

# Why I Am a Council of Canadians Supporter

by Maurice Colbourne

The Council of Canadians takes action in communities across Canada for clean water, public health care, fair trade and climate justice.



I don't recall how I first heard of the Council of Canadians, but I do remember how refreshing it was to know that there was a group of people out there with whom I shared values. For most of my adult life – I am 63 years old now – I feel I have been at odds with mainstream society, including friends, family and co-workers, in terms of my views on the need to be politically aware in order to maintain truly representative democracy.

For the most part other people seemed indifferent to political issues, and to our part in the deteriorating natural environment and the negative impact of capitalism – free enterprise – on the natural world. Throughout the 20th century things seemed to be deteriorating at an accelerated rate, and I felt this indifference was a main reason.

Under the current Canadian Conservative government (and most capitalistic, democratic governments worldwide) the natural environment is rapidly being destroyed due to an over-focus on the economic bottom line. I believed this was, at least in part, in order to maintain political power, with little regard for the broader ripple effect nationally and worldwide. This became more and more frustrating as I began to realize that I no longer had a voice in Canadian Parliament.

I always try to remain politically aware and base my voting choices on an informed opinion. Under the current government, I came to realize that fairness, truth, and freedom of choice were rapidly disappearing. Even representatives in Opposition, who were supposed to provide the sober second thought, became impotent because of the closed nature of the current majority government. This impotence affected Conservative representatives in Ottawa who were no longer free to represent us, but instead were toeing the party line, more than I have ever seen in Canada.

Through the Council of Canadians, an organization that, in my view, “walks the talk,” I felt I had an opportunity to reverse this trend, and an opportunity to spend the remainder of my active years improving the prospects for coming generations.

The Council of Canadians seems more needed today than ever as a forum for critical analysis about the momentum of the current political, economic, environment and social trends.

I am buoyed by our part in the reversal and blockage of efforts to turn pristine waters into tailings ponds, by our part in helping municipal and provincial governments think twice about allowing fracking, by our support for the rights of Indigenous peoples of this continent

and worldwide, and by our role in informing Canadians and Americans of the real risks of pipelines criss-crossing the continent, with far more to lose than to gain.

The Council of Canadians, with a mix of young and “seasoned” supporters, has a great opportunity to let our youth know the benefits of working together with elders to re-establish a higher Canadian and worldwide standard. I am encouraged that the Council is actively encouraging the youth vote. Hopefully, that is a sign that the Council is attracting the next generation, and the Council's future will be in good hands.

I am heartened that the Council offers optimism beyond the acceptance of the perceived negative inevitable. Without the belief that we, individual citizens, can make a positive difference, lethargy will grow as more and more people adopt the attitude that one person's effort is insignificant.

The Council is a collective voice, with proven clout. That is why I joined, and that is why I hope others will do the same.

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*Become a part of the Council of Canadians collective voice by joining today. Make a donation by calling toll-free 1-800-387-7177, or by emailing [inquiries@canadians.org](mailto:inquiries@canadians.org).*