

PRESS RELEASE for immediate release

Monday, May 8, 2006

Author challenges Canadian Militarism with Novel, NORTH OF 9/11

David Bernans admits he risks “triggering a backlash”

Montréal – If the film *United 93* offends some Americans with its depiction of a 9/11 high-jacking, Bernans’ novel, **NORTH OF 9/11** (Cumulus Press, 2006), will have many fuming over his biting portrayal of racism and vengeance in the wake of the tragic September 11 attacks.

The story takes place in the very real context of Montréal between September 11 and October 9, 2001, when the bombing of Afghanistan begins. **NORTH OF 9/11**’s protagonists are Palestinian solidarity activists at Concordia University (known as “Gaza U”), who publicly question the approaching military engagement in Afghanistan.

“For that month we all became Americans,” says Bernans. “And not just plain average Americans, but Fox News-watching, flag-saluting, vengeance-seeking Americans bent on making the new enemy in the war on terror pay the price for 9/11. Hopefully we’re beyond that now, and people are ready to consider a more nuanced perspective.”

Bernans has been working as a researcher at Concordia for the past seven years but has a PhD in Political Science from York University. He says he is aware that **NORTH OF 9/11** risks “triggering a backlash” but it is “worth the risk because Canadians need to start thinking about the present war in Afghanistan in a more critical light.”

NORTH OF 9/11 is the story of Concordia student, Sarah Murphy, a political activist determined to stem the tide of war mania emanating from the United States, and racist hysteria affecting her friends Hassan and Hakim. Sarah overhears a conversation between her father, and the executive of a Montréal-based aerospace manufacturer involved in production for the Pentagon.

Sarah and her friends plan a non-violent direct action to draw attention to Canada’s participation in US war efforts. Activists are questioned by the RCMP, phones are tapped, movements are shadowed. The RCMP closes in on the presumed sleeper cell while bombs fall on Afghanistan.

LAUNCH INFO: Wednesday, May 17 — 7 to 9 pm
Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University
2170 Bishop st.

featuring: the author reading from book; words by Lillian Robinson, Principal SdeB Institute; two or more activists banned from the university will speak from the sidewalk; and short videos from videoactivists Le Collectif Les Lucioles. FREE.

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