



the Tide

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NS Trade Mission to Gaza Launched

BUSINESS COMMUNITY SENDS LOCAL GOODS ABOARD THE CANADIAN BOAT TO GAZA



Miles Howe, founder of Peaceful Waters Trading Company, announces his trade mission to Gaza at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax.

| Photo by Moira Peters

By HILLARY LINDSAY AND MOIRA PETERS

Miles Howe is not your usual businessman, and he is about to embark on a very unusual trade mission.

Howe, founder of Peaceful Waters Trading Company, spoke outside the World Trade and Convention Centre (WTCC) in downtown Halifax on June 15 after attending the Doing Business in Israel Workshop. The workshop was put on by Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) and is in preparation for a Government of Nova Scotia trade mission to Israel that is slated to take place in October of this year.

“The trade mission claims to represent Nova Scotia. Jonathan Levy [Israel’s Consul for Economic Affairs & Trade Commissioner to Canada and a speaker at the workshop] is interested in our offshore drilling technology, and in providing Halifax Harbour with state-of-the-art surveillance and security technology,” said Howe. “I do not believe this represents the Nova Scotia that has endeared itself to me.”

Howe is disappointed by not only the goods being traded, but also the relationship Nova Scotia is attempting to forge—namely, a relationship with Israel.

Critics of Israel accuse its government of adopting policies that defy international humanitarian law, effectively creating an apartheid state that legislates the repression of Arab Palestinians and severely restricts the movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza and the West Bank.

To express his protest, Howe registered Peaceful Waters Trading Company and, as a local small-businessperson, attended NSBI’s workshop.

But Howe isn’t interested in trade with Israel; he’s interested in trade with Gaza.

At the end of June, Howe and more than 30 other Canadians will sail to Gaza aboard the Tahrir, a Canadian boat that aims to break Israel’s blockade on Gaza that is restricting materials coming into and going out of the region. The Tahrir will carry between \$30,000 and \$50,000 worth of medical supplies that participants hope to deliver to Palestinian doctors.

Howe says the intent of the journey goes beyond delivering aid, however, to embracing trade with Gaza so people there can provide for themselves rather than be at the mercy of international aid.

Howe has invited small businesses in Nova Scotia to be part of this initiative by donating goods that represent their desire to trade with the Palestinian people.

“The response was astounding,” said Howe. “I found myself turning away crates of food and trade goods,” as he only has space for sample gifts of solidarity, “literally, what will fit in the bottom of my backpack.”

Jim Guild of the Canadians, Arabs and Jews for a Just Peace, also spoke outside the WTCC that afternoon. He said Howe’s largely symbolic trade mission with Gaza represents “real trade, and a far more authentic gesture” of goodwill from the Nova Scotian business community than the Nova Scotia-Israel trade workshop, which he sees as simply an attempt to “whitewash” Israel’s policies, focusing Nova Scotians “away from Palestine and justice and toward Israel as a wonderful place...to do business.”

Howe will fill his backpack with salt cod, heirloom



Howe will bring quality, local goods from Nova Scotia as symbols of trade with small businesses in Gaza. | Photo by Hillary Lindsay

seeds, handmade soaps, local honey, preserves, pottery, information and letters of support, which he hopes will represent “a message of support from Nova Scotia businesses, and as a token of their desire to do trade in the future.”

The Tahrir is part of the Freedom Flotilla II, an international flotilla of 10 boats that plan to deliver more than 1,000 solidarity activists and thousands of dollars worth of aid and medical supplies to Gaza. Last year, a similar flotilla was attacked by Israeli commandos who boarded the Mavi Marmara in international waters, killed nine passengers, injured over 50 and imprisoned all aboard.

Howe is hopeful that the tide is turning and this year’s Freedom Flotilla will be successful.

Follow Miles Howe’s blog from Gaza at: halifax.mediacoop.ca/boat_to_gaza

Letter to L’nu* — Our Generations

Condensed Excerpts from a letter written for the Halifax Media Co-op by TROY J. GOULD (THUNDERBIRD HEART), a L’nu from We’koqmaq, Cape Breton. Troy turned down a professional fighting career in boxing for a simpler way of life, providing to his family through fishing, hunting, gardening and harvesting wild foods.

We face a major dilemma... If we allow the multinationals and companies Kwilmu’kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMK, or Mi’kmaq rights initiative) is entertaining, such as PetroWorth, to drill Lake Ainslie, the end result would be genocide to L’Nu. Human beings, insects, mammals, reptiles, birds, fish, the entire biodiversity, will be affected and killed off. [...]

Groundwaters, aquifers and deep fault lines will be destroyed, and the chemicals used will reach our underground drinking sources and the Bras D’Or lakes, and contaminate them on a noticeable scale. [...]

Will this be the time some of you will rebel? By then, it will be too late... Farming will be wiped out, gardening will be greatly threatened, the rains and weather will be altered...Is this what you will wait for? ...Have we L’nu



Kaktogowaas, Troy’s son, with his trout catch from Skye River, We’koqmaq, Nova Scotia.

| Photo by Eva Nicholas

become pillagers of nature? Are we willing to sacrifice our children’s lives and futures for monetary wealth? [...]

The capitalist economy is a “guy” thing... The fundamental functioning of L’nu people was by women. Women would farm the lands, because they are fertile...Our matriarch and clan mothers have been

removed and replaced with a guy-thing type of economy. It’s time we re-empower our women: their fertility will restore our people and balance nature and our tribe, and we will unite and be cared back to healthy people, nations, and communities...Until this happens, our treaties and our rights will continue to lose value and be further away from our Nation’s sovereignty. We will be enslaved as a people.

To take away people’s rights of sustainability, resources, food sources, water, lands to hunt, gather, farm, fish, treaties, and identities with threats of a multinational coming here to develop and destroy our watershed is an act of terrorism...Keeping a healthy environment builds a strong, healthy people, community, tribe and Nation... [T]he survival of our people and children deeply depend on what decisions we will make today and what sacrifices we are willing to take. [...]

We have to protect our ancient sites and waterways and re-emerge with ancient methods of caring for our earth and tribes, which were [traditionally] the grandmothers’ roles.

*L’nu = Mi’kmaq word for “the people”

Who Supports The Postal Workers?



Community members in Halifax seem to understand that the postal workers struggle is their struggle too. Community solidarity with CUPW has been strong in this city, and supporters say they will continue their fight for job security and labour rights alongside postal workers.

A poster and pamphlet campaign was organized by local supporters to spread the word even before the lockout happened. On June 16th, the community-led rally outside the Almon Street Canada Post Office was full of volunteers walking the picket line, barbecuing, and making hot coffee for the rainy days.

The day after, a solidarity dance party was planned, again by supporters. Speeches were made by supporting labour unions such as the CAW, and other labour activists. Saturday it was the labour council who organized the rally, and they also helped escort postal workers into the plant yesterday after they were legislated back to work.

—MELISSA ALBIANI

Descartes Without Debt

**HALIFAX HUMANITIES
TEACHES GREAT WORKS
FREE OF CHARGE**

By LAMONT DOBBIN

The Halifax Humanities 101 program graduated its 6th class at King's College Chapel on June 4, re-awakening the debate regarding the value of a humanities course for low-income people.

Over 8 months, students of Halifax Humanities attend classes for two hours twice a week, and read the likes of Plato, Shakespeare, Descartes, and Alice Munro in between lectures. The program is free, and books and reading materials are provided for students to keep. All classes are taught by university professors who volunteer their time.

Raising funds for a course that does not bill itself as 'employment training' for people with low or no incomes is not always easy, says Mary Lu Redden, the Director of Halifax Humanities. But according to the program's participants, the opportunity to study classic works of literature, philosophy and art has a value that's impossible to quantify.

"It opens up your mind and your heart, says Bonnie Shepherd who was one of the program's first students six years ago. "You have more compassion and empathy when you realize what humans throughout the ages have gone through."

"When the curriculum was first devised, I wondered if it might be better to be more practical and better suited

to the students' experience," says Dr. Henry Roper, a volunteer professor from King's University, who has been with the program from the beginning. But that didn't seem to be what the participants themselves were looking for, explains Roper, who says the curriculum gets shaped by the needs and wants of the participants each year.

"The opportunity to learn from so many excellent and learned minds has been a remarkable, precious experience," says Jan G. one of this year's graduates who asked that her full name not be used. "Learning about the journey of humanity through the ages brings a better sense of understanding the world we live in. This experience has given me more confidence in my approach to life."

The course is also an invitation to participate in the broader community – an invitation that is desperately needed and rarely extended, adds Dr. Sarah Clift, one of the professors for Halifax Humanities. "The barrier is real and it has social, spiritual, and financial implications."

Lauri Noye, one of this year's graduates, who brightened up the class by bringing her seizure-alert-dog, Molly, to every session, felt that isolation and found that Halifax Humanities helped her out of it.

"I had become housebound a while ago and this [course] helped me to get out, says Lauri. "I learned a lot about myself and the community and I made new friends. My relationship to the community at large has changed. I found out about things going on that I can participate in and I'm more involved."



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DISPATCHES FROM THE TAHRIR

Follow the updates of Halifax Media Co-op journalist Miles Howe as he sails with the Canadian Boat to Gaza