) coming into force at the United Nations, an independent senator, a former Conservative senator and four parliamentarians from the four other parties represented in the Commons..

[Read more](#)



Michel Duguay: Destined for War, Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?: A Review

This 2017 book by Harvard Professor Graham Allison has launched a debate on the topic its title announces. Professor Allison is a renowned political scientist and author, who has contributed to the U.S. government..

[Read more](#)

Science for Peace
355 University College
15 King's College Circle
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5S 3H7
sfp@physics.utoronto.ca



This email was sent to {{ contact.EMAIL }}
You received this email because you are registered with Science for Peace

[Unsubscribe here](#)



