

# Renewed Hope for a Better Canada Through Monthly Giving

by Dana Chapeskie

The Council of Canadians' work often depends on being able to react quickly and effectively to issues. Protecting lakes, rivers and drinking water, building opposition to harmful corporate trade deals, supporting communities fighting Big Oil pipelines and fracking, and saving health care from devastating cuts – none of it would be possible without the generous donations of our supporters.

The monthly giving program plays an integral part in providing the needed stability for the Council to respond to urgent events, plan for the day-to-day needs of our core campaigns, and fight for strong policies in support of water, environment, climate, fair trade and public health care.

Recently, we had an opportunity to speak with Herb John, a long-time union organizer and dedicated Council of Canadians supporter about his decision to give through the Council's monthly giving program.

## **Please tell us a bit about yourself.**

I was born in Windsor, Ontario. I worked at Ford Motor Company for 30 years and retired at 49 years of age. I was an elected union representative for the last 20 years I worked. After I retired, I spent a year and a half building a house on Walpole Island, which is a First Nations community where my wife was born. I started getting involved with social justice issues at the age of 14 with the California grape growers protest of the farmers' poor pay and working conditions. Following retirement, I was elected to the CAW National

Retiree Executive and then elected President of the National Pensioners Federation. I also sit on the local board for the hospital.

## **What issues are closest to your heart?**

I am very concerned about the trade deals and Canada losing our sovereignty. Also, the environmental damage that we have done in the last 50 years is incomprehensible. I am also concerned about the disproportionate distribution of wealth in Canada and globally and the lack of political will to infringe on profit to try to preserve the planet.

## **What first encouraged you to join the Council of Canadians?**

The first issue was NAFTA. I remember in the eighties when Maude Barlow and CAW President Bob White were touring the country talking about the danger of NAFTA. I think back to that time quite often because a lot of what they warned Canadians about has happened.

## **What hopes do you have for the Trudeau government and Canada's future?**

I would like to see the [Trudeau government] stand firm on their commitments to the environment, the political culture through changes in the voting system, health care and addressing the trade agreements.

The biggest change I would like to see is for the government to take major steps in the growing inequality of prosperity in Canada. That is at the root of all our other issues. If that problem was



Herb John is a monthly donor to the Council of Canadians. He says he prefers to donate monthly to help the Council better plan campaigns to promote social justice.

resolved we wouldn't have to continuously look at an austerity budget or cuts in education or health care.

## **Why do you prefer to give on a monthly basis to the Council?**

I know that monthly support makes it so much easier for the Council to budget for campaigns to promote social justice. Not only is it easier for me to budget, most importantly, it is a benefit to the organization because it is a dependable stream of income. It just makes sense to give on a monthly basis.

## **What would you say to someone considering donating to the Council of Canadians?**

I would encourage someone to give to the Council. It is one of the best organizations to support because the Council is not influenced by financial donations from government or corporate funding. The Council is free to democratically represent the interests of its supporters.

*For more information about the Council of Canadians' monthly giving program, please contact Dana Chapeskie by email at [dchapeskie@canadians.org](mailto:dchapeskie@canadians.org) or by calling toll-free 1-800-387-7177, ext. 254.*