

PRESS RELEASE for immediate release

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New Canadian novel, NORTH OF 9/11, celebrated as House of Commons votes continued military action in Afghanistan

Author David Bernans dedicates book to “all victims of terror, including victims of war on terror terror”

Montreal – As support for counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan plummets, another Canadian soldier is reported killed, and the Conservative government calls a snap vote to extend the mission, new novel, NORTH OF 9/11, is launched in Montreal (in a province where about 70% oppose the Canadian mission).

The Cumulus Press launch was almost as controversial as the novel itself with activists banned from the university, Jaggi Singh and Yves Engler, speaking from the sidewalk outside of Concordia’s Simone de Beauvoir Institute (fearing arrest in the event that they set foot on Concordia property).

The Simone de Beauvoir Institute’s Principal Lillian Robinson introduced the author, David Bernans and stated, “In the fall of 2001, in the first pages of this novel, people are marching in the streets of Montreal, protesting the imminent invasion of Afghanistan. They are chanting, ‘George Bush terrorist, Canada complice.’ Today in the House of Commons, they are discussing whether or not to extend the mission in Afghanistan for another two years. That’s not over, [anti-war activism] can’t be over either.”

Bernans took the opportunity question the whole logic of the war in Afghanistan, citing the controversial rebuke Sunera Thobani made in October of 2001 that appears word-for-word on page 162 of the novel. Thobani criticized “bloodthirsty vengeance” against Afghanistan in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The fictional story takes place in the very real context of Montreal between the dates of September 11, 2001 and October 9, 2001 (from 9/11 to the initial bombing of Afghanistan). The activists at the centre of NORTH OF 9/11 try to publicly question the rapidly approaching military engagement in Afghanistan, but they become the target of racist backlash and an RCMP counter-terrorist operation.

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contact
David Widgington
(514) 523-1975
widge@cumuluspress.com

CumulusPRESS.com

P.O. Box 5205, Station B, Montréal (Québec) Canada H3B 4B5 (514) 523-1975

