

## PEACE TRAIN CANADA (PTC) PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Nov 12)

[www.peacetraincanada.com](http://www.peacetraincanada.com)

### PTC GOAL:

*To Get Peace Back on Track in Canada.*

The Peace Train project is not a protest but an effort to lift up all those who will rise to the current global challenges of resisting polarization, rampant self-interest, and an industrial war machine that is out of control.

In the face of ever-increasing violent wars, nuclear threat, climate disruption, and humanitarian crisis, the Peace Train, "sounding louder," raises the voice of Canadians across the country committed to the basics of enduring stability, security, and human rights both here and abroad.

We have an honorable history of peace efforts in Canada, going back to 1957 and Lester Pearson's Nobel Prize for helping create the first UN Peacekeeping force. In 1992, Canada contributed 3,825 personnel to UN peace operations. Today, only 17 military personnel are deployed out of 62,000 uniformed peacekeepers. The federal government progressively withdrew support for the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre until its final closure in 2013.

### PTC VISION:

*That Canada becomes an independent, middle power that is invested in and committed to promoting a culture of peace and resisting the culture of war*

### THROUGH:

- Recognizing Canada's historical and present involvement in injustice, colonialism, and asymmetrical power structures, here and abroad, and working towards true reconciliation;
- Identifying the underlying causes of violent conflict;
- Upholding the UN Declaration of Human Rights: the basics of justice, equality, freedom, security, and well-being for all, as essential for preventing violent conflict and war;
- Expanding Canada's role in United Nations peacekeeping, the development of international law, and the International Court of Justice: creating the conditions for preventing war, de-escalating violence, resolving conflict, and postwar reconciliation and rebuilding; and
- Prioritizing open and informed public and parliamentary debate on complex issues of peace, disarmament, and the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

### PTC ASK OF GOVERNMENT:

*That the Canadian government establish and fund a Centre of Excellence for Peace and Justice* focused on research, education, and training in conflict resolution, diplomacy, and peace operations for Canadian civilians, police, military personnel, and the international community. This request will come before Parliament as a petition.

The PTC Parliamentary e-Petition closed on November 8 with 1012 signatures. It has been officially approved for presentation to the House of Commons.

**We continue to collect signatures for the PTC Parliamentary Paper Petition (no date limit). The petition form can be found at [www.peacetraincanada.com](http://www.peacetraincanada.com) with instructions on how to complete it and send it in.**

### **SYMBOLISM:**

The Peace Train and the forty Peace Trainers climbing on board are taking a symbolic journey on an iconic train. Although the train is part of our colonial past but it is also a single track that unites this great land. The Peace Trainers represent thousands of others who, although they cannot ride on the train, support it in spirit and in many diverse ways.

The PTC logo is a white train billowing white steam. The spirit train is on a brilliant UN blue background, linking it to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Canada's responsibility within the UN to protect those basic rights and freedoms.

The many cars that comprise PTC are seen to represent the many exemplary organizations who have worked tirelessly promoting and protecting the basic elements of peace and justice. Many cars, one train, riding in solidarity.

Yusuf Cat Steven's song "Peace Train", especially as produced by Playing for Change, captures what fires the peace train: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QpjR6-Uuks>

### **PRAGMATISM:**

Peace Train Canada has a two-pronged approach to its goals:

1. The first is to generate and focus public support through the magnetic nature of the Peace Train journey, the big kick-off event in Vancouver on November 14, the vigils at train stations across the country (including Toronto and Ottawa), the petition to government, the PTC panel discussion on Nov 22 and the PTC Parliament Hill Rally on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.
2. The second prong is meeting personally with MPs to set forth our case. There will also be a multi-party MP reception on Nov 20<sup>th</sup> including speaker, Walter Dorn. This effort will help prepare the ground for our government's response to the PTC paper and e-petition presentations to the House of Commons in Parliament.

### **PTC NATIONAL ADVISORY TEAM:**

The following team of experts have provided invaluable expertise, advice, and inspiration that has helped guide and grow the PTC Project

- Ernie Regehr (one of Canada's most prominent and respected voices on international disarmament and peace and Co-Founder and former Executive Director of Project Ploughshares Project Ploughshares),
- Walter Dorn (pre-eminent peace expert, professor of defence studies at the Royal Military College and the Canadian Forces College),
- Steve Staples (policy analyst, PeaceQuest founder)

- Michael Cooke (peace and justice activist, Project Ploughshares founder).
- Alex Neve (lawyer/professor specializing in International Human Rights, served as Secretary General of Amnesty International CA for 20 years, Order of Canada recipient)
- Peter Langille (specialized in peace and conflict studies, UN peace operations, conflict resolution and mediation, and independent analysis of defence and security policy.)

Walter Dorn will speak at the multi-party MP Reception on November 20<sup>th</sup>. He and Alex Neve are willing to attend PTC meetings with individual MPs on November 21<sup>st</sup>. The two of them will be part of the November 22<sup>nd</sup> evening panel discussion, “Peace and Justice for the War Weary.

**PTC HAS ALSO RECEIVED GENEROUS HELP AND ADVICE FROM:**

- Raja Khouri and Jeffery Wilkinson (authors of *The Wall Between*),
- John McKay (Chair of the Standing Committee on National Defense),
- Ellen Woodsworth (International League For Peace and Freedom WILPF),
- Reverend Jeff Rock, Reverend Cathy Merchant (Cn Memorial UC Center for Peace)
- Brigadier General (retired) Gregory Mitchell (Cn Peacekeeping Association volunteer)
- Anna Vogt and Samantha Coehlo (MCC, Peace and Justice Office),
- Seth Klein (Climate Emergency Unit, founding director in BC for Cn Center for Policy Alternatives),
- Reverend Margaret Marquardt (Chair, Anglican Diocese Justice and Peace Unit)
- Cesar Jaramillo (executive director of Project Ploughshares. His focus areas include nuclear disarmament, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, emerging military technologies and conventional weapons controls.)

**PTC EVENT SCHEDULE:**

Nov 14	Thurs	PTC SEND-OFF at Canadian Memorial Peace Centre, Vancouver (6-9pm)
Nov 15	Fri	LAUNCH THE TRAIN VIGIL at Via Rail Train Station, Vancouver (2-3pm)
Nov 15-19		TRAIN STOP VIGILS (Kamloops, Jasper, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Melville, Rivers, Winnipeg, Sioux Lookout, Hornepayne)
Nov 19	Tues	WELCOME VIGIL at Toronto Train Station. Trainers billeted overnight.
Nov 20	Wed	Peace Trainers catch morning Corridor Train #52 to Ottawa. WELCOME VIGIL at Ottawa Train Station. Trainers billeted until departure. MULTI- PARTY MP RECEPTION by invitation only (6-7:30 pm)
Nov 21	Thurs	All day MEETINGS with MPs and officials Option to attend QUESTION PERIOD in the House (around 2pm). Peace Trainers BANNER MAKING/PIZZA NIGHT at Quaker Hall (3-8 pm)
Nov 22	Fri	Corridor residents (from Windsor, London, Toronto, Kingston, Montreal, Quebec City) train into Ottawa to attend PTC events on Nov 22 and 23.
Nov 22	Fri	Peace Trainers free to gather at Quaker Hall (9am-12 pm) PTC PARLIAMENT HILL PRESENCE (9am-4pm) PANEL DISCUSSION at Parkdale United Church (7-9 pm – set-up at 6pm)
Nov 23	Sat	PTC PARLIAMENT HILL RALLY (noon to 4 pm - set-up starts at 9 am)