

dominion, n. 1. Control or the exercise of control. 2. A territory or sphere of influence; a realm. 3. A self-governing nation in the British Commonwealth.



# *The Dominion*

news from the grassroots

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*Vancouver*  
2010

A SPECIAL REPORT ON THE WINTER OLYMPICS

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**The Peak**  
the University of Guelph's  
autonomous, collectively-  
run, alternative magazine  
[peak@uoguelph.ca](mailto:peak@uoguelph.ca)

# Do You Believe?

Sports are used to sell us fast food, beer, electronics and war. They indulge and legitimate base chauvinism. With unparalleled drama, they give voice to our desire for collective achievement, while distracting us from the daily facts of alienation and political disempowerment.

But beyond the alcohol-fueled appreciation of hot man-on-man violence, beyond the support-our-troops, go-team-go narrow-mindedness, we can still catch a glimpse of something beautiful.

From the muck of hyper-competitiveness and commercialism, ad agencies have dredged up images that harken back to a half-real utopia of the dedication of parents driving their kids to hockey practice, the sacrifice and hard work embodied by Bobby Orr's surgery-knit knee, of getting back to the essence of the game, working hard, having fun, giving your all for the love of sport.

The honest purity of sport is what makes the Olympics so popular. Watching athletes at the peak of their abilities, distilling all of their effort and skill into one moment, is undeniably compelling.

The honest purity of sport is also what makes sport such a powerful political tool. It can be used to legitimate whatever agenda those in power might want to push forward. Roman Emperors knew this when they built the Coliseum, just as the Olympics' corporate sponsors realize this today.

The rhetorical power of

sports is notable in the measures taken to prevent athletes from using their ability to call attention to political causes not supported by the sponsors. John Carlos and Tommy Smith raised their black-gloved fists after winning Gold and Bronze in the 200m dash in 1968. They were stripped of their medals, banned from the Olympic village, and kicked off the US Olympic team.

During the Games in Vancouver, Richmond and Whistler, possession of anti-Olympic signage can earn you a \$10,000 fine, and police are allowed to search your home without prior warning.

When athletes say that they want to keep politics and sports separate, it is self-preservation first, and purity second.

And for those who are informed, it is disingenuous. The Olympics are providing cover for an array of actions that would be politically unpalatable under normal circumstances.

In what follows, we document some of these unsavory advances, including taxpayers having the wool pulled over their eyes, increases in surveillance and militarization, land theft, the setting of new precedents in rolling back civil liberties, and the large-scale implementation of social cleansing.

In another sense, the Olympics represent a high-stakes bet that the province of British Columbia can sell a big lie to a global audience. The province has never signed treaties for the

use of the vast majority of land it today claims. Many First Nations live in third world conditions, with funding for schools and services often at a fraction of their non-native counterparts. Realizing this, the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games doubled down, incorporating Indigenous imagery into all aspects of its marketing. So thorough has this exercise been, that it prompted the *Globe and Mail* to declare, "the Canadian aesthetic has become aboriginal."

In the lead-up to the Olympics, the province unsuccessfully attempted to push "Rights and Reconciliation" legislation onto the Indigenous nations of BC. Grassroots resistance killed it off.

As billions of viewers turn their gaze towards Vancouver between February 12 and 28, 2010, what will they see? Will it be the commercialized veneer of the "Aboriginal aesthetic"? Or will they see the ongoing land theft, enforced poverty and the repressive measures that are used to maintain the current state of affairs?

Canada's political and corporate elite are spending billions to ensure that the odds are stacked in their favour. Others, less-well-funded, will attempt to expose the big lie.

Who wins depends, to a large extent, on Canadians' willingness to believe the lie.

Do you believe?

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The Dominion is a pan-Canadian media network that seeks to provide a counterpoint to the corporate media and direct attention to independent critics and the work of social movements. The Dominion is published monthly in print and on the web.

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2010 Olympics mascot Quatchi, asleep on the street in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

## Pound's Found Foul

In October 2008, a media firestorm swirled around Dick Pound, yet this key member of Canada's elite managed to face down the calls for his resignation. Today he remains both Chancellor of McGill University and Canadian representative to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

It all started with an interview in Beijing conducted in French. Parrying questions about China's record on human rights, Pound appealed to a colonial view of Canada's history:

We must not forget that 400 years ago, Canada was a land of savages, with scarcely 10,000 inhabitants of European origin, while in China, we're talking about a 5,000-year-old civilization.

It took two months for the interview to generate a reaction. Once it did, it took only a week for the IOC to exonerate Pound for a "misunderstanding," claiming he had "absolutely no intention of hurting anyone."

In what he termed an apology, Pound leaned on three points: that his use of *sauvages* meant something different in

French; that he spoke from a basis in historical circumstances; and that his good intentions were all that really mattered.

"I thought that in doing a 400-year-old picture, you use 400-year-old words. If that hurts somebody today, I had no intention of doing that," he said.

By the same logic, Pound presumably would feel free to use the N-word to describe African-Americans in the nineteenth century.

Olympic-sponsor newspapers the *Globe and Mail* and the *Vancouver Sun* quickly closed ranks on the issue. Their columnists offered lengthy contorted pleas for the matter to be dropped. Which it was.

—Joseph Jones

## No Critics, Please

New "no-protest" rules will eliminate free speech as we know it through large sections of Vancouver, Whistler, and the Olympic Torch Relay route across Canada.

Vancouver has already adopted sweeping bylaws banning all forms of outdoor speech—except Olympic ads and "celebratory" signs—across most of downtown

and near all Olympic venues (there are about 70 venues and "Olympic areas" in Vancouver.)

According to David Eby, president of the BC Civil Liberties Association, removing protections for free speech could lead to police abuse.

"Until the Vancouver bylaws came out [in July 2009], we wondered if our fears were overblown," said Eby. "Now, we're beginning to realize we may have underestimated the scope of the repression of free speech around the Olympics."

"You can only hold signs that you have a license for," Eby explains, "and the only signs that you can get a license for are 'celebratory' signs or official Olympic sponsors.

—Zoe Blunt

## Skytrain Workers Rise

In preparation for the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, approximately 20 workers died, with as many as 1,000 injured while working on Olympic venues. Most of these were migrant workers. During the Beijing Olympics, approximately 3 million migrant and low-skill labourers were expelled from the city core.

In the lead-up to the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver migrant workers are being similarly exploited. During the construction of the Canada Line Skytrain route, there were at least 50 workers from Costa Rica, Peru and Colombia whose pay after long hours worked out to be five dollars per hour.

Construction of the Canada Line was carried out by an Italian corporation named Seli Tecnologie. The primary contractor is SNC-Lavalin, one of Canada's largest arms manufacturers. In November 2007, the BC Human Rights Tribunal ruled that 30 foreign workers from Costa Rica, Colombia and Ecuador working on the Canada Line had been intimidated and coerced by Seli Tecnologie.

In December 2008 a group of migrant workers won

a discrimination suit against SELI Canada, SCNP-SELI Joint Venture and SNC-Lavalin Constructors (Pacific) Inc. for substandard pay and housing. The Tribunal found that "for two years the respondents' treatment of the [workers] conveyed to them the message that they were worth less and less worthy than other employees because they were Latin American."

Evidence included paying Latin American workers \$10 less for same tasks and being crammed into motels while European workers were housed in upscale False Creek condos. The Tribunal found that "so long as they continued to work on the Canada Line project, they were unable to escape the discriminatory treatment that pervaded every aspect of their working and leisure lives."

—NOII Vancouver

## Olympic Housing Woes

In the lead-up to the World Exposition in Vancouver in 1986, hundreds of people living in single room occupancy suites in hotels were evicted to make way for visitors to the city. Real estate prices skyrocketed after Expo, and Vancouver's housing bubble hasn't lost steam since.

There is little doubt Vancouver's housing crisis has worsened over the past two decades, and many believe that like Expo before it, the Olympics are to blame.

"As governments have been funding Olympic infrastructure like speed skating ovals and luge tracks, we've had an underfunding and setting up of barriers for people to access social assistance, which has also contributed to homelessness," Am Johal of the Impact on Communities Coalition told *The Dominion*.

A report by the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) estimates that between 1988 and 2007, over 1.25 million people were evicted, forcibly displaced, or arrested on citations relating to homelessness in Olympic host cities.

But the COHRE report praises the Vancouver Organizing Committee's "commitments in the field of housing rights," which according to the organization, "go beyond any previously made by a city hosting a mega-event."

"I think that's a total lie," said Johal. "If they actually think they have met their commitments, why is it that we have a doubling of homelessness since 2002?"

An estimated 1,150 units of low-income housing have been lost over the last six years, but the onus has been on those evicted and their advocates to prove evictions are related to the Games.

When a United Nations' Human Rights Council delegation visited Vancouver in 2007, the final report on the mission stated the Special Rapporteur "remains concerned by information he received on the impact that the preparation for the Olympics could have on low-income housing residents, and particularly on low-income single resident hotel units situated in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood."

—Dawn Paley

## When Civil Liberties are 'Propaganda'

When the Olympics come to town, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) intends to stand in as the supreme government. This IOC remains unaccountable, issuing no audited financial statements and never paying taxes.

By charter and by contract, the IOC seeks to exert absolute control over the public spaces that it occupies. The primary concern is to block all advertising by competitors to its lucrative corporate partners and sponsors.

At the same time, the IOC

shows little concern for how these policies damage civil liberties. Defense against corporate free-loaders seems to extend to brand protection against all criticism whatsoever.

The Olympic Charter leaves the contentious job of overriding fundamental human rights and freedoms to one thin but powerful clause: "No kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or other areas." (Rule 51.3—Advertising, Demonstrations, Propaganda).

When former Mayor Larry Campbell signed Vancouver over to the IOC in July 2003, he consequently agreed to "no propaganda ... within the Olympic venues or outside the Olympic venues ... within the view of the television cameras ... or of the spectators" (Host City Contract—Section 47).

Vancouver City Council followed up by passing an omnibus bylaw on 23 July 2009, spelling out in detail how the host city has altered eleven bylaws to comply with the civil liberties atrocities demanded by the IOC contract.

The sovereignty of the IOC over the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has already been maintained by a judge who ruled against a legal challenge to allow women ski jumpers to participate in the 2010 Olympics. Even though the judge recognized such discrimination to be unacceptable in Canada, the IOC is considered a "non-party" and remains beyond the reach of the judgement.

To enforce sign and graffiti bylaws, BC provincial legislation (Bill 13, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2009) allows police officers to search homes and private property in Richmond, Vancouver, and Whistler with no consent—and little or no notice—during the months of February



970 cameras will be left in Vancouver after the Games. C. Cotrell (CC)

and March 2010.

That same legislation also intends to alter the Vancouver Charter (Section 333) to increase bylaw offence penalties to a draconian maximum fine of \$10,000. Continuing offence could see the \$10,000 fine multiplied by each day of offence, plus imprisonment for up to six months. The existing provision for continuing offence is a maximum of \$50 per day.

—Joseph Jones

## Smile, Vancouver

When the last of the Olympic athletes ski, skate and slide out of town, Vancouverites will be left with an unexpected legacy: 970 cameras.

"Security investment always leaves a good legacy of security for the country," International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge told media gathered last February in Whistler, marking the one year countdown to the Games.

A March 2009 Vancouver city report includes the total cost of installing Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems. The Vancouver 2010—Integrated

Security Unit (VISU) will pay \$2.1 million, in addition to the \$435,000 the province is contributing. But all costs do not appear on the balance sheet. There are also social costs, such as the diminished personal privacy in public spaces.

Although the Vancouver city report *Privacy Games: The Vancouver Olympics, Privacy, and Surveillance* points to the cruise ship terminal and entertainment district as key areas the cameras will be installed, the City of Vancouver and the VISU have not been specific regarding locations for all CCTV systems.

Andrew Pask, director of the Vancouver Public Space Network, cautions that CCTV cameras should only be seen as a "tool of last resort."

The pattern of Olympic cities, including Athens, Turin, and Beijing, has been to retain surveillance cameras after the Games.

The City of Vancouver has admitted the \$435,000 worth of cameras will not be temporary, but part of a "redeployable unit."

—Francesca Galasso

*The Olympic Charter leaves the contentious job of overriding fundamental human rights and freedoms to one thin but powerful clause...*



**2008 profits: \$ 943,000,000**

**\$200 million sponsorship, exclusive telecommunications partner.**

Bell is a subsidiary of BCE Inc., Canada's largest communications company. The firm's Bell Wireless branch is part of the national cell phone oligopoly, with 6.5 million mobile customers through Bell Mobility, Solo Mobile and 50 percent owned Virgin Mobile. Bell provides internet and wireless services, and wired phone lines. BCE owns part of CTVglobemedia, 100 per cent of Virgin Mobile Canada, and electronics chain The Source. Bell Aliant is a subsidiary of BCE that sold its defence, security and aerospace division to CAE in 2008. Slogan: "La vie est Bell."



**2008 profits: \$160,199,000**

**\$68 million sponsorship, Official Home Improvement Partner.**

Canada's renovations, gardening and housing giant, Rona's corporate and franchise retail branch includes 77 big-box depots and 140 smaller stores. An early player in the greenwashing game, the firm currently sources 2% of its wood from the Forest Stewardship Council, which has "certified" parts of the Athabasca tar sands region in Alberta as using sustainable forest practices. Rona will pay 100 employees their salaries to volunteer at the 2010 Games. Slogan: "Doing it Right."



**2008 losses: \$32,318,000,000**

**\$53 million sponsorship, Official Vehicle Partner.**

GM manufactures and markets cars in the US, Canada and globally. Its roster includes the Chevrolet, GMC, Cadillac, and Buick brands. GM also operates a division in Canada which fabricates light armoured vehicles for customers including the United States Marine Corps, the United States National Guard, the Canadian Forces, the Australian Army and Saudi Arabia. Over the last 18 months, GM took \$10.5 billion from Ottawa as part of a bail out from the province of Ontario and the federal government, and \$53,153,952,804 from the US government.



**2008 profits: \$3,134,000,000**

**\$62.5 million sponsorship.**

One of Canada's largest oil and gas companies, Petro-Canada produces, refines and markets oil and gas products. The firm was acquired by Suncor in 2009. The move makes Suncor the fifth largest oil company in North America and the largest in Canada. Suncor is also the largest tar sands operator. The company extracts the equivalent of 680,000 barrels of oil per day in crude oil and natural gas. Slogan: "Strength to Deliver."



**2008 profits: \$4,555,000,000**

**\$110 million sponsorship, exclusive financial institution.**

Royal Bank of Canada is active in Canadian banking, wealth management, insurance, international banking and capital markets. In the early 20th Century, Royal Bank of Canada president Herbert Holt financed the Western Canada Colonization Campaign, which raised \$1,500,000 (1921 dollars) to attract settlers to 20 million acres in western Canada. More recently, the firm has come under fire because it is the number one financier of the Athabasca tar sands, and is also involved in financing gas and coal in Canada. Slogan: "What do you want to create?"



**2008 profits: Unknown**

**\$100 million sponsorship, Official Department Store Partner.**

The Hudson's Bay Company is the oldest corporation in North America. It was active in the British colonization of Canada, building forts and claiming land on behalf of Great Britain. HBC boss George Simpson built Fort Vancouver in present day Washington State in 1825 "... to identify our claim to the soil and the trade with [George Vancouver's] discovery of the river and coast on behalf of Great Britain." Today HBC operates Zellers, The Bay, Home Outfitters, Lord & Taylor and Fields. It is a private company owned by US businessman Richard Baker. Historical Slogan: "Pro pelle cutem: a skin for a skin."

# 2010 Carte Blanche

## Olympic spending tallies won't come in 'til the party's over

by Dawn Paley

VANCOUVER—"There's nothing wrong with a scaled-down Olympics," said CBC sports anchor Brian Williams in his keynote address at the 2009 Webster awards in Vancouver.

Williams' comment was met with applause by hundreds of journalists in attendance for the ceremony marking the year's best reporting in BC. They seemed to have forgotten that beyond some cosmetic cuts, there is little that has been scaled down for the 2010 Games in Vancouver.

Instead, the cost of the Games has risen drastically. In 2003, the Auditor General of BC The report estimated that of the total budget, BC would incur costs of \$1.2 billion.

The report estimated BC would incur costs of \$1.2 billion related to hosting the Games. This estimate left out most infrastructure costs, but the figure was twice the amount touted by the Vancouver Organizing Committee and the BC government, who claimed the Games would cost the province \$600 million.

The cost to the federal government for hosting the Games was also underestimated. By way of example, the security budget, originally estimated at \$175 million, has since ballooned to over \$900 million, more than two thirds of which will be covered by the feds.

*The Economist* reported in September that BC's costs for the Games are closer to \$4.75 billion, an estimate that includes the Sea to Sky highway expansion, \$1 billion for the Convention Centre (which will house media during the Games) and the \$2 billion Canada Line extension of the Sky Train. Add to that the security budget and other costs, and the tab is at least \$6 billion.

At the municipal level, Vancouver City Council had to bail out the developers backing the construction of the Olympic



**Montreal's Stade Olympique cost taxpayers \$1.61 billion by the time it was paid off, earning it the moniker "The Big Owe".** *nessguide (CC)*

Village with \$458 million.

"I'm willing to bet that it's going to be a pretty expensive party, once it's all tallied up," Marc Lee, an economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy AlterNatives, told *The Dominion* at his office in Vancouver.

"We won't know until it's over how much we ultimately spent on it."

Whatever the cost overruns, the province of British Columbia will be the one to pick up the tab. "Any cost increases or revenue

shortfalls the [Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games] cannot control—arising from inflation, interest or exchange rate fluctuations, the state of the economy, world threat levels, weather events and so on—are a financial responsibility of the Province," reads a 2003 report from the BC Auditor General.

All levels of government have announced large deficits and spending cuts over the last few months.

Vancouver now faces a shortfall of \$61 million. Since the city is not allowed to run a deficit, this will mean new rounds of cuts and tax increases.

The provincial government suspended balanced budget legislation for the second time this year, and will now run four consecutive years of deficits. The deficit forecast for 2009-2010 is \$2.8 billion, BC's largest ever.

The federal government changed their budget estimate, upping the deficit to \$51.9 billion over the next four years.

A recent report by Toronto Dominion Bank suggests that the federal deficit over the next year for Canada and all the provinces combined could equal \$100 billion.

These revenue shortfalls result in part from the global recession and falling commodity prices, and are being used to justify even more cuts to the social safety net in BC and Canada.

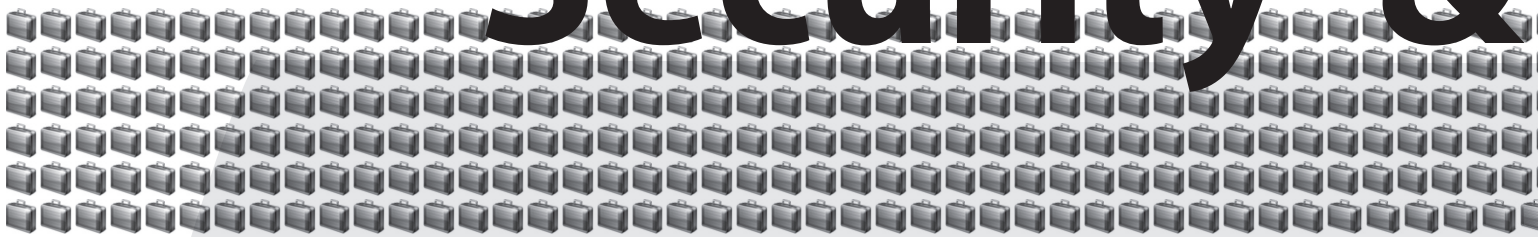
Lee said he wouldn't be surprised if VANOC tables a "massive" deficit as the Games close out, which would be rolled into the provincial budget and become "part of the justification for further cuts elsewhere."

BC's economy brings in about \$200 billion a year in revenue, leading some people to argue that even if the total cost of the Games checks out higher than the current \$4.75 billion, it would be a relatively small portion of provincial spending.

But, counters Lee, motioning out his office window towards Vancouver's downtown east side, "symbolically, the challenges out there on the street, and the need for housing, and other infrastructure, and just the sheer amount of political energy that's been put into the Olympics, you kind of wonder whether there could have been better uses of that money."

*Dawn Paley is a journalist and contributing editor with The Dominion.*

# Security &



 \$212 million to Department of Defence

 \$136 million to "contingency reserve"

 \$25 million to NAV Canada

 \$11 million to CSIS

 \$9.8 million to Industry Canada

 \$8.8 million to Transport Canada

 \$1.2 million to Public Safety Canada

 \$1.2 million to  
Citizenship and Immigration Canada

 = \$0.9 million to  
Public Health Agency of Canada

## Gaming Security

The 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver will see the largest security mobilization in the country's history with the deployment of 16,500 security personnel and expenditures exceeding \$900 million.

Security personnel per athlete: **6.6**

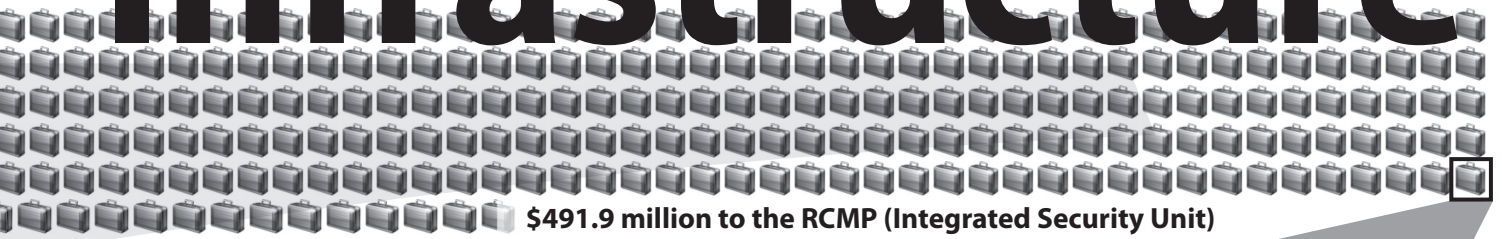
Security cost per athlete: **\$360,000**

**\$580  
MILLION  
Olympic  
venues**

**\$900+  
MILLION  
Security**

**\$2.05 BILLION**  
Canada line (Skytrain)

# Infrastructure



**\$1 million**  
or: one attaché case  
filled with \$100 bills

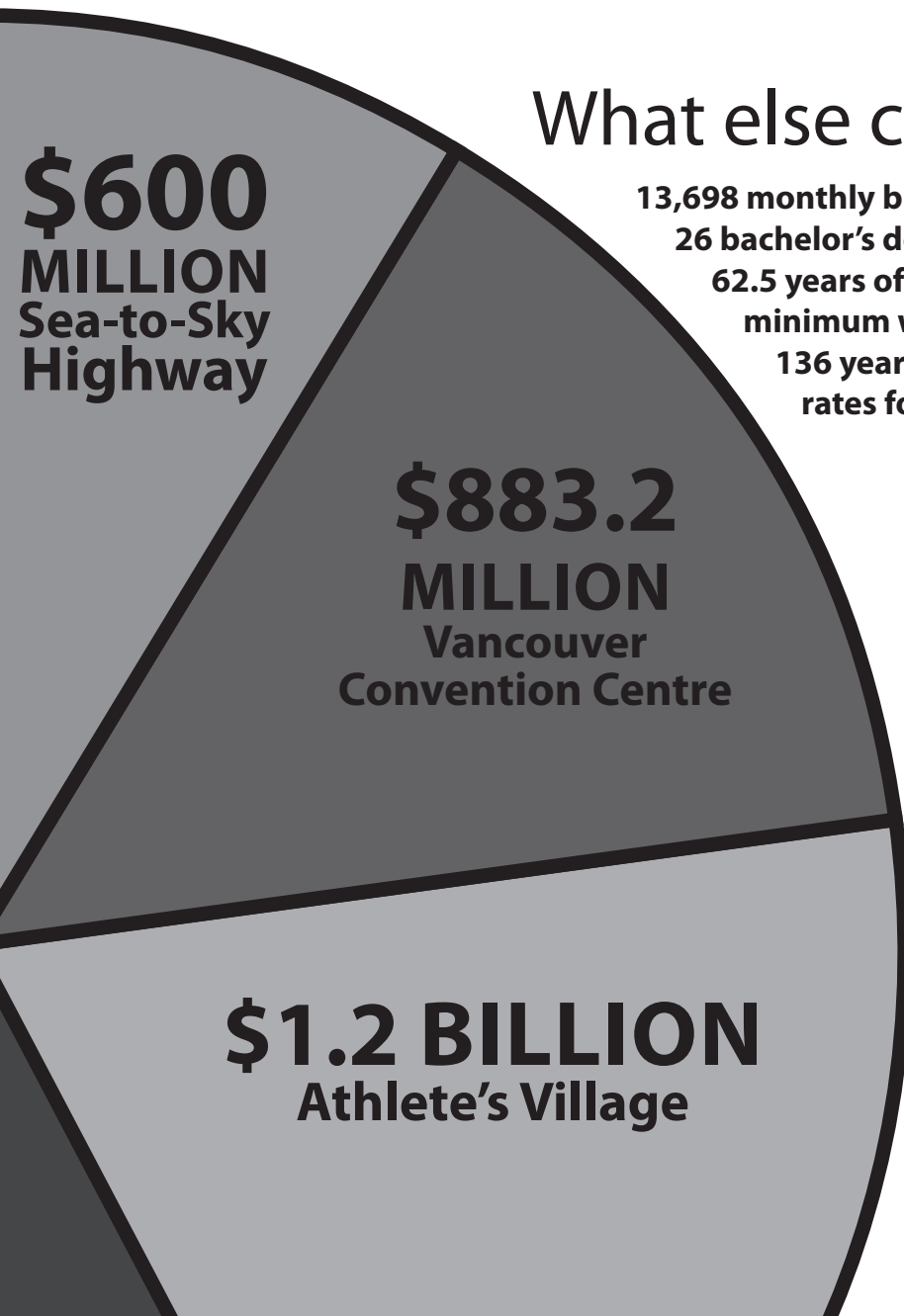
## What else costs \$1 million?

- 13,698 monthly bus passes in the City of Vancouver
- 26 bachelor's degrees at UBC
- 62.5 years of pay for someone working for \$8 minimum wage in BC
- 136 years of welfare payments at current rates for a single person in BC

## How much do the Olympics cost?

It depends on what you count. The total amount of infrastructure and security that will be used by the Olympics is quite a bit more than VANOC's 2007 "balanced" budget of \$1.6 billion.

**Total Spending:**  
**\$6.113**  
**billion+**



# Greenwashing at the Games

## Heavy polluters look lighter as Olympic sponsors

by Chris Arsenault

VANCOUVER—As the debate about global warming heats up on the road to climate talks in Copenhagen, companies with investments in Alberta's tar sands are scrambling to clean up their image as dirty oil producers.

Sponsoring the 2010 Olympics—frequently proclaiming themselves the 'Green Games'—has become a convenient branding tool for companies profiting from the increasingly controversial tar sands, according to a University of Toronto professor who has written several books on the Olympics.

"Big corporations can milk that green image, and they have an excellent venue to do so with the Games because there is so much world attention," said Professor Emeritus Helen Lenskyj.

Petro-Canada, which recently merged with Suncor to create a tar sands giant, is one of only six national partners sponsoring the Games. After expressing interest in an interview, Petro-Canada spokesperson Dany Laferriere refused to answer questions from *The Dominion* about his company's Olympic sponsorship.

Becoming a national partner cost Petro-Canada \$62.5 million, but there is a payoff, according to Dr. Lenskyj. "I think companies have a fair amount of success in greenwashing, with light green corporate environmentalism," she told *The Dominion* in a phone interview.

Companies such as Petro-Canada need all the greenwashing they can get. The Alberta tar sands has the highest carbon footprint of any commercial oil project on the planet, according a recent report written by award-winning business reporter Andrew Nikiforuk. If the world's largest energy project continues on its current growth path, the tar sands alone will produce more greenhouse gas emissions than Ireland, Austria or Portugal by 2020.

"Petro-Canada has been

involved with the Olympics for a long time, before it merged with Suncor," said Harjap Grewal, a member of the Olympics Resistance Network. Petro-Canada sponsored the 1988 torch relay for the Calgary Winter Games.

The Lubicon Cree, an Indigenous nation who are still fighting for a Treaty recognition, protested the 1988 torch relay with a campaign called "Shame the Flame," accusing Petro-Canada of stealing their land and resources, according to Dr. Lenskyj.

Today, Native right activist Mike Mercredi accuses companies such as Suncor of committing a "slow industrial genocide" by poisoning the water supply of Fort Chipewyan, a Native community downstream from the tar sands. "Around 11 million liters of toxic chemicals, including carcinogens and other deadly poisons, are leaking into groundwater and the Athabasca and poisoning entire communities," said a Greenpeace representative in a press release.

In 1988, Lubicon protesters and their allies were banned from Olympic venues and public spaces at the University of Calgary after protesting Petro-Canada. A similar scenario may occur in Vancouver, where the University of British Columbia is taking on a prominent role in the Games, to the chagrin of some student activists.

The Royal Bank of Canada, another national Olympic partner, is the prime financier of the tar sands. Canada's largest bank directly funds fossil fuel extraction with \$15.9 billion per year, creating 198 million tonnes of climate changing carbon dioxide emissions, according to a 2008 report from Rainforest Action Network.

Promoters of the "Green Games" are not talking about the tar sands, however. The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) touts that some rain water from



**Petro-Canada (now owned by Suncor) and the Royal Bank of Canada are among the largest players in tar sands mining.**

Richmond's ice-skating oval, a prime venue, will be pumped into the building's toilets and that waste wood from constructing the Whistler Creekside development will be chipped and reused on site.

"Organizers trot out a list of simple things [that seem green] for people who don't know the difference between dark green and light green environmentalism," says Dr. Lenskyj.

"The Vancouver Winter Games will be featuring more than just Gold, Silver and Bronze in 2010. Green will also be very much part of the mix," explains General Motors, another national Olympic partner, on its website.

The auto giant promises that 30 per cent of its Olympic fleet will be hybrids.

But activists have the power to turn Olympic greenwashing on its head, according to Grewal. "Most of the world is aware that the development model practiced by these companies is causing the climate crisis," said Grewal. "The fact that they are pretending to be green gives activists a chance to highlight their actual policies."

*Chris Arsenault is the author of Blowback: A Canadian History of Agent Orange. He is currently writing a history of sabotage in the oil patch.*



**2008 profits: \$18,269,000,000**

GE is active in more than 100 countries in sectors including oil and gas, lighting, finance, healthcare, water, electricity distribution, appliances, surveillance, weapons manufacturing, and civilian and military aviation. GE owns media brands including NBC, MSNBC and Universal Studios.



**2008 profits: \$868,000,000**

The Swatch Group manufactures watches, including luxury watches marketed under the brands Tiffany & Co and Omega, as well as micro technology, lasers, batteries and quartz components used in mobile phones, fix line telecommunications, industry, aerospace, and security industries. Swatch Group owns Belenos, a company dedicated in large part to Hydrogen power.



**2008 revenues \$1,856,977**

Acer is a technology company specializing in personal computers and logistics systems. Official IT provider of the Iraq Development Program, Acer is actively involved in the commercial "reconstruction" of Iraq.



**2008 profits: \$1,822,000,000**

Visa Inc. makes up the world's largest payment network. Despite the financial crisis, payment fees and interest have led to major profits for Visa. In the last financial quarter, the company posted a 73 per cent increase in profits.



**2008 profits: \$6,093,459,180**

Hundreds of Coke workers have been murdered, detained, kidnapped and tortured by paramilitaries connected to plant managers in Colombia. Coca Cola is instrumental in water privatization schemes worldwide. In the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, a movement emerged to shut down Coke bottling plants.



**2008 losses: \$4,339,000,000**

Panasonic Corporation manufactures a gamut of products, including electronics components, semiconductors, lighting, domestic and commercial appliances, and industrial robots. The company has a business dedicated to factory automation, and makes and markets surveillance equipment, which was installed during the Beijing Olympics in 2008.



**2008 losses: \$388,000,000**

Atos Origin is a technology company that provides support to various industries, including the nuclear energy and oil and gas sectors, the commercial water, pharmaceutical and chemical sectors. The company is a major UK defense contractor with a "focus on delivering business value solutions to achieve a wide range of critical Defence and National Security and Resilience objectives."



**2008 profits: \$4,527,000,000**

There are 31,967 McDonalds restaurants in 118 countries, offering fast food to the masses. The company has been the target of protests around the world for hyper-exploitation of workers and the environment and its contribution to unhealthy lifestyles. Would you like fries with that?



**2008 profits: \$4,876,845,981**

Samsung is a Korean conglomerate involved in manufacturing and sales of digital media, telecommunications networks, semi conductors, and LCD monitors. The company forms half of a joint venture called Samsung Thales, a weapons manufacturer responsible for the creation of the Korean Gunner's Primary Sight(KGPS), Korean Commander's Panoramic Sight(KCPS), and Korean Ballistic Computer System(KBCS).

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# An Insincere Celebration

## Is the Olympics' use of Indigenous symbolism imprudent?

by **Christine O'Bonsawin**

VICTORIA—The inclusion of colonial narratives has forever been enshrined within the Olympic formula, and Indigenous peoples have long served the performance needs of nations whose histories rest in imperial conquest.

Canada is no exception. On three occasions, including 1976 Montreal, 1988 Calgary and 2010 Vancouver, Canada has been afforded the opportunity to host the coveted Olympic Games. In each instance the inclusion of Indigenous cultures, and their complimentary images, has been a prominent countenance of the Games. However, this inclusion has not always been celebrated, nor unquestioningly accepted, by the Indigenous peoples.

The 1976 Montreal Olympic Summer Games organizers no doubt understood the symbolic value of incorporating Indigenous imagery within the programme of the first ever Olympic Games hosted on Canadian soil. During the closing ceremony of these Games, “Indians Hosts” figuratively ushered the athletes of the world into the stadium, accompanied Olympic delegates throughout the duration of the ceremony and, as one might predict, delighted national and international audiences with the traditional songs and dances of the First Peoples of Canada.

In consideration of these “traditional” songs and dances, it is important to point out that the music was based on the works of Canadian composer Andre Mathieu, and included a curious blend of western musical choreography and Indian tom-toms to songs such as “La Danse Sauvage.”

Furthermore, due to financial constraints, responsibility was put on the approximately 250 non-Indigenous people, who were painted and dressed to look like Indians, to lead 200 Indigenous people into the stadium in “traditional” dance. Within the

context of 1976, it becomes clear that Olympic organizers understood the symbolic importance and powerful persuasiveness of Indigenous imagery; however, they flagrantly failed to enter into respectful dialogue with the very people they proposed to be celebrating.

In the case of the 1988 Calgary Olympic Winter Games, the inclusion of Indigenous imagery went beyond the ceremonies as organizers proactively, if not productively, included the romanticized aura of a celebrated, and noble, yet doomed, Indian past.

Despite mighty attempts to highlight indigeneity within the cultural programme, Olympic organizers experienced significant resistance from Indigenous peoples opposing the Games—notably the Lubicon Lake Cree Nation of northern Alberta. The Lubicon people were in a near century-long struggle with the provincial and federal governments for treaty recognition.

While the Games were not being hosted on Lubicon territory, Lubicon opposition to the Games was based on governments' infinite financial support of the Games as well as the sponsorship of Olympic events by corporations illegally invading non-surrendered Lubicon territory—namely Petro-Canada and Shell Canada.

In one instance, the Lubicon called for a boycott of “The Spirit Sings” Olympic exhibit, which was co-sponsored by the Olympic cultural programme, the federal government, Shell Canada, and the Glenbow Museum. Lubicon leaders criticized the fact that the very entities invading Lubicon

territory were sponsoring an exhibit claiming to celebrate Indigenous cultures. Their goal was to expose the hypocrisy of an exhibit that proposed to bring together Native Canadian material

and ongoing mistreatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

As we move towards 2010 Vancouver, there can be little doubt that Indigenous imagery will be a visible feature of Olympic Games programming.

The inclusion of appropriated Indigenous imagery, including the logo (Ilanaaq—the Inunnguaq—the Inukshuk) and the mascots (Miga, a mythical sea bear, Quatchi, a sasquatch and Sumi, a guardian spirit), has caused significant unrest amongst Indigenous peoples and their supporters; however, one must not forget that larger political, social, and economic realities loom overhead.

One might argue that the imprudent inclusion of Indigenous insignia within past and present Canadian Olympic hosting practices, particularly in the absence of respectful consultation and dialogue, is introspective of the ongoing mistreatment and disregard for Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous opposition to the 2010 Games has rallied under a public campaign calling for “No Olympics on Stolen Native Land.” The Indigenous peoples of British Columbia (as do the Lubicon Cree) require honourable treaties—not Olympic circuses that continue to trivialize the political, social, and economic injustices faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada.

*Dr. Christine O'Bonsawin is a specialist in Indigenous sport history, Canadian sport history as well as Indigenous/Indian policy. She teaches at the University of Victoria.*



Francis Mackenzie

culture from collections around the world—material that had, essentially, been stolen hundreds of years prior.

In a second example of Indigenous opposition to the Calgary Games, supporters of the Lubicon focused resistance efforts on the Olympic torch run. While the theme of the run called for all Canadians to “Share the Flame,” the torch was met with significant opposition in every province (except PEI) as Lubicon supporters spread an alternate message reminding that if Canadians were to share the flame, they must also “Share the Blame” for the historic

# Unceded, British Columbia

## Indigenous people face theft of land, commodification of culture

by Kim Petersen

TRADITIONAL TERRITORY OF SNUNEYMUXW FIRST NATION (NANAIMO, BC)—On 2 July 2003 a gathering of the International Olympic Committee in Prague awarded the 2010 Winter Olympics to Vancouver-Whistler. The Canadian entry beat out competing bids from Salzburg, Austria and Pyeongchang, South Korea. The IOC decision has provided a venue for international attention on sovereignty in “British Columbia.”

Vancouver is situated in the traditional territories of Coast Salish First Nations, specifically the Skwxwú7mesh, Xwméthkwyiem and Tseil-waututh peoples. This land has never been surrendered; it is the “hunting Grounds” “reserved” for the “Indians” where they “should not be molested or disturbed,” according to the Royal Proclamation of 1763.

The same unceded status holds for Whistler. “Because we have no treaty with Canada, the imposition and encroachment of Whistler—their hydro lines, their highways, their railroad, in fact all infrastructure development for the 2010 Games—in our territory is illegal,” said James Louie of the Interior Salish St’át’imc Nation, in a press package put out by the Olympics Resistance Network.

Out of these contradictions, a slogan arose: “No Olympics on stolen Native land!”

The Olympic Games is “an energy grab, it’s a land grab, and it disrespects inherent Aboriginal rights and title to the land and water,” Mel Bazil of the Wet’suwet’en and Gitksan nations told *The Dominion*.

Vancouver is named after the British seafarer Captain George Vancouver whose cartography, according to University of St. Andrews professor Dan Clayton, helped lay the foundation for the settlement and colonization of BC. “Colonization is as much an ongoing, arbitrary and vacuously



Angela Sterritt.

conceived process of inscription as it is a process of physical occupation, resettlement, and domination,” wrote Clayton in his book *Islands of Truth: The Imperial Fashioning of Vancouver Island*.

Contact disrupted Indigenous lifeways, and trade with Europeans became dominant. “Native-Western interaction was circumscribed by the capitalist logic of creative destruction,” wrote Clayton.

Later, securing land for the outnumbered colonialists was prioritized by Vancouver Island Governor James Douglas. In the early 1850s, he entered into 14 treaties with First Nations, where land was sold to “the white people for ever” for cash, blankets and clothing.

Subsequent to the Douglas Treaties, Treaty 8 in northeastern BC, the Nisga’a treaty, and Tsawwassen First Nation treaty have been concluded. Officially, 60 First Nations are said to be negotiating land claims in the BC Treaty Process.

Traditionally, Coast Salish peoples have inhabited an area extending from the N’ch-iwana (Columbia River) in Oregon to

Bute Inlet in BC that includes the important waterways of the Salish Sea (Strait of Juan de Fuca Strait, Georgia Strait, and Puget Sound). Whistler is in the Coast Mountains range, 125km north of Vancouver — the traditional territory of the Lil’wat Nation (an Interior Salish people).

The Skwxwú7mesh, Xwméthkwyiem and Tseil-waututh First Nations, along with the Lil’wat Nation, comprise the Four Host First Nations for the 2010 Olympics. This casts the appearance of a First Nations welcome for the 2010 Olympics.

Indigenous rights activist Elder Harriet Nahanee of the Pacheenaht Nation on southeast Vancouver Island, fought that appearance. The then 71-year-old Nahanee died in February 2007, one week after she was released from prison for protesting the destruction of Eagleridge Bluffs, an area considered unique in biodiversity. The bluffs were being clear cut for the Olympics related expansion of the Sea-to-Sky highway, which connects Vancouver to Whistler.

“The Four Host Nations is a

corporate body made up primarily of government-funded Indian Act band council chiefs, not hereditary chieftainships,” stated Seislom, a Lil’wat Elder, in a press package provided by the Olympics Resistance Network.

“An overwhelming number of Indigenous people in these territories and in the interior are opposed to the Olympics because of the long-term impact including destruction of the land, commodification of Native art and culture, and the creation of long-term poverty once the few token jobs are gone,” he continued.

“We’re raising the issue of colonialism and lack of legal jurisdiction by the government in addition to the issue of land and exploitation of Indigenous culture,” Gord Hill of the Kwakwakwak’w nation told *The Dominion*.

Hill pointed to 2010 Olympics sponsor Hudson’s Bay Company’s recent decision to refuse a bid from the Quw’utsun’ First Nation, a Coast Salish people on lower Vancouver Island, who founded and have made the famous Cowichan sweaters for over a century. Instead the Olympic sweater will be made in China.

The Quw’utsun’ are upset over the loss of jobs and an allegedly mock sweater. Quw’utsun’ Chief Lydia Hwitsum said the Cowichan sweater is a registered trademark. HBC in a press release claims its sweater design is an original.

“It is the reality of strong opposition to the Olympic Games by Native peoples that has forced VANOC to desperately try and create the perception of Native support for the Olympics by throwing a lot of money to a few select people,” according to No 2010 Resistance.

*With files from Dawn Paley. Kim Petersen is the Original Peoples editor for The Dominion.*

# “We Better Be Ready”

## 2010 resistance anticipates a rough ride

by Zoe Blunt

VICTORIA—Earlier this year, RCMP officers with Vancouver 2010 security intelligence began knocking on doors in Victoria and Vancouver to interrogate social justice advocates about their plans for the Olympics. The officers had no warrants, no probable cause, and no due process. So far, they've gotten no information. But it appears that this tiny piece of the Olympic security machine has spent thousands of dollars on intimidating local residents.

The cost of security for the 2010 Games will be around \$1 billion, and may be more, when the final tally comes due. A billion dollars could feed, clothe and house 20,000 homeless people for a year, or provide clean drinking water to dozens of remote communities.

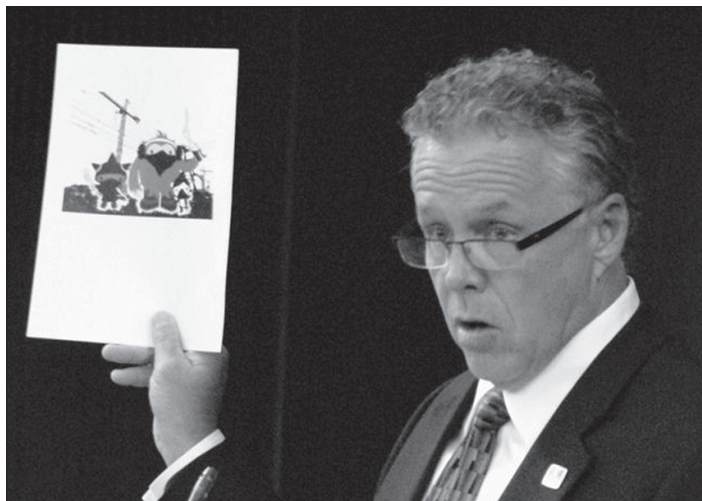
Instead, the government is funding 16,000 police, soldiers, and security personnel. The Games will include helicopters overhead, military vessels offshore, large-scale road closures, miles of security fences, and almost 1,000 closed-circuit television cameras.

Two key figures in the RCMP's Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit have extensive experience in using force to quell dissent.

Readers may remember RCMP Sgt. Maj. Hugh Stewart, nicknamed “Sergeant Pepper” after the 1997 Asia-Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) at the University of British Columbia. Stewart won fame for unleashing streams of pepper spray on a crowd of students holding a sit-in outside the Leader's Summit. Stewart is also the master architect of the secret security plans for 2010.

Assisting Stewart in pepper-spraying students at APEC was Sgt. Gary R. “Bud” Mercer. The RCMP has named him chief of the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit.

Mercer, now an assistant



**VISU head Bud Mercer holds up an image of Olympic mascots with molotov cocktails at Vancouver City Hall in July, 2009.** *Jay Black*

RCMP commissioner, has shown up at crucial moments in other high-profile political confrontations. In 1995, he tracked two people who fled a pickup truck disabled by RCMP explosives outside Gustafsen Lake, where First Nations activists were occupying a Sun Dance ceremony site. That confrontation became the largest paramilitary operation in BC history. After a heavy one-sided firefight and a month-long standoff, the Ts'peten Defenders surrendered and 15 people went to jail.

In July 2000, Ass. Com. Mercer appeared at the climax of a siege in the Elaho Valley near Whistler, BC. Wilderness advocates were using civil disobedience to block loggers from accessing old-growth forests. Four environmentalists were perched in tree platforms supported by ropes and cables 50 meters up when Mercer pulled in with dozens of emergency response officers, sharpshooters, helicopters, and canine units. Mercer then led the charge to dismantle the blockade, using a long-handled cable-cutter to sever one of the cables attached to the tree platforms, causing them to shift and drop under the four tree-sitters. Branches and backup ropes stopped the platforms from

falling further, and no one was hurt, but the action panicked the activists and witnesses on the ground.

One of the tree-sitters made a complaint, and charges of aggravated assault were filed against Mercer. The charges were quickly dropped, however, and the tree-sitter was later convicted of

filing a false report—a charge that he and other witnesses still feel is a gross miscarriage of justice.

More recently, a massive 2008 police raid at the Bear Mountain Tree Sit on Vancouver Island may be a premonition of 2010 security operations. There, a protest camp next to a rare cave and endangered wildlife habitat was delaying highway interchange construction. The raid consisted of a small army of SWAT-type officers—armed with automatic weapons, sniper rifles, and dogs—storming the camp before dawn and forcing five terrified campers to surrender at gunpoint. All charges were later dropped. While there is no evidence thus far that Mercer or Stewart was involved, the raid draws from the same playbook they used years ago. Hundreds of military ration boxes left scattered across the site suggest a joint RCMP-military task force was at work.

In July 2009, Mercer spoke to Vancouver City Council about the threats to security police are preparing to handle. He made several references to past incidents of police violence against protesters, according to observers.

Allissa Westergard-Thorpe, an outspoken Olympic critic, found Mercer's speech disturbing. “Certainly all the violent incidents that Bud Mercer brought up to justify the RCMP's security plans—Montebello, APEC, WTO in Seattle—those were all incidents of police violence, not protester violence.”

Chris Johnson filmed Mercer's presentation for B-Channel News. He said Mercer's Vancouver presentation was illuminating. “He's talking about police suppressing political demonstrations, not controlling rowdies or preventing terrorism, for example. He's describing their bag of tricks here. So we better be ready.”

*Zoe Blunt is a Victoria-based writer and environmental non-profit director.*

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### The career of Assistant RCMP Commissioner Gary R. “Bud” Mercer in brief:

1976 - joined RCMP  
 1984 - joined Emergency Response Team  
 1995—tracked fugitives at Gustafsen Lake  
 1997—pepper-sprayed students at UBC  
 2000—cut cables connected to tree-sit platforms, Elaho Valley  
 2007—promoted to chief of security for 2010 Games  
 June 5, 2009—received a career achievement award from the Lieutenant Governor  
 June 23, 2009—received a letter from the Olympic Resistance Network and the BC Civil Liberties Association advising him to stop harassing activists

# Military, Mounties Train for the Games

## Demonstrations a greater security threat than terrorism: CSIS

by Andrew Crosby

VANCOUVER—The role the Canadian Forces play in domestic security is not new in Canada but the security plans for the 2010 Olympics demonstrate an intensification of using military strategies to control public dissent.

The Integrated Threat Assessment Centre, a CSIS unit and part of the RCMP's Joint Intelligence Group (JIG), who initially identified foreign-based terrorism, crime, and domestic protests (in that order of severity) as the most plausible threats during 2010 have since reconfigured their analysis. International terrorism is now listed as a low-level threat and anti-Olympic demonstrations—including anti-globalization and First Nations activists—are now listed as the primary threat with a medium level rating.

The conflation of protests and terrorism has steadily increased since the 1999 "Battle of Seattle" and the 9/11 attacks which even further entrenched the notion that militarized strategies were essential in quelling dissent. The deployment of military forces alongside police is part of a "continual flow of technologies that are first developed for the military and later flow into police departments," Luis Fernandez, author of *Policing Dissent: Social Control and the Anti-Globalization Movement*, told *The Dominion*.

"In the past few years we are seeing an increase, not of the police being militarized, but of police working with the military. It goes beyond militarization," said Fernandez.

Domestic military support dates back to the 'aid-to-the-civil' power mandate in the Militia Act of 1855. Indeed, the use of military force has been used steadily since the early 17th Century by the French, British, and Canadians to impose colonial rule under the auspice of maintaining law and order.

More recently, Canada has

deployed 16,000 troops during the 1976 Montreal Olympics and 4,500 soldiers during the Oka crisis in 1990. "This role (of the military) has certainly been expanded and evolved in the post-9/11 environment, and perhaps for the first time, we are seeing a much more concentrated effort on the part of the military to fulfill that obligation," Scott Taylor, editor of *Esprit de Corps* magazine, told *The Dominion* via email.

During the G8 Summit in Kananaskis in 2002, the RCMP coordinated the largest security operation in Canada. Approximately 1,500 officers and 5,000 soldiers were deployed and ordered to "shoot to kill" any demonstrators who breached the security perimeter.

Canada Command was established in 2006 to focus on domestic operations, as well as the remodeling of the Reserves into specialized geographical units responsible for, among other things, assisting law enforcement agencies and providing support for large public events.

At the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) meeting in Montebello, Quebec in 2007, camouflaged Canadian Forces were in position to reinforce riot police, and military helicopters were used to patrol the Ottawa River. Meanwhile, police were using agents provocateurs to incite violence amongst demonstrators.

During the 2010 Olympics, the Canadian Forces will have 4,500 military personnel in land, air, and sea capacities, including the use of "Special Operations Forces" (JTF 2). They are allocated \$212 million of the total security budget.

The military will set up bases and facilities throughout the region and are conducting numerous training exercises including Operations Bronze, Silver, and Gold, as well as anti-terrorism training exercises and a mock biological warfare scenario

in suburban Vancouver.

Although the public has been assured that the military presence will be discreet, bomb-removal squads in Victoria, helicopter and CF-18 fly-overs above Vancouver, and other public displays of training exercises have not gone unnoticed. Some residents have grown wary of being subjected to the growing military presence.

Pre-Olympics military training will be supplemented by the construction of up to 10 temporary military bases between North Vancouver and Pemberton in the lead-up to the Games. Increased military presence can be felt in the region from Victoria to Kamloops as part of what has been dubbed "Fortress British Columbia."

In the months before the Olympics begin, security forces will receive new gadgets, including: weapons, bullet-proof body armour, radar systems, surveillance equipment, and Vancouver Police-requested "tactical armoured vehicles."

The Olympics are also acting as a catalyst for integration with the US, increasing the transfer and training of military and security knowledge and equipment. Phil Boyle, who studies the long-term effects of Olympic-style security systems on host cities and states, says the 2010 Olympics are "setting a precedent for harmonizing protocols between Canada and the U.S. over military use."

"The time and context are being provided by the Olympics," said Boyle of an agreement signed earlier last year which allows cross-border military expeditions in times of distress.

At the upcoming G8 summit in Huntsville, Ontario in June, the Canadian military operation is expected to be even larger than in Vancouver.

*Andrew Crosby is a writer and musician based in Vancouver.*

### Olympic Security Tally:



**4,500 Canadian Forces**



**5,000 Private Security**



**7,000 Police**

*Combat Camera, AIVEN, Dru Oja Jay*

# The Business of Intelligence

## Corporate intelligence-gathering harkens back to COINTELPRO

by Tim Groves

TORONTO—In the US, a new model of law enforcement has emerged in which police, military, security contractors and large corporations are collaborating on intelligence gathering. Are the 2010 Olympics ushering this new paradigm into Canada?

The security committee for the 2010 Olympics Task Force, based in Washington State, is at the forefront of planning US security efforts for the Games. According to *The Globe and Mail* this group brings together government agencies from both sides of the border, more than 100 from the US and 17 from Canada.

Documents acquired by *The Dominion* reveal that this committee consists of not only the US Military, Canadian Forces, Federal Bureau of Investigation and Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but also “Pacific Northwest Private Sector Company Volunteers.” The amount the US will spend on Olympic security has not been disclosed.

“The safety and security of the 2010 Olympics and the United States is at risk if we do not take direct action,” testified Jeffery Slotnick, a member of the committee, at a Congressional hearing on Olympics security in March 2008.

Video of the hearing showed Slotnick wearing a dark blue suit and glasses. His bald head and black moustache hinted at the decades he spent in the military. He is president of Setracon Inc., a Tacoma, Washington-based company that contracts out security personnel and trains private security, military and police.

Slotnick explained some of the reasons the US should be involved in Olympic security, including the potential for attacks or natural disasters that could impact US businesses and have significant economic costs to the region. He called for increased



What—or who—is Starbucks spying on?

Nick Richards (cc 2.0)

funding to prepare for securing the Games, plans to expedite border crossings, and a greater role for the private sector in information sharing.

“[The] private sector has tremendous awareness of what is going on... the opportunity to share in both directions is key and critical,” said Slotnick, emphasizing the need for corporate involvement in intelligence gathering for the Vancouver Olympics.

“Boeing, Microsoft, [and] Starbucks ... possess significant intelligence assets. In many cases, individuals from these organizations have higher security clearances than law enforcement officials. It would be unfortunate not to capitalize on these assets...”

It is perhaps not surprising that Boeing, a defence contractor, and Microsoft, a computer technology corporation, have large intelligence and security operations. Starbucks, on the other hand, runs a global chain of coffee shops. Yet they too have a program to identify and mitigate risks to the company.

During a 2007 security conference in Colorado Springs, Starbucks revealed part of their security operation includes monitoring retail stores, roasting plants and container loading sites from a “central security facility.” Press releases from the International Workers of the World, the union representing some Starbucks workers, claim the company conducts surveillance of union activities.

“Are we trying to deputize every private company to be minor league James Bonds against citizens of our own countries?” asked Mike German, reached by phone from Washington, DC.

German is a former FBI agent who now works for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). “From a security perspective this is a nightmare; I mean, you are actually giving private companies, who operate on profit margins, access to extremely valuable information.”

“I am sure the data [US] companies collect on Canadian citizens is routinely shared with

their headquarters in the United States,” he said. “Is consumer information being collected in Canada that is shared across the border and [then] being brought back to [Canadian] law enforcement in violation of privacy regulations? If the answer is ‘we don’t know’, that’s a problem, and if the answer is ‘we don’t think so’, that is still a problem. Because nobody is overseeing these intelligence activities it makes it very difficult to know the extent of the abuse.”

When asked about their involvement in 2010 security, Starbucks responded with a statement reading “...we cannot discuss specific security measures Starbucks is taking for the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games.” They explained that they are prioritizing “the safety and security of our [employees] and customers,” and are “working with and will rely on the direction of local authorities and other official sources.”

Boeing and Microsoft did not respond to requests for comment.

The efforts to integrate

multinational corporations into Olympic security have broad implications. The US has done much to involve the private sector in their security infrastructure. Washington State is at the forefront of blurring the lines between private and public security.

Slotnick informed the Congressional hearing that a “fusion centre” called the Washington Joint Analytical Center plays a role in coordinating intelligence with Canadian authorities. This organization has since been renamed the Washington State Fusion Center (WSFC).

Fusion centres emerged after September 11, 2001, as places for the FBI, Homeland Security, CIA, military, local and state police, and in some cases private sector companies, to jointly gather and respond to intelligence on terrorism and other criminal activities. Currently over 40 fusion centres exist in the US.

While fusion centres are generally not well known, criticism of them has started to emerge.

An ACLU report entitled *What's Wrong with Fusion Centers?* compares them to COINTEL-PRO, a controversial domestic intelligence program run by the FBI between 1956 and 1971.

The report outlines problems with fusion centres. These include: excessive secrecy, military involvement in law enforcement, corporations sharing private information on their customers and employees, and “policy shopping.”

Policy shopping is the practice of manipulating the differences between laws regulating various agencies and jurisdictions, in order to find loopholes in privacy legislation.

According to an article by the Center for Investigative Reporting, at the 2008 Republican National Convention a Minnesota fusion centre undertook data mining on protesters and requested their police partners conduct preemptive intelligence gathering.

Police then infiltrated groups, tapped information exchanges and conducted questionable searches. To justify these activities, some protesters were equated with terrorists.

The private sector is involved in the WSFC. Internal documents made available through Wikileaks show several of their intelligence analysts are contracted from security firms.

An article published at securitymanagement.com said the head of WSFC was “adamant” about getting Washington State’s

major private sector entities involved.” It also revealed that Alaska Airlines, Amazon.com and Starbucks have shown interest in working with WSFC and that efforts have been made to give Boeing clearance to place a full-time analyst inside the organization.

A 2007 Washington State Preparedness Report revealed that the WSFC “...is integrated into the planning and intelligence gathering structure pertaining to... the 2010 Winter Olympics.” However, this is not the only area where the WSFC is involved in Canadian security matters.

WSFC plays a role in the Northwest Warning Alert and Response Network (NWWARN), a “regional information fusion centre” which shares intelligence between the public and private sectors, and rapidly disseminates alerts during disasters.

NWWARN originally operated exclusively in Washington State. The Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) was instrumental in expanding NWWARN into BC, Alberta, the Yukon and Saskatchewan in Canada, and Oregon, Montana, Idaho and Alaska in the US. PNWER is a forum that brings together business leaders and

elected officials from these western provinces and states to impact policy decisions. Atlantica is a similar organization on the east coast, and there is talk of creating such organizations all along the Canada-US border.

These “cross-border regions”

## *Are we trying to deputize every private company to be minor league James Bonds against citizens of our own countries?*

build upon free-trade agreements such as NAFTA, finding ways to harmonize policies to fit the needs of business interests without high profile changes to treaties.

NWWARN’s benevolent-sounding mission to rapidly disseminate information during disasters is giving the private sector a growing role in policing, not only in the US but also in Canada. This permanent intelligence network works in a wide range of areas, but in his testimony Slotnick explained it would play an important role in Olympics intelligence gathering.

Canada has welcomed US involvement in Olympic security. In practical terms, this seems to include preemptive intelligence gathering. It is unclear to what extent multinational corporations will be involved in this, but it is undeniable that the Olympics are seeing an increased use of the fusion centre model of law enforcement in Canada.

“Obviously the Olympics are political,” said German. “You have to expect that people are going to want to engage in the debate and discuss the issues that are important to them, and to treat those people as if they are criminals or terrorists is inappropriate.”

*Tim Groves is a Toronto-based investigative researcher and trainer.*

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# Land and Rights in Canada

## Don't let Harper play hockey with human rights

by Arthur Manuel

COLDSTREAM, BC—We have reached a very critical time in our struggle for our land and human rights as Indigenous Peoples. The Canadian government knows this and has been doing everything in their power to trick us into extinguishing our Aboriginal Title through negotiations under their policies—including their Comprehensive Land Claims and Self-Government Policies. Canada's courts have been the alternative to negotiations, and there we have had measured success. But the establishment Indigenous organizations, like the Assembly of First Nations, have been stuck with what the government is dictating to them.

As Indigenous Peoples we need to think about what to do now. In early August 2009, Indian Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl sent a strong message to the British Columbia Treaty Commission (BCTC) Common Table, a group of First Nations from different BCTC negotiating tables who came together to raise concerns regarding consistent obstacles they all faced in negotiating land claims agreements in BC. He said that the federal government will not change the existing Comprehensive Land Claims and Self-Government Policies.

The federal government has ignored all objections from groups who do not negotiate and groups who are inactive in their negotiations. Now they have stated clearly to those actively negotiating that they will not review their land and self-government policies.

It is important for Indigenous Peoples who have not signed treaties surrendering their Title to realize that we are all under the federal Comprehensive Land Claims and Self-Government Policies. We must realize that any land claims and self-government agreement will be determined by these policies. Right now, this will mean that the best deal

Indigenous Peoples can get is the Nisga'a, Tsawwassen or Maa-nulth Final Agreements. This requires the extinguishment of Aboriginal Title, according to what the government has put on the table under the Comprehensive Land Claims and Self-Government Policies. Indigenous Peoples will have to give up their tax-exemption, take their land in fee simple, and agree to be under provincial control.

There needs to be a fundamental change in Canada's Land Claims and Self-Government Policies. These policies need to address the direct link between Aboriginal Title and our human rights as Indigenous Peoples. Canada must abandon their existing policy of extinguishment and assimilation and adopt a plan of recognition and co-existence. This dramatic change must be forced on the federal government by direct action from Indigenous Peoples and our supporters. We get a lot of support for taking direct action. We just need faith and courage to stand up for our rights.

The 1980 Constitution Express, an international grassroots campaign that involved sending a train with hundreds of Indigenous protesters from the west coast to Ottawa, secured section 35(1) in the Canadian Constitution 1982. We need similar collective action to get Aboriginal Title recognized.

A lot has changed since the 1980s.

The Delgamuukw case judicially recognized Aboriginal Title in 1997. The World Trade Organization and the North America Free Trade Agreement recognized that Canada's policy not to recognize Aboriginal Title was a subsidy to Canada's resource industries. The British Columbia government now has to report Aboriginal Title as a contingent liability in their annual balance sheet. And the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the



George Manuel on Parliament Hill.

George Manuel Institute

Rights of Indigenous Peoples despite the fact that Canada voted against the Declaration.

Our real problem is that the federal and provincial governments do not want to recognize Aboriginal Title because it ousts their jurisdiction over our Aboriginal Title territory. They want to continue to mutually and exclusively make all decisions regarding our land. Everything comes from the natural wealth of our land. We need to unite, not around our weakest positions in negotiations, but around the strongest defenders of our land.

In British Columbia, participating under the BCTC over the last 16 years has had dismal results: it has produced only the Tsawwassen and Maa-nulth Final Agreements, plus the rebuked Common Table Report and the rejected BC Recognition and Reconciliation Act.

Introduced in the spring of 2009, the proposed BC Recognition and Reconciliation Act was originally praised by the BC First Nations Leadership Council, a grouping of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), the First

Nations Summit representing those involved in the BCTC process, and the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations. The proposed Act did not recognize Aboriginal Title, and for this reason was rejected by the BC All Chiefs Assembly in August 2009. All the Recognition Act recognized was that Crown Title also existed where Aboriginal Title existed. It would have been nothing more than a Bill of Sale for the BC government. The Chiefs and People saw through it and rejected provincial legislation

*We need to unite, not around our weakest positions in negotiations, but around the strongest defenders of our land.*

resoundingly.

The term “recognition” was manipulated by the province just like “self-government” has been manipulated by the federal government. I remember my late father George Manuel really struggled to develop the term “self-government” when he was president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. But after the federal government came up with their “self-government” policy he rejected the term “self-government”, because weasel word doctors at the Department of Indian Affairs totally undermined what self-government meant from my father’s perspective.

The province had me in the same boat: I have been fighting for recognition of Aboriginal Title, but I too was forced to fight against the “recognition” offered by the province under the Recognition and Reconciliation Act. This can be confusing because fighting for “recognition” sometimes requires us to fight against words that favour the status quo at our expense. Any definition or term must be decided by us and not the federal and provincial govern-

ments.

Indigenous Peoples must realize that these circumstances require us to have strong leadership. We need to assert our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and not demand money for more programs and services. We need a fundamental change from the existing Aboriginal Land Policies and a National Treaty Policy. We need to take action before the 2010 Winter Olympics against Canada’s human rights record. Our lack of opportunity and our impoverishment are directly related to the fact that Canada does not recognize our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is a fundamental aspect of our human rights as Indigenous Peoples.

We cannot support the 2010 Winter Olympics unless Canada adopts and implements the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. First Nations that have agreed to allow the 2010 Winter Olympic Torch through their territory should seriously reconsider that decision in view of how Canada is playing sports with our human rights as Indigenous Peoples. Canada will be using any endorsements by First Nations at the international level to polish their image, and to persuade people that Canada’s Indigenous Peoples still support them despite the fact they voted against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We need to be strong. The 2010 Winter Olympics and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a direct link that connects Canada’s Human Record at the international level. Canada will not change their mind unless we insist, through band council resolutions, to not support the Torch Relay, and to engage in direct action. We must stand up for change. We cannot let Prime Minister Harper play political hockey with our human rights.

*Arthur Manuel is the spokesperson of the Indigenous Network on Economics and Trade.*

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# Fighting for Sutikalh

## St'át'imc unity has kept BC-backed ski resort at bay for ten years

by Dru Oja Jay

SUTIKALH—Since first contact with European settlers, St'át'imc people (also known as the Lillooet) have fought against land theft and destruction by resource extraction and development. Their traditional territory surrounds the Lillooet River, stretching from Whistler to the town of Lillooet.

The St'át'imc way of life has always been inextricably tied to

the land. For thousands of years, the St'át'imc have hunted, fished, and gathered medicine in the mountains, valleys and rivers of their land. Starting in the 19th century with the 1858 gold rush, and continuing through the 20th century to the present, settler governments encouraged settlement, clearcut logging and hydroelectric dams. The resulting overfishing, destruction of land and blockage of waterways caused food

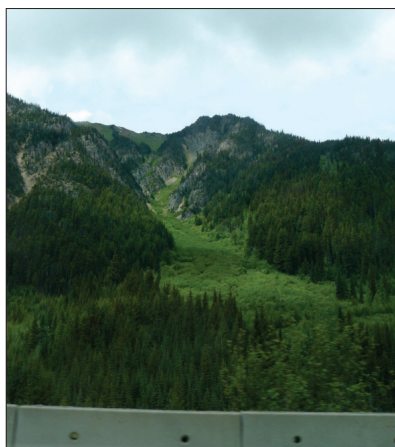
shortages and forced displacement of the Indigenous population. Prime lands cultivated or occupied by St'át'imc were often simply stolen without compensation. One St'át'imc chief complained: "Our friends the whites they have been taking our lands away from us and there is nothing left to us and everything that we use they stop us from using it."

In 1911, Lillooet chiefs signed a joint statement declara-

tion: "We are aware the BC government claims our Country, like all other Indian territories in BC; but we deny their right to it. We never gave it nor sold it to them. They certainly never got the title to the Country from us, neither by agreement nor conquest, and none other than us could have any right to give them title." In 1927, the Indian Act was amended to outlaw organizing to challenge land theft.



In 1990, the government of British Columbia expropriated a section of the Mount Currie reserve (shown here) in order to extend Highway 99, expanding a logging road between Mount Currie and the town of Lillooet. The Lil'wat, the local St'át'imc community, took exception, and blocked the construction. A major RCMP operation was required to remove it, and 63 community members were arrested; many refused to give their names or cooperate with police, and were jailed for one month.



The extension of Highway 99 opened the possibility for further development. The BC government announced that it was seeking proposals for development of a ski resort in the Melvin Creek area. Olympic gold medalist Nancy Greene and Whistler developer Al Raine proposed a \$530 million all-season resort, to accommodate as many as 12,000 visitors daily.

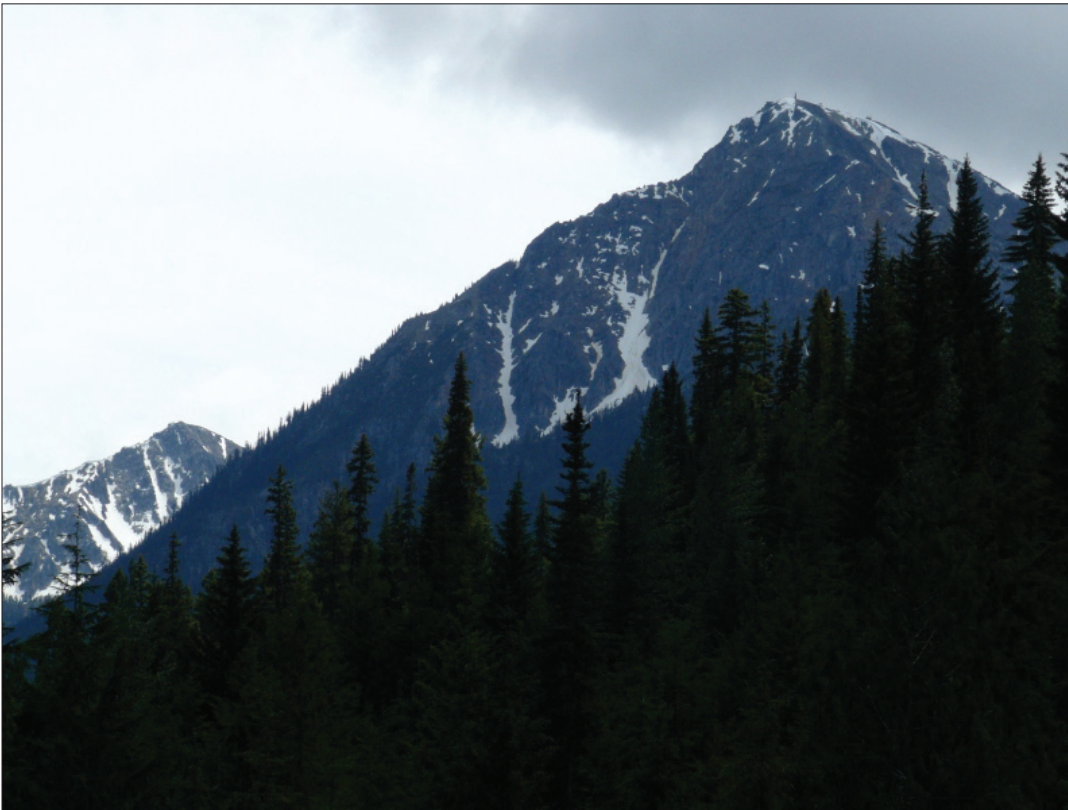


The Melvin Creek watershed is known locally as Sutikalh, a St'át'imc term that means "place of the winter spirit". It is an important ecological area, as it is one of few watersheds in the area untouched by development. For the Indigenous St'át'imc, it is a place for spiritual purification and renewal. Visitors to the area typically note the fresh air and clean water. St'át'imc medicine men would spend 12 years living in Sutikalh, learning.



In 1993, the proposal faced objections from the Environment Ministry for the environmental destruction it would cause, and its threat to Grizzly Bear and Mountain Goat habitat and the proposal was withdrawn. By 1996, the government found ways to bypass these concerns, and the proposal moved forward. In 2000, as final approvals were moving forward, people from the Mount Currie reserve set up a camp at Sutikalh. On June 11, representatives from all 11 St'át'imc communities gathered, expressing their opposition to the ski resort. Despite RCMP raids and frequent harassment—what Hubert “Hubie” Jim calls “a heavy foot and hand, from day one”—from police and pro-resort goons, the occupation was maintained. *Photographer unknown*

Nine years have passed since the resort was planned, and Hubert Jim has lived at the camp since day one. “We set up this camp to protect the environment, the animals’ lives, our mothers’ lives, the air we need to breathe, the water we need to drink,” said Jim. “We must continue to grow spiritually to protect what is left. There is not much left. The main objective of this place is to unify and lead by example in protecting a way of life, and the lives of many who cannot speak for themselves. The plants, the animals, everything.” *Photo by Maya Rolbin-Ghanie*



An overwhelmingly anti-resort sentiment among the St'át'imc and strong, widespread support have kept Sutikalh pristine for nine years. When the Olympics come to Vancouver, no competitors will ski Sutikalh, one of two remaining pristine valleys on St'át'imc territory. “Everything is still here as mother intended it to be,” says Jim.

Hundreds of visitors from countries around the world have visited Sutikalh. More importantly, it is a place for St'át'imc people to gather food and medicine, and participate in cultural activities. The camp hosts an annual gathering in early May. “When we start taking pieces of the chain of life away, we start to fail, we start to get sick. We need to stop that. That’s why this place is so important,” says Jim.

# Victorians Heat Up over Torch Launch

## “Corporate festival” will showcase poverty and homelessness

by Tamara Herman

VICTORIA, LEKWUNGEN AND WSANEC TERRITORIES—At first glance, Victoria, BC, appears to be an idyllic setting for the official launch of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay.

Only a short trip across the water from Vancouver, Victoria is known as a sleepy, prosperous, tourist-friendly city. Yet beneath this façade, Victoria is becoming a hotbed of local resistance to the Olympics, which is fueled—in part—by deepening poverty.

“Gordon Campbell called the Olympic Torch Relay ‘an incredible opportunity to showcase BC’ says No2010 Victoria organizer Kim Crowell. “The fact that he thinks there’s something to ‘showcase’ tells me what circles he’s running in.”

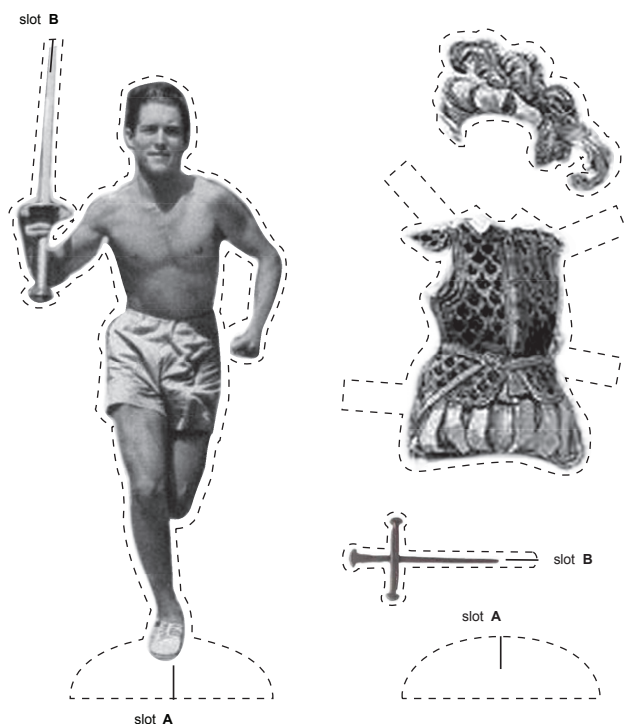
Under the banner of No2010 Victoria, local anti-poverty and environmental groups have been using the Olympic spotlight to “showcase” the critical issues that they are working on throughout the community. Growing public outrage at the colossal cost of the Games and the Torch Relay festivities have added fuel to the anti-Olympics fire.

“The Olympics are contributing to everybody’s poverty,” says Rose Henry, a Coast Salish elder-in-training whose life experiences led her to become one of the city’s best-known anti-poverty advocates.

“They’re creating a bigger deficit and taking seed money that has been there to help overstretched social service agencies that are already struggling with their finances.”

Henry estimates there are upwards of 1,600 homeless people in Victoria. “But there’s only 375 beds available during winter months,” she adds.

“Beds are like winning the lottery. And so people are criminalized; they’re getting ticketed for sleeping in public places, having a backpack or sitting on the



**Dress your own Olympic Torch Crusader before he heads out across the country.**

*Shira Ron*

sidewalk.”

Henry is an organizer with the Committee to End Homelessness, a grassroots group led by and for members of the street community. The Committee has already expressed concerns that the Games will make life more difficult for homeless people living in Victoria. “We’re seeing the number of people growing because of Olympics,” says Henry. “We’re having people leaving Vancouver thinking that life is easier in small town Victoria. But Victoria doesn’t have the same services as Vancouver, and the issues are just as big.”

No2010 Victoria organizer Linden Stewart says that people involved in different movements have been coming together to use the Games to draw attention to the issues they’re working on.

“Victoria is a middle-class town. Maybe some people aren’t impacted by 2010, but the folks in their backyards are. It’s important to demonstrate locally so that

people who don’t normally think about these issues do.”

While critical media reports in Victoria tend to focus on the escalating costs of the 2010 Games, local anti-poverty organizers are trying to push the debate beyond the digits.

“There’s an incredible amount of financial, human and environmental resources going into an event that excludes a large population of marginalized peoples in our province and our country,” says Heather Hobbs from Harm Reduction Victoria, a local group that works for justice and dignity for illicit drug users.

“Instead of focusing on addressing the needs of the most marginalized communities, resources are going into once-in-a-lifetime event,” Hobbs says. “The event arguably won’t benefit marginalized people but will contribute to a legacy of homelessness and poverty.”

Harm Reduction Victoria made headlines earlier this

year when it began operating a “Guerilla Needle Exchange” to mark the one-year anniversary of the eviction of the city’s only fixed site needle exchange.

“We’re hearing from people who use drugs that they aren’t able to access services that they need in order to adequately house themselves and meet their most basic health care needs,” says Hobbs.

“People hear that there’s all this money going into Olympics, and it’s very frustrating and infuriating when they continue to be on streets and have nothing to eat.”

Harm Reduction Victoria is also using the Olympic Games as an opportunity to bring the issues faced by drug users into the local anti-poverty organizing mix.

“In activist movements there hasn’t been lots of attention paid to needs of people who use illicit drugs,” says Hobbs. “So when we come together to talk about these issues, we realize how we can support one another and integrate our concerns in each others’ messages.”

Bringing groups such as Harm Reduction Victoria and the Committee to End Homelessness together to share the stage in denouncing the Olympics is one objective of No2010 Victoria. The collective organized a teach-in on local issues in March 2009, which featured groups such as the Prostitutes Empowerment Education and Resource Society (PEERS) and the Society of Living Intra-venous Drug Users (SOLID). The plans for the Olympic Torch Relay send-off also centred on ongoing local struggles.

“We’re very conscientious about bringing struggles together”, says No2010 Victoria’s Crowell. “We’re imagining a grassroots groundswell to acknowledge our own communities instead of a corporate festival.”

*Tamara is a community organizer, researcher and independent journalist whose work focuses on international and local poverty-related issues.*

# Torch Ignites Resistance

## Opposition to Olympic Torch spreads across Canada

by Alex Hundert and Dan Kellar

KITCHENER-WATERLOO— Emerging from the October 2007 Indigenous Peoples gathering in Sonora, Mexico was a call out for an anti-Olympics convergence in Vancouver in 2010, to coincide with the opening days of the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics. In February 2009, the Olympics Resistance Network (ORN) in British Columbia issued a statement: Solidarity & Unity in Opposing the 2010 Olympics.

The call was heard in Ontario, and since then resistance to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in the province has drawn attention to ongoing local colonialism and environmental destruction. Actions undertaken by anti-poverty, Indigenous, and solidarity activists have highlighted how the Olympics impacts the gentrification of Vancouver and Whistler, the destruction of Native lands, and the criminalization of activists—all also occurring in communities across Ontario.

The Olympic torch is to arrive in Ontario on December 12, 2009, after departing from Victoria, BC, on October 30th.

In August 2009, headlines were made when residents of Six Nations, in Southern Ontario, started debating the torch relay's intrusion into their territory. In October 2008, protests followed the Canadian Pacific Olympic Spirit Train through Ontario (including a rail blockade outside of Toronto). In March 2009, activists disrupted the Royal Bank Torch Relay press conference in Toronto and directly confronted then Assembly of First Nations chief, Phil Fontaine. In October 2009, the Olympic Resistance Network—Ontario (ORN-O) released a statement calling for autonomous actions to disrupt the torch relay.

Wherever groups have organized against the Olympics, activists have been targeted by policing and intelligence agencies



**Native youth disrupt Phil Fontaine's Toronto press conference.** *Native Solidarity*

who have visited and interrogated people at their homes, workplaces, and even pulled them out of university classrooms.

One of these activists is Melissa Elliot, a founding member of Young Onkwehonwe United (YOU) and one of the individuals who confronted Fontaine this past spring. Elliot has been central in the debate about the torch relay at Six Nations, where youth are organizing to stop the torch from passing through their territory. They have echoed the slogan which unites much of the Olympic

resistance movement nation-wide: "No Olympics on Stolen Native Land."

Elliot says that at Six Nations, "we have land rights and we have treaties that are nation-to-nation." She emphasizes that the torch relay compromises their assertion of sovereignty: "They're not coming to us under the Two Row Wampum and asking if they can cross our territory." She continued, "They are going through band council and asking if it can pass through our Canadian municipality—we're not a Canadian municipality, we are a nation."

In Stratford, 100 km northwest of Six Nations, the annual, six-month long Shakespeare Festival has been targeted by Stratford Action for Equality (SAFE). Comparisons are drawn to the Olympics by showing how the festival committee is an instigator and propagator of local gentrification which targets low and no income communities, and of neoliberal exploitation of art and culture.

While attempts to convince City Hall to block the torch from coming through Stratford have been rejected, SAFE continues to conduct rallies and small actions directed against the city and Olympic sponsors. These actions have ignited debates around gentrification in Stratford and Julian Ichim, one of SAFE's core organizers, draws connections between his own community and the 2010 Olympics. "Stratford is a town based on tourism," says Ichim. "We have a lot of social cleansing [...] removing specific undesirable elements to create the image of the town being perfect. And the reality of the situation is that what is happening in BC is happening in Stratford [...] so we have a direct interest and a direct tie to what is going on."

Elliot and Ichim both think that one major benefit of working on the no2010 campaign is that it has created new energy for direct action and change in their

respective communities despite the negative police and media attention that has been focused on anti-Olympics organizers across the country. Elliot adds that the no2010 campaign has played a big role in the recent trend towards political engagement and mobilization among youth from Six Nations. Elliot and Ichim are both also excited about the positive impacts Olympic organizing has made on the activist community in southern Ontario. Ichim says that anti-Olympics organizing in Stratford has helped to "take things to the next level... It has revealed the inefficacy of the democratic process, it has exposed the city and has exposed the liberals who claim to be the friends of poor people, it has exposed all the hypocrisy."

Both Julian Ichim and Melissa Elliot stressed that solidarity between Native and non-Native activists has been one of the campaign's strengths. Ichim says that, "the Olympics are imperial in nature. In Canada the issue is that the Olympics are taking place on stolen Native land." For him this equates simply: "As settlers we have to take a stand... while some people think that it is an issue of the past, it is still today stolen land."

For Elliot, one of the reasons she is enthusiastic about the campaign against the torch relay and the Olympics is that, "we're all working together, and that is very powerful: non-Natives and Natives working together, that is a huge step forward in healing."

*Alex Hundert is a founding member of AW@L and the KW Community Centre for Social Justice (kwccsj) in Kitchener. He is a co-host of AW@L Radio on 100.3 SoundFm, and the Rabble Podcast Network.*

*Dan Kellar is an organizer with AW@L. He recently completed a master's degree focussing on the application of environmental impact assessment legislation to the 2010 Winter Olympics.*





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# “Greenest Games Ever”

## What environmental legacy will the Olympics leave?

by Pina Belperio

WHISTLER—With the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games less than five months away, concerns are growing around the long-term effects of this three-week event on Whistler’s prized natural environment.

### Whistler Olympic Venues

While Vancouver’s Olympic venues were constructed in urban areas, Whistler’s were built far from public view in remote and less disturbed areas.

As the official mountain host, Whistler wanted to show the world that it could hold a world-class event with minimal impact on the environment and make these the “greenest Games ever.” It has been more of a challenge than expected.

### Whistler Olympic Park

Completion of the \$119.7 million Whistler Olympic Park in the Callaghan Valley came with a hefty environmental price. Between 89,000 and 120,000 old-growth trees were removed to build the “Olympic Legacy” trails and ski jumps. The site contains 55 kilometres of public Nordic trails, three stadiums, two ski jumps and a Nordic day lodge.

The venues were designed to meet the Canadian Green Building LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Silver designation. Waste wood was chipped and composted and diverted from the local landfill.

According to Ann Duffy, VANOC’s Corporate Sustainability Officer, “We took conversations with stakeholders and turned them into actions. We shrunk the Nordic venues by 30 per cent and built them on a more compact, geographical area, so fewer trees were cut.”

Local environmental groups claim VANOC failed to listen to



Clear-cutting makes room for the Olympics Medal Plaza in Whistler, BC.

Pina Belperio

their concerns, though, pointing to ski trails fast-tracked from the original designs and cut without buffers around watersheds or sensitive wetlands.

Whistler’s environmental organization AWARE (Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment) had intended to work with VANOC to minimize the Games’ impacts on the environment.

“VANOC said they would look into the width and extent of the Legacy trails, but nothing changed,” said Sara Jennings, AWARE president. “We got the feeling VANOC was only interested in checking us off the stakeholder list as having been consulted.”

AWARE was concerned about the “lack of studies done on the impact of the Legacy trails on grizzly bear habitat,” said Jennings.

To date, VANOC has refused to study this, despite the BC Ministry of the Environment designating the area a grizzly bear

rehabilitation area.

As a stakeholder in the Sea-to-Sky Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP), AWARE had wanted to designate a large tract of land for the Games and call it the Olympic Wildlife Refuge. They were told by VANOC that the name “Olympic” couldn’t be used. In the end, the land was protected, but with no association with the Olympics.

### Whistler Medals Plaza

Over 800 trees were removed from the four-acre forest in Whistler village in spring 2008 to build the \$13.67 million Whistler Medals Plaza. Although the resort already has five plazas for outdoor gatherings, Whistler’s municipal officials decided to build yet another outdoor plaza and amphitheatre.

### Nesters Wetland Transit Facility

Last summer, this rare, red-

listed wetland north of Whistler Village was cleared virtually overnight by BC Transit for the new Whistler Transit Facility and a refueling depot for the experimental Hydrogen Highway.

The wetland, owned by BC Hydro, never received a proper environmental assessment [did it receive an improper one? by whose standards? a partial one? nothing at all?] and was cleared with wider than normal buffers to accommodate the large storage tanks. Prior to the Games, Whistler had already lost 72 per cent of its wetland. With the destruction of this sensitive site, it has lost even more.

### Whistler Sliding Centre

The \$104.9 million luge, bobsleigh and skeleton venue on Blackcomb Mountain has become Whistler’s “white elephant.” [according to whom? author? popular opinion?] VANOC used

next page

# Blacklisted

## A letter from Dustin Rivers

Many will ask, “Why are you against the Olympics?” “Why are Natives against the Olympics?”

For me it’s simply about the hypocrisy of this Olympic machine. It is a very stark form of colonialism in modern times. The objective of the colonizer has not changed in the past 200 years. The monster still wants to devour us, take our lands, and appropriate what little we have. With organizations like the Four Host First Nations, Olympic organizers have designed the operation in a way that it has our people aiding in the colonialism and oppression. This is not a new tactic. In the late 1800’s, the state created hereditary chiefs to aid in the Indian Agents control of the communities. We are told they are helping our people. In the end, however, the environment and spiritual destruction, the twisting of our culture, and the oppression of our people are not worth it. No Olympics on Stolen Native Land.

It seems only a handful of people will truly benefit from the Olympics. Millions of dollars have, supposedly, been poured

into our community. But only a small group of people and their friends and family are benefiting. Ironically, some of these people are a part of my family, but I stand by my principles.

One of the worst parts of the Olympics for me is how much our culture is being sold off and commodified into merchandise and money. A handful of artists have benefited from this. I was asked, “How come you’re not applying for the Olympic arts opportunities?” Our children must know that some collaborated, and others resisted. And so I resist the 2010 Winter Olympics, and I’m not afraid of who knows that.

The myth about Skwxwú7mesh involvement in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games is quite large and troublesome. The land deals, the money-transfers, the real benefits, the history of how it all come together, and who’s doing what and what they are really doing. Perhaps in time I will work on exposing this myth, and speak the truth. The truth about my nation is that many are fed up



“Why are Natives against the Olympics?”

Dawn Paley

with the 2010 Olympics and the lies fed to us by our own politicians. They claimed this would be the best thing for our people, and even use the words of dead chiefs to support their arguments. My community sees little for this, and in the end, it won’t be worth it.

I also have the Police approaching me wanting to find out information about the 2010 Resistance. I’ve been told that my name has come up in Police meetings as “someone to watch during the Olympics.” What I say to this is: I know my rights, I know my intentions, I know what

I believe in, you don’t scare me. Stop targeting Indigenous people who are standing up for their rights.

In solidarity with those who think the Olympics is not worth it. For my ancestors who believed in something better than this. For my ancestors who didn’t die for us to be wealthy capitalists. For the future generations who must know that some resisted.

*Dustin Rivers is a Skwxwú7mesh-Kwakwaka’wakw writer and artist. This piece was previously published on his blog, liberatedyet.com.*

### from previous page

sustainable environmental design principles for the site access, energy use and construction materials. The waste heat from the refrigeration system will be reused to heat the refrigeration plant building and guest services building.

However, the “fridge in the sky” requires the same amount of energy to operate as Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains’ facilities combined, and stores 68,000 kilograms of ammonia. Any leaks would be detrimental to nearby residents and wildlife.

### Women’s Downhill Course, Creekside

VANOC was credited for re-aligning the Women’s Downhill course to minimize the impact

on red-tailed frogs, but the realignment went beyond what some biologists considered “safe.” Environmental groups believe that the new course will cause sediment build-up in nearby creeks.

### Expansion Of Highway 99

Thousands of trees were lost and sensitive ecosystems compromised to build the new \$650 million highway to Whistler. Vulnerable areas like Eagle Ridge Bluffs were bulldozed to make an overland route instead of a tunnel.

### Whistler Athletes’ Village

By all accounts, the Whistler Athletes’ Village is a success story. It’s one of only 20 Canadian developments designated as

LEED-ND (Neighbourhood Development). It received the 2008 Energy Action Award for “its compact, low-carbon, resident-restricted housing with its innovative, alternative energy heating system.”

“The two Athlete Villages use 50 per cent less water and energy than previous venues,” said Duffy.

### The Best We Can Do?

While VANOC touts successes such as the Sustainability Star Program and Project Blue Sky, which encourages people to take on climate change through athletic action, many residents believe the IOC continues to destroy the global environment for corporate gain.

“There’s nothing innova-

tive about clearing every tree in sight or destroying wetlands and grizzly bear habitats. Recycling, composting or building to LEED standards is not innovative—but following the norm,” said Jennings. “Where are the solar panels, the composting toilets, electric cars and green jobs that can be showcased to the world?”

When the guests go home after March 2010 and the party dies down, Whistler residents will be able to assess just how “green” the Games really were.

*Pina Belperio is a writer, politico and community activist who reports on Olympic-related issues in her hometown of Whistler, BC.*

## In Our Own Words

### Women living in the Downtown Eastside weigh in on the Olympics

by Stella August and  
Phillipa Ryan

VANCOUVER—The Downtown Eastside Power of Women Group is based at the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Women's Centre. We are women from all walks of life who are working poor, homeless or on social assistance; and we are all living in extreme poverty.

Many of us are single mothers or have had our children apprehended due to poverty; most of us have chronic mental or physical health issues, for example HIV and Hepatitis C infections; many of us have drug or alcohol addictions; and the majority of us have experienced and survived sexual violence and mental, physical, spiritual and emotional abuse. Indigenous members among us are affected by the legacy of residential schools and a history of colonization and racism.

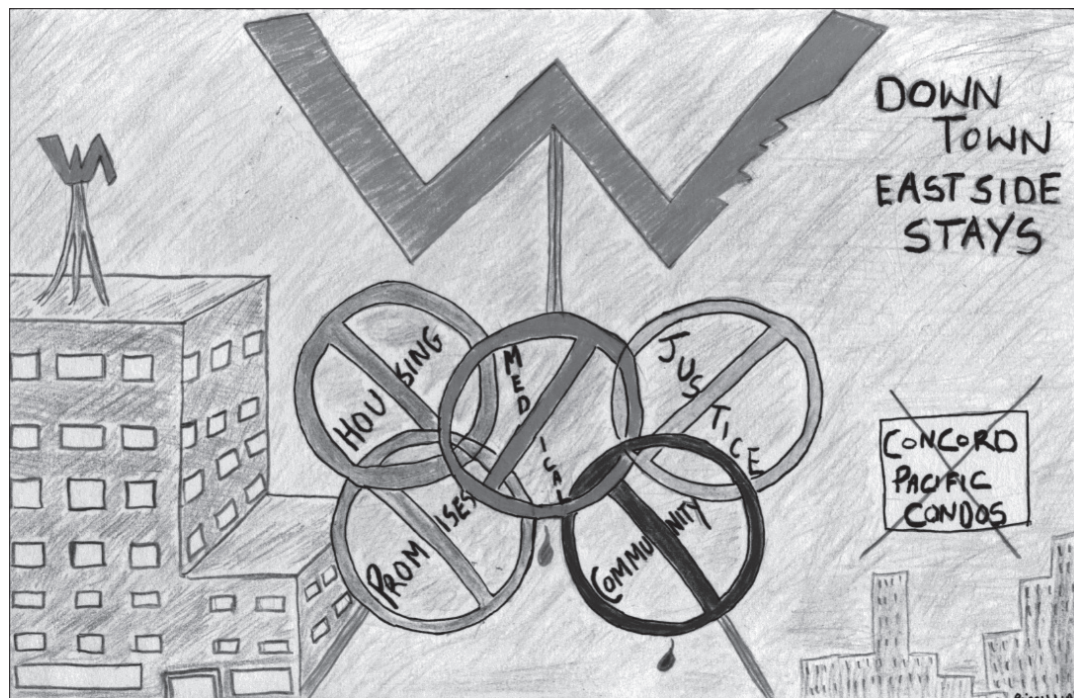
One of the many issues we are concerned with are the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games, which we have seen increase poverty and policing in the DTES, Canada's poorest postal code.

Below, accounts from Power of Women members Stella August and Phillipa Ryan are accompanied by an illustration by member Priscillia May. Her image depicts the broken promises of the 2010 Olympics and the impacts of gentrification and criminalization in the DTES.

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The DTES faces more homelessness and hunger than any other neighbourhood in Vancouver. Every day, I walk by more homeless people on the street who are hungry, cold and wet. The Olympics have only increased this, creating man-made poverty which is unfair and unjust.

The government is spending billions on a circus, while putting people aside. They say they are



Priscillia May

fixing the city but how is the city being fixed if so many people are actually worse off? Across the city we are seeing cuts to education, decreased funding to the arts, more people unemployed. Is this the kind of society we want? The cost of renting in Vancouver is now outrageous. It is hard enough to live on a fixed income—whether pension, or social assistance or disability. Just in the DTES, 1,000 to 1,200 units of low-income housing have been lost since the Olympic bid due to closures and conversions to tourist rentals. Meanwhile, over 1,500 new market homes, primarily condominiums, are being built here.

We are also witnessing a dramatic increase in police presence in this neighbourhood. There are often six to eight police officers on just the one intersection at Main and Hastings. One day a few of us were walking down the street and heard a woman yelling for help. As we ran, we saw her being dragged out of a police car, getting kicked to the ground,

and being handcuffed. She had apparently been chased by a guy with a knife and she ran into the police car for help. The police had dragged her out of their car, berating her for entering a police car, and arrested her. They did not do anything to help her. With the Olympics, this is the kind of increased protection we can expect.

Street vendors are especially being harassed and are given tickets for by-law infractions. The City has banned dumpsters from the downtown core, eliminating the ability of binners [dumpster divers] to make a living. All this to “clean up” the neighbourhood for Olympic officials and tourists; but what is the cost to humanity? They might be able to temporarily sweep things under the rug, but what Olympic legacy will be left for our grandchildren? The City of Vancouver and the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit are also trying to change the planned route of our historic Feb 14, 2010 March for Murdered and Missing Women, something far more significant and sacred than their

Games.

It is easy to turn a blind eye to the plight of the DTES and to stereotype us all as alcoholics and addicts, but we are all humans and we all have a story. I am living proof of the residential school era. I was separated from my parents, my family and my culture. I lost my language. I was beaten and abused severely in residential school. All across Canada, Indian Residential Schools are one of the starkest reminders of the legacy of genocide against Indigenous peoples.

Like many others, I am not satisfied with last year's formal apology from the federal government. The apology was supposed to start a new relationship with Indigenous peoples, one based on respect. But the 2010 Olympic Games represents just one of the many examples of the continuation of the same kind of colonial relationship: we are not consulted, are forcibly displaced, and endure increasing poverty for their benefit. This is not the start of a new relationship. This is why to

me the apology is like a slap in the face, the kind you experience in an abusive relationship where one day you are beaten, the next day you are sent flowers with a sorry note, and then you are beaten again.

This is why I and the DTES Power of Women group are united against the impacts of the Olympics and we have been doing a lot to make our voices heard and our opposition strong. There is a lot of power and unity among us; we may be poor but our spirit is not. All my relations.

—Stella August

When one hears “Olympics,” one thinks of good health, strength and endurance. There seem to be few, if any, Indigenous athletes in Canada. The powers that be have been trying to break the spirits of Indigenous people with poverty so that we will sign away our lands and rights by their treaty process. Over 150 years our once abundant forestry and fishery have been taken and so we have gone from being free self-sustaining individuals living off clean, rich land to being beggars in our own country. Chemicals from monocultural farming, manufacturing, mining and the tar sands continue to pollute our once-pristine air, land and water. None of the stolen lands or assets have benefited the people to whom it once belonged.

The ugliness of our lives, such as drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution, chronic

unemployment, watered-down education and health problems from an inadequate diet are just some of the prices we have paid for the so-called democracy of Canada which continues to justify the thievery of our lands and resources. In spite of the apology for the residential school experience, the policy of racism and genocide continues. I saw my parents resist injustices just as they told us our ancestors resisted from first contact; so it isn't as if Indian Affairs doesn't know what is wrong with the system that they have imposed on us. We now know that the government has designed our lifestyle by micro-managing our lives the way they, as partners to other so-called democracies like the USA, did to the Iraqis and the Palestinians.

The only improvement to our lives that has been bandied about recently was to legalize prostitution. I suppose it is so our government acts as our pimps as the Australian government has done. The Australian government recently sent a leaflet to all prostitutes recommending they use numbing agents so they can service more clients! After dishonoring the contribution of Indigenous people in the First and Second World Wars, the military is promising to pay for post-secondary education for the descendants of those veterans so they can go kill other people's children. The military are particularly targeting



Priscillia May

tribal people with this program so none survive to lay claim to their lands and resources. It looks as if the only way Indigenous people in Canada will be taxpayers is through prostitution and the military. The so-called “Indian Problem” will never go away as it is a multi-billion dollar industry.

The Olympics should be terminated. Its standards have been achieved by cheating. Of what practical value is winning the gold? Look at the price the Peruvians have paid for their gold. Such frivolity is unacceptable when there is so much poverty in the world. Such high standards of physical excellence going hand-in-hand with bankrupt moral ethics—to what purpose? Why is there so much slavery when there are so many so-called democracies? Perhaps that is why they need to deliver it at the point of a gun.

Sorry is not good enough for what has been done to our humanity. It is no longer about educating them. They have made their choices; let them pay through their karma.

—Phillipa Ryan

*Stella August was born in 1945 in Abousat, BC and is a long-time resident of the Downtown Eastside.*

*Phillipa Ryan was born in 1943 in Kitwanga, Skeena River, BC. She has been a resident of the Downtown Eastside off and on since 1980.*

*Priscillia May is from Wet'suwet'en Territory. She is an activist, artist, actor and volunteer in the DTES. She has been involved with organizing the February 14, 2010 Memorial March for Murdered and Missing Women. A single parent, her child is her stone, who inspires and encourages her.*

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# Failure on an Olympic Scale

## At least 137 Native women missing and murdered in BC since 1980

by Maya Rolbin-Ghanie

MONTREAL—The February 14th Memorial March for Murdered and Missing Women has taken route along Hastings Street in Vancouver every year since 1991 to honour Vancouver's murdered women, as well as more than 68 women still missing from the city's Downtown Eastside (DTES). East Hastings Street, which runs straight through the DTES, is often referred to as the poorest postal code in Canada, and is notorious for a highly visible level of homelessness, drug use and sex work.

Vancouver's City Hall recently confirmed its support for the march at the insistence of DTES residents, but previously, the city, along with 2010 Olympic officials and the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit, attempted to change the procession's route or date to defer to the predicted flow of Olympics-generated traffic on Hastings Street.

The Games are set to begin on February 12th, two days prior to the march. Already, the Olympics have led to increased poverty, homelessness, and policing in possibly the poorest neighbourhood in Canada.

The epidemic of missing and murdered women in Canada has not improved since the inaugural march 18 years ago. In fact, it appears to have worsened, particularly for Indigenous women and girls.

Of 521 known cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada since roughly 1980, half have occurred in the last decade. BC has seen the worst: as of 2008, approximately 137 of those cases had occurred there.

According to Walk4Justice activists (a group made up largely of Indigenous women who hold annual walks demanding justice for their missing and murdered friends and loved ones), and the Native Women's Association of



**The annual Women's Memorial March in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside pays tribute to missing and murdered women. The 19th annual march will take place during the 2010 Olympics.**

*Dawn Paley*

Canada (NWAC), the actual number of missing and murdered Indigenous women is much higher, and likely in the thousands. Underestimation, they say, is due to insufficient research funding, which is also a phenomenon of the last decade.

Craig Benjamin, a campaigner for Indigenous rights with Amnesty International, estimates that Canadian police only note victims' racial identity about 60 per cent of the time, and the information is often inaccurate when they do. Many officers do not see the relevance of the information in the first place. "If [victims] don't look Aboriginal in their eyes, then they don't record it," he says.

According to the 2008 Greater Vancouver Homeless Count, almost 3,000 people in the area are homeless, a 22 per cent increase since 2005. Indigenous people make up 32 per cent of this population, though they make up just two per cent of the city's total population.

Frontline Indigenous human rights activist Gladys Radek, of

Vancouver, has participated in the Walk4Justice for several years now. While the 2008 Walk4Justice route went all-out (Walkers made a three-month trek from Vancouver to Parliament Hill in Ottawa), the month-long 2009 Walk last June saw 17 Indigenous women retracing the stretch of Highway 16 between Prince George and Prince Rupert, dubbed the "Highway of Tears," where so many of their relations had violently passed from this world.

"Once we got past Prince George," said Radek, "it was really emotional because we were reaching the heart of the Highway of Tears. Lots of the women's spirits were with us as we were walking."

"You could feel there was no work being done for the family members. We were asking family members [up North] about certain organizations, and there were no answers for them up there so it was really disheartening. A real severe lack of support for any type of justice, equality, closure,

or accountability. We're hoping to change that."

Organizations from the grassroots Walk4Justice all the way to the United Nations have called on the Canadian government for a public investigation into the appallingly high number of unresolved, uninvestigated murders and disappearances of Indigenous women.

In November 2008 the UN gave Canada an ultimatum to report back in a year on the status of more than 500 cases that "have neither been fully investigated nor attracted priority attention, with the perpetrators remaining unpunished."

Canada has not responded.

The problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women is systemic, and an extension of ongoing racist and sexist colonial policies such as the Indian Act. The issue is also country-wide, with the frequency of violence against Indigenous women growing in eastern provinces. BC, though, is still the site of the most alarming level of gendered and



Women drumming at the February 14th Memorial March in 2007.

Dawn Paley

racialized violence toward Native women in the whole country.

Ironically, when deciding where to hold the 2010 Olympics, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) faced a choice between Pyeongchang, South Korea, and Vancouver. While South Korea pitched itself as the “peace” candidate, Vancouver sold itself as the “safety and security” candidate. The provincial government presented BC as a place where everybody gets along: rich and poor, rural and urban, Native and non-Native.

### Increased Susceptibility to Homelessness, Trafficking

A June 2007 report by the Geneva-based Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) found two million people worldwide have been forcibly displaced in the last 20 years to clear space for the Olympics. Vancouver has been no exception. The DTES has seen mass closure of social housing and low-income hotels, triggered by an effort to create more space for tourists and corporate investors.

Indigenous women have been

at the receiving end of the city’s clear priority of over homes: 45 per cent of homeless women identified as Aboriginal in the 2008 Greater Vancouver Homeless Count.

The precariousness of their living situation also leads to more Native women than the rest of the homeless population stating that they are involved in “illegal activities” for income. Most of these women said they were involved in sex work.

This is reflected in other studies: Gang expert Michael Chettleburgh has found that 90 per cent of underage, urban sex workers in Canada are Aboriginal.

Canada is not ordinarily associated with violations like sex trafficking, but it was not even illegal here until 2001. The Olympics, however, have a long tradition of arriving hand-in-hand with a massive influx of prostitution and the pseudo-legalization of the sex industry for the benefit of businessmen and elite athletes. Vancouver is no exception.

Former NWAC president Beverly Jacobs has stated that the organization has reason to believe that trafficking is playing a

significant role in the continually high level of missing Indigenous women and girls, but the only body with adequate resources for an investigation of that calibre is the Canadian government, which has proven to be the least likely to implicate itself.

In Vancouver, trafficking has been historically associated with Asian and Indigenous women, beginning in the mid- to late 1800s as European colonization began. Today, both groups are still targeted much more than other population sectors.

“Vancouver is considered to be a hub for Pacific human trafficking... Traffickers will view the 2010 Olympics as the biggest opportunity for them in decades. Any time you have an influx of foreign tourists and money, you’ll see a huge demand for the sex trade,” says Vancouver journalist Magda Ibrahim.

According to a report by Calgary-based Future Group, entitled *Faster, Higher, Stronger: Preventing Human Trafficking at the 2010 Olympics*, “There is a real risk that traffickers will seek to profit from the 2010 Olympics... This event could create an

increased demand for prostitution, and also give an easy cover story for victims to be presented as ‘visitors’ by traffickers.”

Although the scale of trafficking within Canada is difficult to measure, it is likely much higher than RCMP estimates of six to eight hundred women per year.

Ottawa-based researcher Anupriya Sethi has identified trafficking triangles through which Aboriginal victims are moved: Saskatoon-Edmonton-Calgary-Saskatoon; Saskatoon-Regina-Winnipeg-Saskatoon.

“I don’t know if there are international linkages,” she says. “Once you’re in Vancouver, are you taken? Once you’re in Toronto, are you taken to New York or do you go to Los Angeles? I don’t know. It hasn’t been explored.”

“There’s a total myth that Aboriginal women either consent to or are born into the sex trade,” said Jo-Ann Daniels, interim executive director for the Metis Settlements General Council in Edmonton. “The average age of Aboriginal girls who are human trafficked is between seven and 12 years old.”

“Basically their handlers start them in Vancouver,” said Chantal Tie, a lawyer with the National Association of Women and The Law.

“They work for them there for a while, then they’re sold to someone in Winnipeg and then to someone in Toronto, and so on down the line as they get moved around the country.”

The RCMP’s National Aboriginal Policing Service has expressed a desire to explore the issue further, but says it lacks the funding and human resources to do so.

Considering the extremely poor record of police investigations into violence against sex trade workers and Indigenous women in Canada, it is unlikely that any real attempt to check these practices during 2010 will take place.

*Maya Rolbin-Ghanie is a writer active with the Missing Justice campaign (missingjustice.ca) in Montreal.*

## 2010 Olympics, by the Numbers

17 days of sporting events during Vancouver 2010 Olympics.

17 days of sporting events during Vancouver 2010 Paralympics.

\$6 billion minimum financial cost of the 2010 Olympics.

\$1.73 billion VANOC's estimated operating costs.

\$40 million amount VANOC spent buying all of the billboards and bus shelter ads in a 140km range.

3.5 million tonnes – Estimate of total CO2 emissions from 2010 Olympics, including venue construction, according to activists.

100,000 trees cut to pave the way for the Games.

\$58.4 million price of the opening and closing ceremonies.

\$1.4 million amount crown corporations ICBC, BC Hydro and BC Lottery Corporation spent on tickets to the Olympics.

2,500 athletes.

250,000 tourists in town for 2010.

3 billion TV viewers.

20 Vancouver Organizing Committee board members.

14 VANOC members with past or present professional ties to finance, investment banking or real estate.

45,000 kilometers that the Olympic torch relay will travel.

1,100 units of housing in Athlete's Village.

\$900,000 building cost per unit of housing in Athlete's Village.

373 percent by which street homelessness in Vancouver increased between 2002 and 2008

40 kilometers of security fencing installed during 2010

36.6 per cent of Vancouverites who voted no to hosting the 2010 Games in 2003 plebiscite.

## Medals and Salutes

### A brief look at fascism and the Games



**International Olympic Commission President Count Henri de Baillet-Latour stands between Rudolph Hess and Adolph Hitler during the 1936 Winter Olympics.**

*Bundesarchiv*



**Joan Antonio Samaranch giving the fascist salute in 1974.**



**Canadian, German and US athletes salute Hitler.**

*B. Johannes, Bundesarchiv*

“In August 1936 the Nazis audaciously achieved a propaganda triumph by staging the Olympic Games. Massive efforts had

been undertaken to camouflage the evil nature of the regime... anti-Semitic slogans were removed from walls and roadsides... Every sign of racial, religious or political persecution was temporarily hidden... even as the Olympics were taking place, the concentration camp at Oranienburg, scarcely half an hour's journey from the splendid new Olympic Stadium, was jailed with Jews, socialists... and other anti-Nazis” (From *Hitler's Games: The 1936 Olympics* by Duff Hart Davis.)

The modern Olympics have a long history of association with colonial & fascist elites, starting with the French baron Pierre de Coubertin in 1894, who advocated the Games as a means of legitimizing colonial rule. Yet he was only the first among a long line of outright Fascists that have attained the highest levels within the Olympic industry. Others include Juan Antonio Samaranch (left), IOC president from 1980-2001, who was a former official in Franco's fascist regime in Spain.

In 1932, the IOC awarded the 1936 Olympics to Germany. As the 1936 Berlin Olympics approached, and as the oppressive, racist and brutal policies of the Nazi regime became well known, Jewish groups and others began to call for a boycott. In the USA, a vocal campaign to boycott the Games and to not send a US team, began. Avery Brundage, president of the US Olympic Committee, a well-known fascist supporter, actively undermined the boycott campaign and succeeded in having the USOC reject it in a committee vote. He dismissed it all as a “Jewish-Communist conspiracy.”

—Gord Hill

# Embedded at the Olympics

## Media's sponsorship of 2010 compromises coverage

by Tim McSorley

MONTREAL—The announcement came nearly five years to the day before the 2010 Olympics: CTV and Rogers had won the bid to be the official Olympic broadcasters in Canada for both the 2010 and 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The broadcasting deal offered up a Canadian record of \$153 million for the rights, including \$90 million alone for the exclusive broadcast rights for the 2010 Vancouver Games. That was an increase of 221 per cent on what CBC paid to broadcast the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics and marks the first time the bid for the Winter Olympics bested the bid for the Summer Games.

Four years later, in Spring 2009, CTV/Rogers would be joined by La Presse, Canwest Global regional newspapers and *The Globe and Mail* as the official Francophone, regional and national media partners, respectively, of the Olympic Games.

Together, these five media outlets, which cover the vast majority of the Canadian media landscape, have a vested interest in how the Olympics are perceived, and how many people tune in or read.

"It sort of undermines any kind of journalistic independence or any claim to journalistic independence," Mike Gasher, chair of the journalism department at Concordia University in Montreal, told *The Dominion*. "It's like when Quebecor [which owns Star Academie] covers Star Academie: you know there's a sort of official endorsement and I think that 'officialness' makes a big difference."

Gasher emphasized it's unlikely that coverage is dictated by a direct order; in most news organizations, sports and news coverage will remain independent. But he warns that there could still be unconscious implications for coverage: "Most journalists would say, 'No, no, no, that's not gonna



Sebastian Harder

affect me,' and it probably wouldn't on any sort of conscious level, but I think on a more unconscious level, clearly you know that your newspaper is implicated in this event in some way, and it's probably going to show up [in coverage]."

Interview requests to the CTV/Rogers consortium and *The Globe and Mail* went unanswered. In a press release announcing their partnership with the 2010 Olympic Games, though, *Globe* publisher Philip Crawley stated, "As always, *The Globe and Mail* will do its utmost to deliver insightful, balanced and in-depth news through the stories that matter most to Canadians coast-to-coast."

Chris Shaw, author of *Five Ring Circus* and member of the Olympic Resistance Network, is no fan of the Olympic Games. While he admits this taints how he interprets Olympics coverage,

he believes that very few in the mainstream media are making an effort to cover the Olympics in a serious way.

"It's really been kind of a 90 per cent to 10 per cent split. The 90 per cent being really bad, non-critical coverage, and the 10 per cent being some fairly decent coverage."

For Shaw, that 90 per cent doesn't lie simply with official sponsors, but extends to other mainstream TV and news outlets, including English CBC, which was runner-up in the bid for the Olympic broadcast rights. "By and large CBC's opinion has been see no evil, hear no evil," he says. "Other stations like Global are far more likely to be critical, but they aren't anti-Olympics by any measure."

Charlie Smith, of Vancouver's alt-weekly *Georgia Straight*, sees things as a little less black and

white. He argues media have done their job uncovering stories such as cost overruns, city deficits, and legislation that could further criminalize homelessness, but has failed to provide adequate context.

"I think that certain things have been introduced because of the Olympics, but have not been linked to Olympics," Smith told *The Dominion*.

Smith points to the expansion of the Vancouver Police Department as one example. "It's gobbling a larger and larger share of the budget and leaving less to be distributed elsewhere. The expansion began about 5 years ago [in 2004, the year after Vancouver was granted the Games]."

"That might be one place where the mainstream media has not done a thorough job of contextualizing."

But oft-lacking analysis in

Continues on page 38

# Chicago Thwarts the Bid

## How one American city dodged the Olympic bullet

by Dave Zirin

WASHINGTON, DC—"This is a devastating blow for the people of Chicago." So said ESPN's Chicago-born Michael Wilbon.

But the decision to send the 2016 Summer Olympics to Rio was in fact a victory for the people of Chicago. Pushing back against immense pressure from Mayor Daley's political machine, organizations like No Games Chicago went grassroots, corner to corner, and spoke out against the Olympic storm of gentrification, tax hikes, and police misconduct. They are a model of resistance in the Obama era. Certainly one reason the United States got the high hat was the lingering bad taste of George W. Bush. The global community, after eight years of sneering contempt from Washington, DC, isn't ready to rinse with the Obama mouthwash.

But it's the community activists of Chicago who should feel tremendously gratified. In the Windy City, the hastily formed group No Games Chicago took to the streets, shadowing Olympic organizers at every stop. They turned almost every public relations gambit into challenged, contested, space. They—along with the millions of Chicagoans who expressed their trepidation in polls—saved their city. They have every right to say with pride, "That's the Chicago way!"

As for Barack Obama, he may not be feeling it, but he is the luckiest man alive. Yes, he traveled all the way to Copenhagen and didn't even get a lousy t-shirt, but he is very fortunate his bid went down like it did.

Obama is the first US president to ever appear before the International Olympic Committee and plead for the Games. The Games coming to the Windy City would have been an eight-year distraction and political gold for his opponents. Every time an Olympic project came in late and over budget, every time a



Protests plagued Chicago's Olympic bid.

John W. Sisson, Jr.

scandal hit the tabloids, every time a crime was captured on a cell phone camera it would have been "Obama's Olympic Folly."

The person who really has egg on his face is Mayor Richard Daley. He wanted to show everyone he was a bigger man—and mayor—than his Daddy, with Olympic-sized stadia to boot. Now expect all the Daley arm-twisting and all the dirty skullduggery in the lead-up to come to light and come home to roost. Mayor Daley, rocking a 35 per cent approval rating, said that the Games would be "a huge boost to our economy, raising it to a new level. The Games will help us recover sooner from the recession that still grips our nation and enable us to better compete in the global economy."

There was only one problem with this argument: the history of the Olympic Games almost without exception brands it as a lie. As *Sports Illustrated's* Michael Fish—an Olympic supporter—has written, "You stage a two-week athletic carnival and, if things go

well, pray the local municipality isn't sent into financial ruin."

In fact, the very idea that Chicago could have been an appropriate setting for the Olympics might have been hatched by Jon Stewart for a four-year supply of comedic fodder. To greater or lesser degrees, the Olympics bring gentrification, graft and police violence wherever they nest. Even without the Olympic Games, Chicago has been ground zero in the past decade for the destruction of public housing, political corruption raised to an art form, and police violence.

It was also difficult for Chicago residents to see how this would help their pocketbooks, given that Daley pledged to the International Olympic Committee that any cost overruns would be covered by taxpayers.

This is why a staggering 84 per cent of the city opposed bringing the Games to Chicago if it cost residents a solitary dime. Even if the Games were to go off without a hitch—which would

happen only if the setting was lovely Shangri-La—not even half the residents would support hosting the Games.

The Obamas, former Chicago residents, should have stood with their city. Instead, we saw Barack, Michelle, and Oprah trying to out-muscle Pele and Brazil for a place at the Olympic trough.

Michelle Obama said in her speech to the IOC, "My father was disabled, and I think what it would have meant for him to see someone in his shoes compete. Kids need to see that and that needs to be celebrated just as much, if not more."

This seems more like an argument to support the Paralympics (a tremendous event) but that's beside the point. Michelle Obama should have realized that if the Olympics had come to Chicago when she was a young girl on Chicago's working class southside, her home might have been torn down to make way for an Olympic facility. No word on how being out of house and home

Continues on page 39

# sacrifice

2009

I WON SILVER IN MY FIRST RACE AT 11. BY THEN I WAS ALREADY HOOKED ON THE SMOOTH TURNS, THE COLD WIND, THE RUSH OF GOING FAST... MY COACH TOLD MY PARENTS THAT I COULD GO FAR IF I WORKED AT IT.

BY 13 MY ROUTINE CONSISTED OF PRACTICE TWICE A WEEK, HOURS ON THE ROAD TRAVELING TO RACES, JOGGING, SCHOOL, HOMEWORK... I RECORDED TELEVISED SKIING COMPETITIONS AND WATCHED THE TAPES OVER AND OVER... FORGET DANCES AND PARTIES, I DIDN'T HAVE TIME. I WANTED TO PLAY BASKETBALL AT SCHOOL BUT MY SKI COACH WARNED ME OF THE RISK OF INJURY. I MISSED OUT ON A LOT, BUT THE SUPPORT OF MY FAMILY AND MY TEAM (MY SECOND FAMILY) HELPED...



CONCEPT & LEAD CO-AUTHOR: MOIRA PETERS  
ARTWORK & CO-AUTHOR: HEATHER MEEK



A LOT OF MY TEAMMATES HAD QUIT TO PURSUE A NORMAL TEEN LIFE BY THE TIME I GOT AN OFFER TO TRAIN FOR A YEAR AT AN ELITE SKI TRAINING ACADEMY IN MAINE. ON TOP OF ALL THE EXPENSIVE GEAR, MY PARENTS MANAGED THE \$38,000 FEE, BUT MY BEST FRIEND BRYNN COULDN'T AFFORD TO GO...

THE NEXT YEAR I WAS INVITED OUT WEST FOR A RESIDENCY, NOT KNOWING IF I'D MAKE THE OLYMPIC TEAM. EVEN SO, I WAS CONFIDENT - A LIFELONG DREAM WAS ABOUT TO BECOME REALITY - YEARS OF DEDICATION SEEMED ABOUT TO PAY OFF...

I'M SORRY, SUE. YOU'RE VERY TALENTED... HEY, YOU'RE STILL YOUNG... DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR SPORT - 2014 IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!

ALL THE MONEY MY PARENTS INVESTED, HOW CAN I START OVER, STAY FOCUSED? IT'S NOT FAIR!

LATER

THE OLYMPICS IS BAD NEWS ANYWAY, MAN. THEY DISPLACED A BUNCH OF NATIVES TO BUILD THE SKI RUNS, AN' ALL THAT MONEY COULD BE HELPING THE HOMELESS...

AT LEAST YOU HAD A SHOT AT THE "BIG O." TRY BEING A GIRL SKI JUMPER...



*film*

## Go Team!



### Canadian Olympic Committee; Conservative Party of Canada logo

*"If [minister of state for sport Gary] Lunn thinks he can go into a Tim Hortons anywhere in Canada and tell an average hockey fan that this is not the Conservative party logo, then Mr. Lunn thinks the Canadians are stupider."*—NDP MP Charlie Angus

## Quotable

*"The only certain Olympic legacy is a transfer of wealth from the poor to the rich."*—George Monbiot

*"My Office's two previous reports, issued in 2003 and 2006, conclude that British Columbia's share of the full cost of the Games is considerably higher than the \$600 million figure that has often been quoted. Further, in the absence of full disclosure by the Province, each report highlights significant risks that could result in even higher costs to the Province by the time the Games are finished."*—Former Auditor General of BC, John Doyle, December 2008.

*"We've had overwhelming support from Canadian companies since we were awarded the right to host the 2010 Winter Games,"*—Dave Cobb, VANOC executive vice president, revenue, marketing and communications.

*"The core traditions of the Olympics are very powerful, and we lose sight of that with all the corporate sponsorship, Olympic bylaws and the gigantic scale of the event."*—Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson.

*"We also have legal obligations as a host city for the Olympics, particularly to sponsors."*—City of Vancouver Manager Penny Ballem

## Readable and Audible

For alternative Olympics coverage, refer to the following publications:

Megaphone ([megaphonemagazine.com](http://megaphonemagazine.com))

The Tyee ([thetyee.ca](http://thetyee.ca))

The St'at'imc Runner ([vancouver.mediacoop.ca/author/lillooet-tribal-council/](http://vancouver.mediacoop.ca/author/lillooet-tribal-council/))

Victoria Street Newz ([www.relativenewz.ca](http://www.relativenewz.ca))

Vancouver Media Co-op ([vancouver.mediacoop.ca](http://vancouver.mediacoop.ca))

Red Eye on Co-op Radio Vancouver ([vcn.bc.ca/redeye](http://vcn.bc.ca/redeye))

Briarpatch Magazine ([briarpatchmagazine.com](http://briarpatchmagazine.com))

Groundwire ([groundwire.ncra.ca](http://groundwire.ncra.ca))

## Mexico '68



On the evening of October 2, 1968, ten days before the Summer Olympics were scheduled to start in Mexico, the national government opened fire on a peaceful gathering of 10,000 students and residents gathered to protest government policy at the University in the Tlatelolco district of Mexico City. Hundreds of students were killed, and 2,500 people were detained by a police force named the "Olympic Battalion." Some of those detained were later murdered, others disappeared, others served up to three years in prison. One of the slogans that people were chanting on the afternoon of October 2, 1968 was "¡No queremos olimpiadas, queremos revolución!" ("We don't want Olympic Games, we want revolution!").



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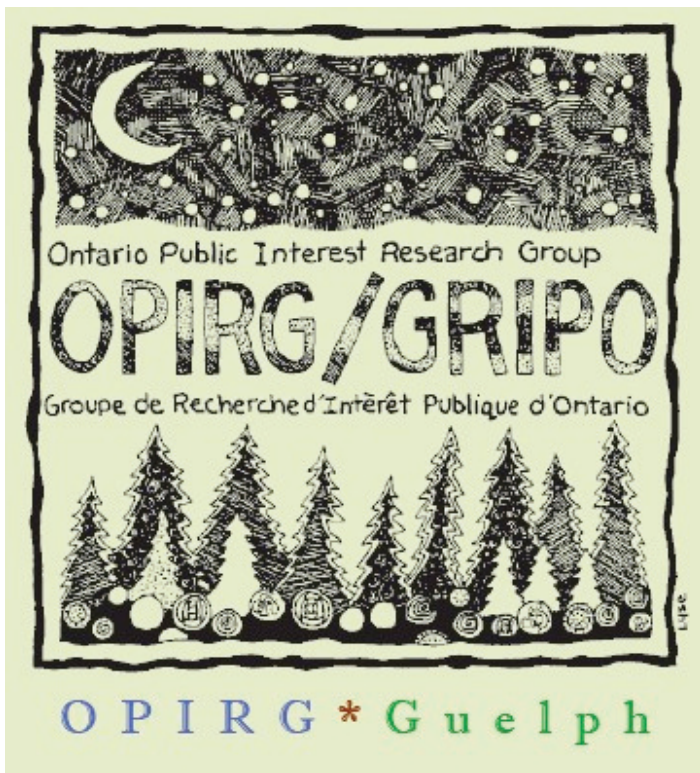
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“Embedded,” continued from page 33

the mainstream media doesn't mean that there will be no critical media coverage of the 2010 Olympics.

Shaw believes that international journalists coming to Vancouver to cover the Games won't hesitate to report on protests or on the immense poverty and homelessness among the residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. When the International Herald Tribune or the London Daily Times begin to run stories on these issues, he says, Canadian media will have no choice but to follow, or risk embarrassment.

There are also independent journalists coming to Vancouver with the express goal of ensuring coverage of the social impacts of the Games.

“We are less interested in covering Olympics themselves than the effects, and covering what is happening in the streets. Paid media will be interested in the

sports and games, while we'll be trying to fill the void on covering social issues,” says Franklin López, who is helping to organize independent media coverage of the Games.

Online and new media, such as video, photo and audio posts to various sites including the Vancouver Media Co-op, will play a critical role in such a project.

But while there will be alternative media coverage, the

resources at the disposal of the mainstream press, and the sheer amount of coverage they will provide—CTV will be airing 22 hours of Olympics coverage per day on its national affiliates—mean they will certainly capture the bulk of the audience.

And as long as media outlets continue to fly the Olympic flag, people will be right to raise questions.

“If the whole point of jour-

nalism is to give sort of objective, independent, non-partisan account of events, then it really casts doubt because the media are partisans, officially,” says Gasher. “It's the same issue as embedded journalists with the military. It does raise questions about what kind of compromises are in play, whether they're conscious or unconscious.”

*Tim McSorley is the Media Analysis Editor at The Dominion.*

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“Chicago,” from page 34

would have helped her disabled father.

The question is, why did Obama risk this humiliation?

Maybe Obama wants the Olympic fairy dust enjoyed by Ronald Reagan at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles or Bill Clinton at the 1996 Games in Atlanta. Or perhaps he is returning favor to the developers and other sundry connected people in the Windy City who will make out like bandits once the smoke has cleared. But his intentions are clear: he wants the glitz, glamour, and prestige of the Games and he wants it for the Daley machine. What the people of Chicago want doesn't seem to compute.

But we shouldn't be surprised at this point that Obama is tin-eared to the concerns of Chicago residents. As Paul Krugman wrote on September 20 on the banker bonuses, “the

administration has suffered more than it seems to realize from the perception that it's giving taxpayers' hard-earned money away to Wall Street.” Shoveling taxpayers' money into the Olympic maw is no better, especially in these tough times.

No Games Chicago organizer Alison McKenna said, “I oppose the Olympics coming to Chicago because instead of putting money toward what people really need, money will be funneled to real estate developers who will be tearing down Washington Park and other important community resources. I oppose the Olympics coming to Chicago because the nonprofit child-welfare agency that I work for had to sustain budget cuts and layoffs, while Chicago has spent \$48.2 million on the 2016 Olympic bid, as of July 2009.”

There is an urgency to building resistance to these

kinds of priorities. Right now, the right wing is shamelessly adopting populist rhetoric and the power of protest to sell an agenda of racism and fear wrapped

*Money will be funneled to real estate developers who will be tearing down Washington Park and other important community resources.*

in taxpayer protection. The big public voice against Obama's trip to Copenhagen was the repellent Republican National Committee chief Michael Steele who believes, and this is hilarious, that “at a time of war and recession,” Obama needs to stay home. It shouldn't be a scoundrel like Steele who

represents a party of privatization and occupation who delivers that message.

Now is the time to build a pole of attraction on the left for people furious at corporate greed amidst a recession. This needs to happen, and not just for the Windy City. In Vancouver, the struggle is now defensive in nature as our anti-Olympic heroes strive to find a way to sand off the worst edges of the Olympic scythe, cutting through one of the world's most beautiful cities. It's about building a vibrant protest movement that believes in social justice not the rank divisiveness of the right. Obama likes to say that change comes from “outside Washington.” It's time to take him at his word.

*Dave Zirin writes about sports for The Nation, among other publications. His most recent book is A People's History of Sports in the United States.*

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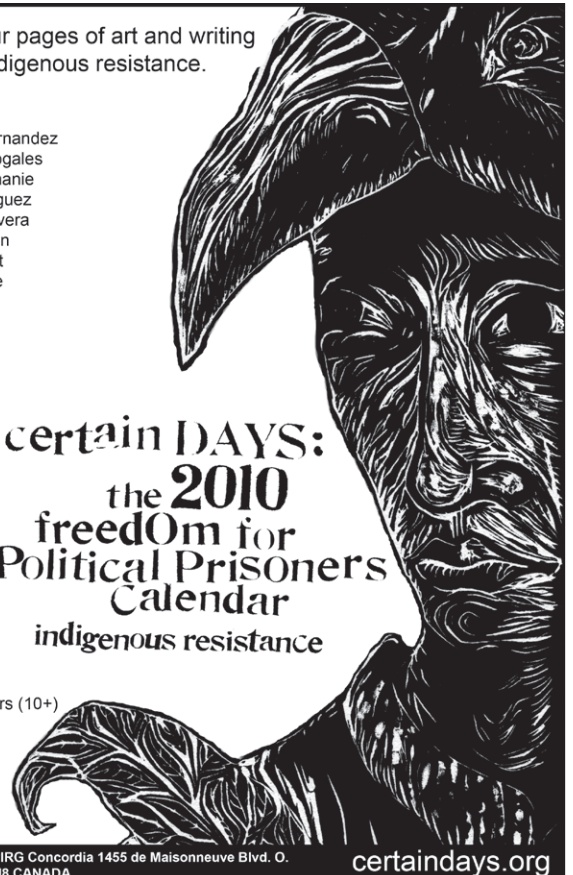
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