

**TO:** Law Amendments Committee

**From:** Tamara Lorincz, 55 Willowbend Court, Halifax, NS B3M 3L3

**Date:** May 3, 2010

**Re:** Bill No. 23 "An Act to Establish a Day to Recognize the Royal Canadian Sea, Army and Air Cadets and the Navy League Cadets in Nova Scotia"

**Bio:** I am a mother with two young boys. I am very active in the community on environmental, sustainability, social justice and peace initiatives. Professionally, I am the Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Environmental Network. I am currently on the Nova Scotia Minister's Round Table for the Environment and Sustainable Prosperity and the Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia for Everyone Working Group. In my personal capacity, I sit on the Parent-Teacher Association of Burton-Ettinger School, the Advisory Committee of the Nova Scotia Council for Early Child Development, the Halifax Peace Coalition, and the Nova Scotia Voice of Women for Peace and I am involved in the Clayton Park-Fairview Community Action Network.

**Background:** I am very opposed to Bill. No. 23 "An Act to Establish a Day to Recognize the Royal Canadian Sea, Army and Air Cadets and the Navy League Cadets in Nova Scotia". I missed appearing in person before Law Amendments on this bill last week and I would like to ask that the committee not recommend that the bill go to Third Reading and if the committee will not reject this bill then I would like to propose amendments to the wording.

**My concerns:**

- The bill and the debate in the House did not accurately reflect to the public that the cadet program is funded and directed by the Department of National Defence with an explicit objective to interest young people to join the Canadian Armed Forces
- The bill and the debate in the House did not accurately convey to the public that the cadet program is a recruiting strategy for the military and that this is explicit in the Department of National Defence's Plans and Priorities for 2010-2011
- The bill and the debate in the House did not disclose to the public that children would be given weapons training, marksmanship training, and be on warships etc... in the cadet program
- The bill and the debate in the House did not disclose to the public that children in the cadet program would be given camps, training opportunities, and exchanges with the US military
- The cadet program is NOT in the best interest of children
- This province doesn't even have a "Children's Day" (universally recognized on November 20) and all children in Nova Scotia should be a top priority to designate a day for them
- The government could have established a "4-H Day" to encourage young people to become farmers and gardeners - we need young people to create local, organic food systems not to learn how to use weapons.
- There are better youth programs: the Adventure Earth Centre, Peaceful Schools International, the Young Naturalists Club, Nova Scotia Sea School, and the Nova Scotia Youth Conservation Corps, where our young people can learn respect for each other and for the earth.
- I am opposed to any cadet or military programming or recruiting in our public schools
- Children in the cadet programs are between 12-18 years old and they are vulnerable and are not able to fully discern what involvement in the military entails
- Parents are not given full information about the cadet program including the risks associated with weapons use
- Using weapons and preparing for/training for war undermines the non-violent, anti-bullying programming and peace education done in our public schools and in the public education curriculum

- Using weapons and preparing for/training for war undermines parents' guidance of their children to not fight and use weapons to solve problems
- A militarized economy and society are not sustainable and are not in the best interests of our children and this province.

**My proposed amendments:**

- The bill is amended to convey to the public the full intentions behind the cadet program including recruitment to the Canadian Armed Forces
- The bill is amended to signal to the public that the cadet program involves children using weapons i.e. rifles
- Please remove this Whereas "AND WHEREAS the Royal Canadian Sea, Army and Air Cadets and the Navy League Cadets are a positive influence in today's society;" – there is no evidence of this
- Please remove the word "valuable" in this clause "learn valuable life and work skills, such as teamwork, leadership, good citizenship and physical fitness, that will benefit them no matter what path they choose to follow;" because weapons training is not a valuable skill
- If not, please revise the wording to include these other skills training as part of the cadet program, in fact the signature programs, "healthy respect of firearms", "marksmanship", and "shooting"
- Please include a reference to the cadet program being funded and directed by the Department of National Defence

**REFERENCES** Please look at the documents and pictures to see what the cadet programs are about and please refer to the attached documents.

*DND's Cadet Canada*

<http://www.cadets.ca/home-accueil.aspx?LangType=4105>

*DND's Cadet Canada – Parents Guide* (woefully incomplete and does not honestly tell parents about their children's exposure to weapons and recruitment for the military)

<http://www.cadets.ca/content-contenu.aspx?id=49315>

*Cadet League of Canada-Nova Scotia Provincial Committee*

<http://www.aircadetleague.ns.ca/documents.htm>

*Army Cadet League of Nova Scotia*

<http://www.armycadetleaguens.ca/>

*Sea Cadet-Atlantic Region*

<http://www.cadets.ca/regions/atl/content-contenu.aspx?id=52035>

*Federal Government Public Spending - Department of National Defence 2009*

<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/pdf/50-eng.pdf>

(p. 18-10 on Cadet program)

*Department of National Defence Plans and Priorities 2010-2011*

<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/2009-2010/inst/dnd/dnd-eng.pdf>

(DND Target to increase youth in Cadet program p. 24)

*Stepping Up Our Game: Cadet Population Growth Initiative (Youth Programs Development Article)*

DND's Cadet Canada - March 3rd, 2010

<http://www.cadets.ca/content-contenu.aspx?id=100145>

\*\*Please read these background documents on DND/military's strategy to increase the cadet program here: <http://www.cadets.ca/content-contenu.aspx?id=100145>

- Cadet Population Growth Initiative (CPGI) Letter, 28 Jan 2010 (PDF version, 978KB)
- Strategic Initiative Directive (SID): Cadet Population Growth Initiative, 17 Feb 2010 (PDF version, 336KB)

I believe the real motivation for the NDP bill is to assist the Department of National Defence with its youth military recruitment through the cadet program.

Nova Scotians should get a full, frank and honest assessment of the Cadet program so that they can choose whether this program is appropriate for their children, so the Act must at the very least be amended if not cancelled entirely.

Finally, I do not believe that this is not a bill with children's best interests in mind and the cadet program is also NOT a program with children's best interests in mind. It the work of the Department of National Defence.

Thank you for your serious consideration of my concerns and for stopping and/or revising Bill No. 23.

Sincerely,

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