UNSETTLING BRITISH COLUMBIA:
INTERVENTIONS IN A NEOCOLONIAL
POLITICS

by

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary struggles by Aboriginal Nations within the boundaries of British Columbia for land and self-determination must be understood in relation to the historical geography, and political economy, of European colonialism and imperialism. The protracted and uneven process of European capitalist expansion overseas eventually led to the establishment of a British settler colony on the Pacific Coast of North America and the wholesale displacement of the region's indigenous populations. Once this regional history of white settler ascendancy is placed in its proper historical context, present day conflicts between Natives and settlers in Canada's westernmost province can be seen as local manifestations of an ongoing struggle by Aboriginal Nations around the world to challenge settler state power and a global system (the "New World Order") whose main features and dynamics remain largely imperialist. To illustrate this point, this thesis considers both the recent upsurge of settler opposition to Aboriginal land claims and treaty negotiations in British Columbia, and the militarization of state responses to Aboriginal protest exemplified by the Gustafsen Lake Standoff of 1995.
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INTRODUCTION

It's out of hope, not nostalgia, that we must recover a community-based mode of production and way of life, founded not on greed but on solidarity, age-old freedoms, and identity between human beings and nature. I believe there is no better way to honor the Indians, the first Americans, who from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego have kept their identity and message alive through successive campaigns of extermination. Today they still hold out vital keys to memory and prophecy for all of America, not just our Latin America.

Eduardo Galeano¹

Modern imperialism, the global expansion of competing western European powers which began over five hundred years ago, laid the foundations of the contemporary world system. This expansion was directly linked to the rise of capitalism in Europe, a system predicated on ceaseless self-expansion through the production and sale of commodities. The modes of European expansion varied markedly across time and space, but revolved essentially around the establishment of overseas colonies for the purposes of extracting wealth. In early phases, this meant controlling trade in or otherwise appropriating the products of existing non-European social systems. Later, with the shift to industrial capitalism, European powers began to seek out sources of raw materials

as well as markets for finished products. This required a thorough reorganization of indigenous societies, involving the seizure of territory, exploitation of indigenous labour, and introduction of capitalist social relations. Sometimes it led to the creation of settler states whose security rested on the eradication or permanent subordination of preexisting indigenous populations. In all cases, imperialism and colonialism inevitably involved the imposition, often by force of arms, of a political and economic order suited to the needs of European ruling elites.

In this thesis, I analyze the political economy of imperialism and colonialism in the context of British Columbia to reveal the structural forces, motives and methods that led to the establishment of a British settler colony on the northwest coast of North America in the nineteenth century. My project has a double focus: I want firstly to sketch in broad outline that historic transformation by which sophisticated and richly diverse Indigenous Nations, self-governing in territories encompassing the whole of what is now B.C. for thousands of years, were all but expunged and replaced, in a matter of decades, by a destructive political and economic system centered in Europe, organized around the interests and authority of a European elite, and institutionalized in a wholly new apparatus of state power. Secondly, I consider
the political antagonisms which are the present day outcome of settler colonization, and focus in particular on settler responses to the contemporary struggles of B.C.'s Aboriginal Nations for land and self-determination.

A basic premise of my argument is that imperialism and colonialism are still with us, though their circuits have changed. To many, no doubt, these terms have a decidedly anachronistic and alien connotation, suggesting a remote past and distant places. Yet British Columbia is very much a product of the imperial division of the world into colonial possessions and spheres of influence. Like countless other ex-colonies, it was established amid intense inter-imperial rivalry in order to safeguard British political and economic interests within a much broader geopolitical strategy. And here as elsewhere colonization entailed the subjugation of the local indigenous population, the appropriation of territory, and the plundering of natural wealth. Unlike elsewhere, however, in B.C. the end of the Second World War did not mark the beginning of decolonization and independent statehood; instead, B.C.'s Aboriginal Nations are trapped within a settler society whose basic features remain colonial. Moreover, in global terms, domination and unequal exchange still characterize relations between the core of advanced capitalist powers and a periphery of poor, underdeveloped countries, though now these connections are mediated through the multinational
corporations and the organs - the World Bank-IMF, the G7, the WTO - of an emergent transnational state. Hence in my view "imperialism", understood as the ongoing process of capitalist globalization, remains a fundamental feature of the world in our epoch.

For these reasons, I resist using "post-colonialism" - with its emphasis on textuality, cultural hybridity, and subjectivity - as my theoretical framework because it risks exaggerating the discontinuities between the so-called Age of Empire and the present configuration and dynamics of global power. Instead, I adopt a political economy approach which stresses the need for deep, structural analysis of the material conditions, historical trajectories, and social cleavages in both the world capitalist system and particular social formations. This approach, I believe, enables us to see the politics of settler colonialism in British Columbia within its proper, world-historical context.

The organization of my discussion reflects this overarching concern to link past and present, the local and the global, in a coherent structural analysis. In Chapter Two, I present a hit-and-run genealogy which situates the colonization of B.C. within the longue durée of European imperial expansion, emphasizing a hemispheric history of genocide and dispossession, in order to reframe the settlement of the province, and its current political
landscape, as ineradicably colonial. I offer a schematic overview of Euroimperialism at three overlapping scales - global, national and regional - in order to link the implantation of a settler colony in British Columbia with a broader set of global dynamics, in particular the rise of a world capitalist system centered on the de jure primacy of the modern nation state and de facto dominance of (white) patriarchal bourgeoisies. These remain the structural imperatives which shape the political terrain on which settlers and Indigenous Nations engage today.

In Chapter Three, I consider the current political conjuncture in B.C., where an ostensibly progressive treatymaking process has belatedly begun only to encounter a well-orchestrated and pseudo-populist settler backlash. This conjuncture, I maintain, can only be understood in connection to broader shifts in the era of multinational capitalism whose primary symptoms - economic restructuring, the dismantling of the welfare state, and the rise of right wing populist movements - are by no means unique to B.C..

I argue that Natives have become the new scapegoats for regional elites and the subordinate strata of the settler caste in the face of ongoing restructuring in B.C.'s

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2 I use "conjuncture" here in the sense specified by Stuart Hall, as the "coming together of often distinct though related contradictions, moving according to different tempos, but condensed in the same historical moment...." See his "The Great Moving Right Show", in The Hard Road to Renewal (London: Verso, 1988) p. 41.
resource-based economy. This diverts attention from the real causes of the crisis, namely, the aggressive promotion of a corporate agenda bent on adapting the provincial political economy to suit the needs and interests of transnational capital.

One of the defining events of this conjuncture, I propose in Chapter Four, was the month-long Gustafsen Lake Standoff, which transfixed the province and the country in the late summer of 1995. What began as a local conflict between a group of Native Sundancers and a Cariboo rancher quickly developed into the most serious confrontation between Natives and the settler state apparatus since the Oka Standoff of 1990. Native resistance provoked a large-scale counter-insurgency operation involving advanced military technology and hundreds of police and Canadian Forces personnel. The Standoff illustrated that repression remains the final guarantor of settler rule in this ostensibly post-colonial era, and that the settler state will swiftly criminalize any Natives who challenge the reformist agenda of an elite-sponsored treaty process. However, the standoff also demonstrated that emergent political divisions between moderates and sovereigntists within Native communities will make the task of defending aboriginal land and nationhood ever more complicated.
Reminders are all around us, if we care to look, that the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century extermination of the indigenous people of Hispaniola, brought on by European military assault and the importation of exotic diseases, was in part only an enormous prelude to human catastrophes that followed on other killing grounds, and continue to occur today - from the forests of Brazil and Paraguay and elsewhere in South and Central America, where direct government violence still slaughters thousands of Indian people year in and year out, to the reservations and urban slums of North America, where more sophisticated indirect government violence has precisely the same effect....

David Stannard, *American Holocaust*

British Columbians should understand, as now they hardly do, how non-Native power took root in their province.

Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the main historical forces which have shaped relations between Natives and settlers in British Columbia down to the present. As such, it represents a synoptic history of imperialism and colonialism as these relate to Canadian state formation and the development of British Columbia. My purpose is not to provide a rich historical narrative of the past, but to outline, in schematic form, the political and economic dynamics which produced our present circumstances,
in order that we may understand and act within them. In part, my project takes its cue from Foucault's notion of a "history of the present", which selectively invokes the past to disrupt the received wisdom of the present; it is a "curative history", self-consciously situated in a contemporary political field and responding to current political concerns.¹ But more direct inspiration comes from the work of Perry Anderson, whose peculiar brand of historical sociology has generated a number of ambitiously synthetic overviews of European, and especially, British society, including Lineages of the Absolutist State, from which the title of this chapter derives.² Anderson's work is similar to Foucault's insofar as he is concerned to construct a politico-economic history of the past in order to illuminate current political realities and opportunities. But it diverges sharply from Foucault's work methodologically and politically, for Anderson is writing within a deliberately Marxian framework, in pursuit of an avowedly socialist politics. This leads him to develop totalizing histories which seek to disclose the main structures and dynamics determining the course of long-run

development for particular social formations. Likewise, then, my aim in this chapter is to provide a telescopic account of the "distinctive historical trajectory" of British Columbian society, setting it in its wider historico-geographical context and delineating its main features and movements.

My discussion is divided into three main parts. In the first, I provide a thumbnail sketch of the longue duree of European overseas expansion, emphasizing the impetus provided by different phases of internal capitalist development and the impact of that expansion on the non-European peoples who encountered it. I also offer a summary exposition of the main features of one particular historical variant of European imperialism, the white settler colony. In these colonies of settlement, the triangular relationship between settlers, indigenous peoples, and the metropolitan power give rise to a distinctive set of power relationships and developmental trajectories. In the second part, I narrow my focus to construct an historical diagram of the Canadian social formation, emphasizing both its peculiar position within the world capitalist system and its particular model of colonization. In the third and final

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part, I refine my focus once again, developing a similarly
diagrammatic narrative of the imperial intrusion into
British Columbia, which highlights the main features of its
transition to "advanced resource capitalism" and its history
of Native subjugation.

II. IMPERIALISM: A POSTCOLONIAL PRIMER

The Export of Barbarism

The discovery of gold and silver in America, the
extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the
aboriginal populations, the beginning of the conquest
and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa
into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-
skins, signalised the rosy dawn of the era of
capitalist production.

Marx, Kapital, Vol.1

European expansion in the modern era was a spasmodic affair
driven by the dynamics of uneven development in Western
Europe, a process shaped in turn by the interplay of a
number of contingent factors: technological innovations, the
pace and nature of economic change, and political conflict
within and between the nascent capitalist nation-states. 4
The earliest European overseas forays spanned the century or
so following the Colombian voyages, the storied "Age of

4 The periodizations of capitalist development described in
this section are based mainly on the essays in Harry
Magdoff, Imperialism: From the Colonial Age to the Present
is broadly similar may be found in Hamza Alavi, "Colonial
and Post-Colonial Societies", in Tom Bottomore, ed., The
"Discovery" (in reality an "Age of Plunder"), as European ruling classes sought access to the storied riches of the "Orient". In this period, centralizing feudal monarchies in Western Europe were engaged in a prototypical form of "internal colonialism", fighting serial wars to consolidate power over the patchwork of independent fiefdoms and diverse peoples that was then Europe, and financing these costly campaigns with the precious metals, spices and other exotic goods obtained abroad by force of arms. Spain and Portugal, the dominant powers in this period, secured their preeminence through pioneering efforts in empire building: Portugal, following a southern route to the East, seized control of the spice trade from Asian and African merchants and began a brisk trade in West African slaves to satisfy the labour requirements of its Brazilian plantation colonies; while Spain, blocked by the Ottomans to the east and Portugal to the South, enlisted Columbus to chart a western route to Asia, thereafter embarking on a genocidal course of looting, destruction and enslavement in the Americas that would produce untold mountains of gold, silver and "Indian" corpses. The lesser powers - England, Holland, 


5 In this sense, the antecedents of European imperial expansion overseas were campaigns of internal expansion - the consolidation of economic and political power - within Europe itself. For an evaluation of this process in relation to Britain, see Michael Hechter, Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe British National Development
France - were forced to content themselves with a hand-me-down brigandism aimed at local conquests (like Ireland) or predatory forays against Spanish and Portuguese ships and trading posts. In the end, however, this pre-capitalist, or "bullionist", phase of Euroimperialism could not be sustained, as accumulation depended upon finite reserves of goods (especially precious metals), and traditional systems of production that were no match for European rapacity. As Magdoff puts it, "the wealth obtained by plunder of hoards amassed over years can only be taken once."  

This old or pre-modern form of imperialism was gradually replaced from the opening decades of the 17th century by a new system of colonial exploitation revolving around the mercantile interests which dominated the Western European transition from feudal to capitalist society. Iberian hegemony, stagnating under the decadent rule of retrograde aristocracies, gave way to an intense rivalry between British, French, and Dutch ruling classes that would

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ultimately be resolved, after protracted wars in Europe and North America, with the defeat of Napoleon and the establishment of the "pax Britannica". This was the period of the so-called "first British empire" (comprising Ireland, the American colonies, and the Caribbean) whose lifeblood was the lucrative "triangular trade" in slaves, colonial products (sugar, cotton, tobacco), and manufactured goods (textiles, rum) between Britain, West Africa and the Caribbean. It was also the heyday of the great trading monopolies - the Dutch and British East Indies Companies, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Company of New France, among others were established during this time - and of protectionism, wherein commercial exclusivity (typified by the Navigation Acts) became the basis for economic growth in each imperial domain. Lacking the capacity to exert extensive control over distant territories, imperial strategies focused instead on the establishment and profitable management of plantation colonies and white settler entrepots along the coastal fringes and major inland waterways of the colonial periphery: for example, the French settlements along the St. Lawrence at Port Royal (1604), Quebec (1607) and Montreal (1640), the Dutch at the Cape (1652), Batavia (1619) and New Amsterdam (1626), and the

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9 Magdoff, "Imperialism: A Historical Survey".
English at Jamestown (1607), Ulster (1609), Plymouth (1620) and Barbados (1627).\(^{10}\)

Merchant primacy was not to last, however, as changes within Europe, fueled above all by the exsanguination of colonized peoples and territories, combined to spur on even further transformations. The so-called "industrial revolution" heralded not only a new phase of capitalist development in Western Europe - featuring wholesale dispossession of rural peasants through enclosure of feudal lands, the parallel emergence of an urbanized system of factory production, and the concentration of political and military power in the modern nation-state - but also a cataclysmic shift in the relations between Europe and the rest of the world.\(^{11}\) The previous forms of colonial incursion were disruptive, to be sure, and in areas of intensive European activity were frequently devastating. Spanish conquistadors and encomenderos, for example, managed to reduce the indigenous population of the Americas by approximately 90 million, or


\(^{11}\) For a concise and elegant theoretical analysis of this transition, see Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
90 percent, in the two centuries after Columbus. Nevertheless, prior to industrialization European imperial powers lacked the economic and military capacity to thoroughly reorganize communally oriented indigenous societies, tending instead to exploit them while leaving their socio-political structures more or less intact. But industrial capitalism set new imperatives in motion, as the engine of European expansion became less and less the trade in luxury products, and more and more the competition between imperial powers for overseas territories to serve as markets for European manufactures, sources of raw materials for expanding industries and food for an urbanizing proletariat, and outlets for the profitable investment of rapidly accumulating capital.

As Magdoff suggests, colonization became a program for a fundamental restructuring of non-capitalist societies along Euro-capitalist lines, and though the "local tactics" may have varied

the basic strategy was universal, involving to a greater or lesser extent the disruption of traditional self-sufficient and self-perpetuating communities;

introduction of private property in land; extending the

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use of money and exchange; imposition of forced labour and recruitment of a labour force dependent on wages; destroying competitive native industry; creating a new class structure, including fostering of new elite groups as political and economic junior partners of the metropolitan centers; [and] imposition of the cultures of the metropolitan centers....

European control over production and reproduction, therefore, became the essential object of imperialism in this phase, and required the introduction of bourgeois property relations and a sexual division of labour premised on male supremacy (or its reinforcement, where the latter already existed). Though the basic impetus of this process was economic, colonization also frequently entailed aggressive attacks on indigenous cultures and social institutions, including the suppression of local traditions, especially language and religion, and the prescription of European class and familial structures and sexual-cultural regimes. Bishop Desmond Tutu has succinctly captured the

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14 Ibid. p.106.  
15 See M. Etienne and Eleanor Leacock, Women and Colonization (New York: Praeger, 1980).  
role of Christian missionaries as cultural footsoldiers in campaigns of colonial conquest:

They came. They had the Bible and we had the land. And they said: 'Close your eyes and pray'. And when we opened our eyes they had the land and we had the Bible.\textsuperscript{17}

From the 1830s onwards, European efforts were directed increasingly to the continental interiors of Africa, Asia and North America, the consolidation of this new colonial order usually requiring extended wars of conquest against native populations, either to subdue them for exploitation or displace them for future white settlement.\textsuperscript{18} A necessary precondition for the consolidation of European hegemony in colonial territories was the continuing technological revolution wrought by capitalist industry: the increased killing capacity associated with new armaments, the enhanced economic and strategic power afforded by new technologies of transport (railway and steamship) and communications (the telegraph); and, last but not least, new

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{17} Eduardo Galeano, "Othercide", in \textit{We Say No} (New York: Norton, 1992), p.307.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{18} For an excellent overview of this period see V.G. Kiernan, \textit{European Empires From Conquest to Collapse 1815-1960} (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982).}
administrative techniques enabling the management of large flows of people, goods, information and capital.¹⁹

This acquisition of new territories accelerated rapidly in the late 1870s, the era of so-called "high imperialism", as capitalism entered its monopoly phase - marked by the ascendancy of finance over industrial capital, the unfolding of the "second" Industrial Revolution (steel, electricity, oil, industrial chemistry and the internal combustion engine) and the unprecedented concentration of capital in emerging conglomerates.²⁰ This shift dramatically expanded the need for secure supplies of raw materials, preferably under monopolistic control, and provoked febrile competition among the rival centers of capital accumulation now challenging British hegemony, among them Germany, Belgium, Italy, the U.S. and Japan. By 1914, when imperial expansion reached its zenith, Europe's imperial masters had secured direct control over 85% of the earth's land surface, and forcibly initiated social and economic transformations whose human and ecological toll would perhaps be scarcely imaginable to contemporary Europeans were it not for the homecoming of inter-imperial rivalry in the twentieth

century, in the form of two World Wars and the rise of fascism.\textsuperscript{21} The strategies, methods and ideologies of colonial conquest, hitherto reserved for colonized peoples beyond Europe, were now visited upon the continent's civilian populations, with particular groups - Jews, Gypsies - classified as "inferior" and targeted for systematic annihilation. The apocalyptic conflict, which saw over eighty million killed, dozens of cities destroyed, and a colossal squandering of material resources for purely destructive ends, demonstrated the basic perversion of human existence that the capitalist system represents.\textsuperscript{22} And yet far from marking the death knell of capitalism per se, the war simply cleared the path for the global preeminence of U.S. capital, and a new form of "imperialism without colonies".\textsuperscript{23}

The postwar period witnessed the historic reversal of almost five centuries of European imperial expansion, as anti-imperial movements in the colonial periphery, adopting the modern vernacular of national liberation, sought to throw off the yoke of European domination by establishing

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 169.
independent nation-states and nationalist programs of economic development. These movements marked the culmination of resistance struggles which had been gathering momentum throughout the colonial period, accelerating particularly in the first 50 years of the twentieth century. A number of long-term trends in the international political economy converged in the postwar realignment of global power, creating conditions favorable to these independence movements: the ascendancy of the U.S. as the dominant capitalist power, determined to consolidate its own imperial hegemony but forced to contend with a welter of anti-systemic forces; the concomitant decline of the competing imperial powers, whether through military defeat (Germany, Japan and Italy being stripped of colonies) or decrepitude (Britain and France); and, perhaps most significantly, the historic emergence of a global anti-capitalist bloc, centered in the USSR but attracting mass support in the advanced capitalist countries, which for a time threatened the persistence of the world capitalist system.

Decolonization thus became one of the hallmarks of the postwar period. The initial phase actually began during

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23 See "Imperialism without Colonies" in Magdoff, Imperialism: From the Colonial Age to the Present, pp.117-147.
24 The following paragraphs are based on Kiernan, European Empires From Conquest to Collapse; and Magdoff, "Imperialism: A Historical Survey".
the war, when Lebanon, Syria and Transjordan achieved independence in 1941; the second phase covered the period 1945 to 1950, and was concentrated primarily in Asia: the Philippines, India, Burma, Indonesia, China. The third phase, 1950-56, delivered the coup de grace to a bitterly recalcitrant Franc-imperialism, as French defeats produced new nations in Indochina (Laos, Cambodia, the "two" Vietnams) and North Africa (Libya, Tunisia, Morocco). The final phase of decolonization was reserved for tropical Africa, where 33 new countries emerged between 1958 and 1968. As Magdoff points out, the nature of decolonization was mainly shaped by the imperial assessment of post-colonial prospects: on the one hand, where new governments were amenable to continued imperial influence, independence "came sooner, and with less bloodshed"; on the other, where they were nationalist and revolutionary in character, threatening expropriation, closure of markets, and alignment with the socialist bloc, bloody warfare generally ensued (as in Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and France's North African colonies). Settler regimes were naturally the most bitter defenders of the colonial status quo, in some cases severing ties with the "mother country" (as in Algeria, Israel and Rhodesia) in order to gain a free hand in the suppression of indigenous liberation movements.

Unfortunately, as Fanon and others soon recognized, "colonialism and imperialism have not paid their score when
they withdraw their flags and their police forces from our territories". Decolonization produced not autonomy but a modified form of imperial domination based on nominal independence but de facto subordination in the economic, political, cultural and military spheres: in a word, neocolonialism. In reality, the decolonization process itself carried with it the seeds of this renovated imperialism: the dependent patterns of trade and investment could not be broken without a fundamental restructuring of economic relationships between core and periphery, a step which the imperial powers (especially the U.S.) actively discouraged by applying economic pressure and, where necessary, intervening militarily. Cold War rivalry opened up some space for autonomous initiatives (the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77), but the long term putrefaction of the Soviet system, signaled first by the 1980 invasion of Afghanistan, then by Gorbachevian reforms, and culminating in the 1989 "collapse of communism", eliminated whatever slack existed in the imperial chain. The revolutionary dreams of Third World solidarity and autonomy which characterized much of the 1950s and 60s dissolved into a nightmare of debt, dependency and internal rivalry in the 1970s and 80s, as the ex-colonies struggled to survive in a

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26 For analysis of the collapse of the communist bloc and its implications for the Third World, see the essays in
world still dominated by the capitalist centers. By the early 1990s, with Third Worldism disintegrated and communism vanquished, the triumph of capital was complete, and George Bush was soon boldly proclaiming the birth of a New World Order. Its chief features: class polarization on a world-scale, as the gulf between the global rich and the global poor grows ever wider; the paramountcy of multinational capital, dangerously mobile and increasingly detached from any national allegiance or accountability, and pursuing accumulation through ever more globalized systems of production; supranational economic organizations like the IMF, the World Bank, and the GATT (now the WTO), the New Conquistadors overseeing the "structural adjustment" of Third World economies on behalf of the multinationals; and regional trading blocs dominated by one or another national capital (Germany and the EC; Japan and ASEAN; the U.S. and NAFTA); all guaranteed by a resurgent U.S. militarism now disporting itself in the blue helmet of United Nations internationalism. In sum, while the formal trappings of colonial rule have disappeared, the main features of imperialism remain intact, though it may no long be recognized as such.
Cinderellas of Empire

The colony of a civilized nation which takes possession, either of waste country, or of one so thinly inhabited, that the natives easily give place to the new settlers, advances more rapidly to wealth and greatness than any other human society.

Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations

In thus tracing the trajectory of Euroimperialism it is useful perhaps to distinguish between different modes of colonization. If the most common form of imperial domination was the colony of exploitation - characterized by a "thin white line" of European administrators and military personnel, forcibly installed in densely populated tropical zones to manage the exploitation of local resources and indigenous or imported (slave) labour on behalf of a metropolitan bourgeoisie - then the temperate colonies of settlement established in the Americas and Australasia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries represent an exceptional form. The distinction between them is not

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28 There appears to be renewed academic interest in the "settler colony" in recent years. Among the recently published works I have relied on are Donald Denoon, Settler Capitalism: The Dynamics of Dependent Development in the Southern Hemisphere (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983); Daiva Stasuilis and Nira Yuval-Davis, eds., Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class (London: Sage, 1995); Ronald Weitzer, Transforming Settler States: Communal Conflict and Internal Security in Northern Ireland and Zanzibar (Berkeley: University of
always clear-cut, of course, since virtually all European colonies experienced some degree of settlement, if only to describe that "thin white line" of European domination. For settler colonies, however, the determinative factor was the relative intensity and permanence of settlement: settlers came in substantial numbers, and meant to stay. As Stock remarks,

in a sense, a settler state represents an active attempt to make colonial relations irreversible. For the settlers have claimed the land not just as the spoils of imperialist war, but as their 'homeland'. Their survival as an ersatz 'people' depends completely on a set of justifying myths, rationalizations, caste systems and repressive devices.29

Yet within this general category of the settler colony a further distinction must be drawn between those in the (semi-)tropical and temperate zones. The former, which included colonies like Algeria, South Africa, Rhodesia, and Kenya, occupied a mediate position between the two types of colony: notwithstanding considerable white immigration, and determined efforts to eradicate the Natives, settlers were

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faced with the persistence of large, settled indigenous populations, and thus destined to exercise a more tenuous form of "white minority rule".

At any rate, the temperate settler colonies were, as Fieldhouse puts it, the "Cinderellas" of the first three centuries of imperial expansion, acquired as afterthoughts or as adjuncts to the main business of tropical plunder and relegated to bit parts in the nascent world economy. The ignominious beginnings of the Australian colonies need hardly be recounted, but few if any white settler colonies can claim exalted origins: South Africa began as the Cape Colony, a mere way station on the fringes of the global spice trade, New Zealand as a sub-colony of New South Wales, while most of the American settlements (French and British alike) were established by 17th century robber barons and religious fanatics, and were regarded skeptically by their imperial masters. Yet this was to change during the 19th

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30 Fieldhouse, The Colonial Empires, p. 13. Spain's American empire represents a partial exception to this rule, since its gradual expansion in Central and South America in the 15th and 16th centuries was, in a sense, an early form of "settler colonization". It is distinguishable from later forms, however, by the comparatively small scale of settlement and imposition of a feudal (rather than capitalist) mode of production. The Spanish colonies eventually became subject to "recolonization" by British and American interests in subsequent phases of imperial redivision, though a few (Uruguay, Argentina and Chile) would briefly follow the path of dependent development charted by settler colonies like Canada and Australia.
century, the golden age of settler state formation, when the emergence of industrial capitalism in Western Europe, and further rounds of competitive empire-building, made the settler colonies more and more attractive as sources of industrial raw materials and repositories for accumulated capital and displaced workers and peasants. They also proved cost-effective for the occupation of newly acquired territories, as settler populations could be mobilized to advance and defend imperial aims vis-à-vis rival European powers and indigenous populations. By mid-century, they could be seen as "the natural, as well as the most rewarding mode of imperial expansion", the most "loyal and energetic partners' with the "supreme virtue of being self-propelling".\footnote{Kenneth Good, "Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation", \textit{Journal of Modern African Studies} 14 (1976) pp.597-620} By the end of the century, they had become the primary destinations for European emigration and capital investment, much of it going into the infrastructure necessary to exploit land and natural resources.\footnote{See Denoon, pp. 50-51. See also P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, "'An Extension of the Old Society': Britain and the Colonies of Settlement, 1850-1914", in \textit{British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion 1688-1914} (London: Longman, 1993) pp.229-275.} An estimated 55 million Europeans emigrated to "new countries" in the Americas and Australasia in the 100 years after 1820, with English, Irish and German settlers composing the bulk
of mid-century immigration, and Italians and Slavs predominating in later years.\textsuperscript{33}

In a sense, as Denoon indicates, the white settler colonies were the Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs) or Asian Tigers of the 19th century, with the U.S. serving as the paragon of capitalist "take off" that Japan represents today to Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan. Settler states other than the U.S. were distinguished, firstly, by the nature of their insertion into the world economy as the "richest underdeveloped countries", resource-based dependencies or "dominions" (as the leading British settler colonies were called) dominated by metropolitan capital but enjoying a degree of political autonomy, and a more or less European standard of living, which diverged sharply from the ordinary colony of exploitation.\textsuperscript{34} Though over time the growth of a domestic economy would permit a substantial measure of local capital accumulation and industrial development, and despite the periodic booms associated with the discovery of precious minerals in colonies like

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{33} Magdoff, "European Expansion since 1763", p.33.  \\
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Australia and South Africa, long term prosperity was ultimately tied to the production for export of certain key staples - wool in Australia and New Zealand, fish and lumber in British North America, beef in Argentina and Uruguay, nitrates in Chile - and the willingness of one or another metropolitan power to supply labour, capital, technology, and military protection.

The other distinguishing feature of the temperate settler colonies (including the U.S.) was their socio-political structure, which was founded on the total suppression, even extermination, of the indigenous inhabitants of the newly established settler homeland. As Weitzer puts it, supremacy vis-à-vis Native populations was (and is) one of the "pillars of settler rule". Initial conquest was usually carried out by the imperial power in order to establish a foothold in the new territory; later, once immigration and industrialization had tilted the balance of power in favour of settlers, colonial governments frequently embarked on their own sub-imperial campaigns against indigenous peoples as part of the drive to secure resources and lebensraum for the fledgling nation-state - settler governments in the U.S., New Zealand, Australia, Chile, and Argentina all fought expansionist "Indian Wars" in the 19th century.

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35 Weitzer, Transforming Settler States, p.24.
In place of the ancient societies thus displaced, new societies were established which recreated the hierarchically structured relations of class, gender and ethnicity found in the metropolitan centers. They were, among other things, the official birthplaces of institutionalized white supremacy, which came into being not only to distinguish settlers from the indigenous populations they were subjugating, but also to privilege northern European settlers (regardless of class and gender) in relation to the "lesser breeds" of Europeans (the Irish, Italians, Jews, Slavs) and non-Europeans (Asians, Africans) who were increasingly needed to fill out the bottom rungs of expanding labour markets. Whiteness, as a social identity and source of institutionalized power and privilege, received its most potent expression in the settler colonies, where it functioned as a solvent of radical consciousness and solidarity among the oppressed and exploited. As the African American writer James Baldwin put it:

No one was white before he/she came to America. It took generations, and a vast amount of coercion, before this became a white country.... White men - from Norway, for example, where they were Norwegians - became white by slaughtering the cattle, poisoning the

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wells, torching the houses, massacring Native Americans, and raping Black women.  

III. THE GREAT WHITE NORTH

Arrested Development

The roots of the present Dominion of Canada can be found in the year 1503 when the first shipment of gold plundered in the Americas reached Spain. Canadian history since then reveals little more than a struggle between various imperial powers to determine whose dominion it shall be. 

The earliest imperial intrusions into the northern portions of North America - the cod fishery, the various voyages in search of a Northwest passage to the "Orient", and, most significantly, the Dutch, English and French settlements oriented to the burgeoning fur economy - were in different ways competitive responses by the lesser imperial powers to the immense bounty produced by Spain's meso-American genocide. After the bourgeois revolution of 1648, Britain embarked on an aggressive program of colonial expropriation against its rivals, gradually wresting control of the

37 James Baldwin, "On Being White and Other Lies", Essence, April 1984, pp.90-91. Of course, many of the "lesser breeds" of Europeans would eventually become "white" after a period of apprenticeship in the new country. For an example of this process, see Theodore Allen's magnificent account of how the Irish were transformed from black to white: The Invention of the White Race (London: Verso, 1989).

Caribbean islands from a weakened Spain, including the lucrative asiento (the right to transport and sell slaves), and evicting the Dutch from their settlements on the Hudson in 1664.\textsuperscript{39} Imperial competition with France was more protracted, and despite the considerable concessions wrested from France in 1713 after its defeat in the War of the Spanish Succession (which resulted in the surrender of Acadia, Hudson's Bay and the French portions of Newfoundland), British supremacy in North America was not finally established until Wolfe's triumph on the Plains of Abraham in 1759. The Conquest installed a regime of Anglo political and economic supremacy, and Quebecois national oppression, whose legacy continues to haunt Canadian federalism.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{39} See "English Revolution - Contest for Empire", Chapter 17 in Stanley Ryerson, \textit{The Founding of Canada: Volume 1: Beginnings to 1815} (Toronto: Progress Books, 1975); and Naylor, \textit{Canada in the European Age}.

\textsuperscript{40} The resurgence of Quebecois nationalism beginning with the Quiet Revolution of the early 1960s has put this "national question" at the center of Canadian political life for the last several decades. Much of this struggle has been waged at the level of cultural policy and formal political arrangements, so that the complex historical and material roots of the conflict are rarely identified, especially in mainstream Anglophone accounts. Like all major political antagonisms, it overlaps with other political divisions such as class, race and gender. For Anglophone analysis which attempts to identify some of these complexities, see Abigail Bakan, \textit{Quebec From Conquest to Constitution: A Socialist Analysis} (Toronto: International Socialists, 1991).
Britain's dominance would not go unchallenged for long, however, as the revolt within two decades of its American colonies - the rebellion of a rising settler bourgeoisie against restrictions on trade and expansionism imposed by its imperial masters - set in motion a new round of regional conflict. After conceding independence to the upstart United States, British imperialism now competed with it in the scramble to carve up the continent in the face of declining Russian, French and Spanish power. The territorial configuration of the state that would eventually become Canada was a direct product of the subsequent competition between these two antagonists, with the Louisiana Purchase (1803), the War of 1812, the Oregon boundary settlement of 1846, and the Alaska purchase of 1867 (along with U.S. annexations of Texas (1836) and the Southwest (1846-48) from Mexico) representing stages in the piecemeal partition of North America into imperial spheres of influence-cum-nation-states. Canada's nominal independence would ultimately affect only the form, and not the substance, of its absorption into the U.S. imperium in the twentieth century.

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42 Commenting on the British legislation that granted Canada independence in 1932, Naylor writes that "the Statute of Westminster marked the formal transfer of Canada from Britain to the United States, giving the Canadian bourgeoisie the constitutional authority to beg favours from
Of course, the basis for the imperial contrivance which became Canada was and is economic, "in the last instance," but perhaps also in the first: Innis maintained that the economic geography of Native-European interaction during the fur trade laid the foundations of the future Canadian state, while Ryerson and others have seen Confederation as essentially an instrument of public finance. The characteristic tendencies towards resource dependency and truncated industrialization were established during the period of British hegemony, and share common features with other "dominion capitalist" countries: an export-oriented staples economy with a limited degree of secondary processing (forward linkages), heavy reliance on foreign technology inputs in staples production (backward linkages) and finished goods (final-demand linkages), and a high proportion of foreign capital investment. The dominant fraction of the Canadian bourgeoisie, direct descendants of the mercantile class of the fur trade period, remains

Washington as they previously had from London." See R.T. Naylor, "The Rise and Fall", p.28.

43 The task of explaining the peculiar character of Canadian development has spawned its own theoretical tradition, the "staples" theory pioneered by Harold Innis, and continues to produce rancorous debate even amongst left-inclined political economists. See Wallace Clement and Glen Williams, eds., The New Canadian Political Economy (Kingston, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1989) for an informative survey of the various approaches. On the economic origins of Confederation, see Stanley Ryerson, Unequal Union: Roots of Crisis in the Canadas 1815-1873 (Toronto: Progress Books, 1983).
essentially comprador and commercial, concentrated in services (finance, commerce, real estate) and infrastructure (railways, utilities) and opting typically to serve as a junior partner of metropolitan capital (British, American, or Asian) in its pillage of the Great White North rather than charting an independent course of capitalist industrialization.

At the same time, the massive influx of immigrants and capital and creation of a strong, entrepreneurial state structure associated with white settler colonization mitigated the effects of dependency, enabling the development of a quasi-metropolitan social formation with high wages and living standards and an advanced class structure. Integration into the American empire, a process which began in the nineteenth century and accelerated rapidly in the inter- and postwar years, permitted a limited, dependent mode of industrialization (the branch plant economy) while furthering staples dependence and foreign control. The overall result is an "advanced resource capitalism" occupying an intermediate position in the international political economy as a subordinate "region within the center".44

44 The references to "advanced resource capitalism" and "region within the center" are derived from Glen Williams, "Canada in the International Political Economy", in Williams and Clement, eds., The New Canadian Political Economy, pp. 116-137.
Of course, this Canadian "region" is itself internally fragmented on regional lines, a product not so much of environmental factors (as a vulgar geographical determinism would have it) but of the dependent development already described. The diversity of staples extraction produces tendentially a fragmented economic and political geography, a tendency enhanced by the vast territorial expanse of the Canadian state. Confederation was an attempt by the leading capitalists in each of the British North American colonies, under the hegemonic leadership of Montreal and Toronto elites, to engineer an alliance capable of accommodating their respective interests, with railway construction - publicly subsidized private bonanzas - and associated land development schemes providing the ties that bound. Though the resulting federal state structure was designed to promote unification by centralizing power in Ottawa, the provincial state structures soon became effective vehicles for the assertion of regional opposition to the unequal exchange imposed by the heartland mercantilist class: first, for the protests of independent commodity producers in the

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46 See "Make the Railways First", in Ryerson, Unequal Union.
West, and later, for regional fractions of the bourgeoisie pursuing their own, staples-based accumulation strategies.  

Ironically, then, the trend since Confederation has been mainly centrifugal, especially as provincial states have used royalties derived from their constitutional jurisdiction over lands and resources to develop independent fiscal bases from which to contest the core-periphery relationship cultivated by central Canadian elites. The postwar period has witnessed an intensified balkanization of the Canadian nation-state, as absorption into a U.S.-dominated continental economy has exaggerated uneven development (popularly represented in terms of have and have-not provinces), underwritten the dramatic expansion of the size and function of provincial states (all now competing for U.S. capital), and transformed the dominant axis of the Canadian political economy from east-west to north-south and, latterly, "west-east" (reflecting the increasing prominence of Asian capital). Indeed, the major political upheavals of the last two decades - constitutional patriation, the 1988 Free Trade election, defeat of the

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Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords, and the Quebec Referendum - can all be seen as increasingly desperate attempts to cope with the disintegrative thrust of this new political and economic reality.\(^{49}\)

**The Mechanics of Settler Domination**

The Indians and the Metis of the Northwest will be held down with a firm hand till the West is over-run and controlled by white settlers.

Sir John A. Macdonald\(^{50}\)

If imperialism marked out a subordinate path for Canadian economic "development", it spelled catastrophe for indigenous peoples, here as elsewhere. Naylor has observed that "Canadian history in general is part of the story of the conquest of America, and the fate of the Beothuk, Huron, Blackfoot and Kwakiutl people is not qualitatively different from that of the Aztec, the Maya or the Arawak".\(^ {51}\) It is important to appreciate the underlying logic of a process which is too often portrayed as either heroic and inevitable or tragic and irrational.

\(^{48}\) Stephenson, "Federalism".

\(^{49}\) See the essays collected in Duncan Cameron and Mel Watkins, eds., *Canada Under Free Trade* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1993).

\(^{50}\) Quoted in Naylor, *Canada in the European Age*, p.347.
In the period prior to settler colonization, that is, across the long arc of the fur trade, the trading monopolies (first the Company of New France, later the Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies) extracted fur wealth by exploiting Native labor, knowledge, technology and trading networks. During this time, Aboriginal Nations remained the material base of a lucrative commercial venture, as well as the dominant military presence, so European powers would not, and indeed could not, pursue the general extirpation of Native societies. Instead, they were compelled to adopt a flexible approach, forging alliances or resorting to violence according to economic and strategic expediency. The trade itself was fundamentally exploitative and imperialist in character, and would, over the long term, undermine indigenous institutions and autonomy: Euro-imperialists manipulated existing divisions between Aboriginal Nations in pursuit of fur profits and strategic advantage, drawing them into increasingly lethal wars; introduced, generally inadvertently but sometimes deliberately, a by now familiar spate of devastating diseases; and distorted traditional institutions and subsistence economies. Indeed, market-driven rapacity

51 Ibid., p. xv.
52 Ryerson, The Founding of Canada; see also Ron Bourgeault, "The Indian, the Metis and the Fur Trade: Class, Sexism and Racism in the Transition from 'Communism' to
ensured the rapid depletion of animal populations, pushing the commercial frontier ever westward and ensuring that the benefits accruing to Natives would be temporary. Nevertheless, while the fur trade remained the dominant economic force in a given region, European imperialists were disinclined to mount frontal attacks on indigenous populations as such. And Aboriginal Nations, pursuing their own interests, proved more than capable of playing off one European power against the other. 53

The rise of industrial capitalism in Europe, and contemporaneous decline of the mercantile fur trade in eastern North America, marked the beginning of a new, colonizing phase of imperialism, as the rich potential of indigenous land (and associated resources) became the primary focus of the imperialist powers. The pivotal factor in this transition, the "wheels of the old and detested cart of colonization" (as Cabral put it), was white settlement, which provided the labour force required to exploit the new territories, as well as the military presence necessary to defend them. 54 The settlement process had begun relatively early in Britain's original "13 colonies", where the fur

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trade was marginal to plantation agriculture, and the combination of comparatively rapid settlement and rampant land speculation had set white settlers on a genocidal path against Natives more or less from the outset. By contrast, in the northern, French-dominated portion of the continent, where climate and topography made plantation agriculture economically unfeasible, the fur trade retained its prominence, slowing the pace of settlement considerably. All this would change, however, with the gradual British dismemberment of New France, first in the Maritime region and then, after the Conquest, in Canada itself, when lands were granted to Anglo veterans and Britain's Native allies, moving the settlement frontier across the Ottawa River and into the future Ontario. The U.S. Revolution gave dramatic impetus to immigration, sending thousands of Loyalists into the remaining British colonies after 1784. The U.S. would provide a steady stream of land-hungry settlers (so-called "Late Loyalists") well into the 19th century, shifting the balance of power ever more in favor of the settlers (by


55 It also set American colonists increasingly against the imperial crown, which retained its interest in the fur trade and sought to protect it by proscribing further western expansion of the settlement frontier, most notably with the Royal Proclamation of 1763. This restriction, which threatened the speculative holdings of prominent settler capitalists like George Washington and Patrick Henry, became a major factor leading to the U.S. Revolution. For further
1812, they outnumbered Natives in Upper Canada 10 to 1). After 1810, the major source of immigration shifted to Britain itself, as the dislocation caused by capitalist industrialization prompted successive waves of dispossessed farmers and displaced workers to cross the Atlantic.⁵⁶

With the shift to settler colonization, the colonial state apparatus (hitherto consisting, as in Engels' famous description, of "bodies of armed men and prisons") assumed a new prominence, charged as it was with establishing the institutional framework, under the administrative control of a pliant colonial oligarchy, for expanded staples extraction on behalf of imperial capital. To this end, one of the chief tasks of the state apparatus erected on the basis of the Quebec Act (1774) and Constitution Act (1791), aside from securing the economic and political hegemony of colonial elites vis-à-vis the settler hoi polloi, was the consolidation of control over Aboriginal Nations.⁵⁷ State formation and function in Canada after the establishment of Anglo hegemony cannot be understood except in relation to this basic objective, which persisted (albeit to varying degrees) well into the 20th century. As Abele and Stasiulis discussion, see Steve Talbot, Roots of Oppression (New York: International Publishers, 1981), p. 60-65. ⁵⁶ J.R. Miller, Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989) p.83.
put it, "both pre- and post-Confederation state structures and practices were, arguably, shaped by the need to control the territory encompassed by fur trade activity - including the aboriginal population." In this regard, it is perhaps unsurprising that the first administrative organ established by the imperial government in North America was the British Indian Department (in 1755).

One of the main functions of the emerging settler state apparatus was the management of territorial enclosure, the conversion of communally held native homelands into saleable blocks (land as commodity) with ownership concentrated in the hands of European elites (a colonial variant of the

57 Ryerson, Unequal Union.
58 Abele and Stasiulis, "Canada as a White Settler Colony", at p. 253.
59 James Frideres, Native Peoples in Canada: Contemporary Conflicts, 4th ed. (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 1993) p.221. The changing administrative location of "Indian Affairs" within the federal state structure speaks volumes about the position of indigenous peoples within the Canadian social formation: since Confederation, it has resided within the Department of Secretary of State for the Provinces (1867), the Department of the Interior (1871), Department of Mines and Resources (1936), the Department of Citizenship and Immigration (1949), and the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (1965). The present Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) was created in 1966. See Douglas Sanders, "Government Indian Agencies in Canada", in The Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 4, The History of Indian and White Relations (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian, 1978) pp.276-283.
process Marx referred to as "primitive accumulation"). In Canada, the main instrument for the commodification and private monopolization of Native lands was treatymaking, which provided the otherwise ugly reality of dispossession with a veil of "civilized" legality. The practice of concluding land surrender treaties originated with the Dutch in their colonies on the Hudson (the storied Manhattan swindle of 1626), at a time when strategic considerations made such bargains with militarily powerful First Nations necessary; the English began to follow suit, albeit with "treaties of peace and friendship" which typically focused on trade and military alliances and ignored the question of

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61 The legitimacy of treaties rests on a series of dubious, self-serving historical premises: first, and most fundamentally, that colonial settler states had "the right to impose their particular definition of just and equitable relations between peoples and call it law"; second, that imperialist powers could assume sovereignty by dint of mere assertion, and treaties were required only to dispose of whatever residual, "usufructuary" interest to use and occupation Natives retained; third, that treaties signed under threat of annihilation, or concluded without genuine agreement regarding the terms, remain valid; and lastly, that subsequent breaches by imperial and Canadian authorities do not abrogate the agreements. For discussions of the imperialist cant of the law of treaties as applied to indigenous peoples in North America, see Glenn T. Morris, "International Law and Politics: Towards a Right to Self-Determination for Indigenous People", in M. Annette Jaimes, ed., *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1992) pp.55-86.
land. Later, as advancing settlement began to provoke determined military resistance in the lower Great Lakes region (culminating in Pontiac's devastating campaign of 1763-65) and threatened to undermine the "peltry trade", imperial authorities formalized a protocol for land cession in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, based on two fundamental principles: the Crown alone could acquire Native territories and only with prior Native consent. The Proclamation also set a western boundary for settler expansion, which was quickly disregarded.

Predictably, the Proclamation principles were honoured only in the breach, producing a patchwork of treaties across the country, most of them in Ontario and the western provinces. Today, only half of Canadian territory is covered by the 485 land surrender treaties negotiated between 1763 and 1921. The century between the Royal Proclamation and Confederation witnessed a process of piecemeal conversion in Southern Ontario, as the colonial state met immediate settlement needs by securing land cessions in exchange for nominal payments in cash and goods. Initially the parcels involved were fairly modest, but increased rapidly in size as the

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63 Ibid.
balance of power tipped in favor of the colonizers: the seven treaties negotiated in the decade after the War of 1812 covered an area of 2.8 million hectares.\textsuperscript{65} Prior to 1818, payments were made in lump sum form, ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand British pounds; after this date, even these trifling amounts were seen as too expensive, and colonial authorities switched to compensation via annuities, which the state paid out of the annual mortgage payments received from white settlers (Natives thereby provided indirect financing to the agents of dispossession).\textsuperscript{66} The expropriation process in Ontario, and in particular the so-called "Robinson Treaties" of 1850 (which secured massive tracts in the Lake Superior region in anticipation of mineral development), set the pattern for treatymaking in the West in the post-Confederation period. After buying out the Hudson's Bay Company (whose "interest" in the lands of the Northwest was handsomely compensated), the newly established Canadian state embarked on dispossession on a grand scale as part of its overarching programme for capitalist nation-building (embodied in the National Policy), negotiating 11 treaties between 1871 and


\textsuperscript{66} J.R. Miller, Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens, p. 87.
1930 covering most of the land in Northern Ontario and western Canada, with the exception of B.C.\textsuperscript{67}

In Quebec and the Maritimes, primitive accumulation was accomplished without the pretense of Native consent.\textsuperscript{68} In the colonies of New France and Acadia, French authorities transplanted a feudal system of land tenure, granting large estates (seignueries) to favoured aristocrats and the Catholic Church on the assumption that indigenous peoples had no territorial rights; after the Conquest, the British considered prior French occupation, without recognition of Native sovereignty or rights, as having nullified whatever Native interest might have existed. They proceeded to install a regime of bourgeois property relations without securing land cessions from the Native inhabitants, many of whom had already been killed in the internecine warfare of the pre-Conquest period, or pushed into the hinterland by previous settlement.\textsuperscript{69} In the Maritimes, the British evicted the bulk of the Acadian population, and granted the


\textsuperscript{68} Darlene Johnson, \textit{The Taking of Indian Lands in Canada: Consent or Coercion} (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan Native Law Center, 1989) pp.9-21.

lands thus acquired in large blocks to absentee landlords and members of the newly established Anglo oligarchy. In Quebec, the seigneurial holdings were preserved - in order to secure the vanquished Francophone feudal elites as a bulwark against the noxious republicanism emerging in the 13 colonies - while new grants were assigned to the parasitic Anglo elites who arrived on the heels of the British occupation forces. Today, then, there are no land surrender treaties in Quebec and the Maritimes (with the exception of those negotiated since the 1970s in Northern Quebec).\textsuperscript{70}

As land was expropriated, with or without the facade of treaty making, the colonial state was increasingly confronted with a problem of population management: how to dispose of landless Natives? Merivale, theorist of empire and Britain's colonial undersecretary in the crucial period between 1847 and 1860, identified four options: extermination, slavery, insulation and amalgamation.\textsuperscript{71} The first two, which featured prominently in earlier phases of British colonization, were impractical: why expend British lives and pounds to accomplish with violence what settlement itself could achieve through attrition? Insulation was slightly more promising, but posed a risk of perpetual

\textsuperscript{70} Cumming and Mickenberg, \textit{Native Rights in Canada}.

\textsuperscript{71} David T. McNab, "Herman Merivale and Colonial Office Indian Policy in the Mid-Nineteenth Century", in Getty and Lussier, \textit{As Long as Sun Shines} pp 85-103, at 87.
dependence on the public purse. The answer, then, was amalgamation (assimilation in current parlance): the decomposition of indigenous societies as distinct entities (what U.S. President Teddy Roosevelt once described as "pulverizing the tribal mass") and the absorption of indigenous people - remade as Christian possessive individualists - into the new society. Merivale viewed assimilation as the "only possible Euthanasia of savage communities."\(^{72}\)

In practice, the strategy adopted to accomplish amalgamation incorporated an element of insulation as well, resting as it did on the creation of "Indian reserves", a product of the same spatial logic which gave modern society the prison and the asylum (and later, the concentration camp and the Bantustan). To colonial authorities, reserves were temporary holding pens designed to facilitate the conversion of indigenous peoples into normalized subjects by containing them in a space separate from that of the general population and making them susceptible to Foucauldian regimes of social engineering ("Indian Administration"). The term "reserve" itself, suggesting an area held back by the state for some purpose other than private acquisition, underscores the extent to which "reservization" was a byproduct of national expansion and capitalist accumulation.

\(^{72}\) Ibid.
The geography of Canadian segregationism reflects the peculiar pattern of the European invasion. The first reserves in Canada, modeled on the Franciscan reducciones of Mexico and Paraguay, were established by Jesuits in Quebec in the 17th century for the "tutelage" of their Huron and Iroquois converts (some, like those at Kahnewake, St.Regis, and Huron Village, survive today). However, a consistent policy of reserve allocation did not emerge until the early 19th century, when it became an integral component of the treatymaking process in Upper Canada. There is no uniformity in the amount of land set aside for these southern Ontario reserves (except that they represent a tiny fraction of the territory ceded); the northern reserves created by the later Ontario treaties (the Robinson treaties, and Treaties 3 and 9) tend to be much larger, representing 80 percent of Ontario reserve lands, and averaging 35 acres in per capita terms (compared to 5 acres in the pre-1850 reserves in the south). On the Prairies, the pattern is more consistent, since the numbered treaties built on the Ontario treatymaking experience by adopting a specific formula for reserve size: treaties One, Two and Five allotted 160 acres per family of five, and the remaining Treaties increased this to 1 square mile, making the Prairie reserves the largest in the country (their per
capita area ranges between 12 and 50 acres, and averages 22). In Quebec and the Maritimes, the pattern is different again, since the prevailing disregard for indigenous land rights meant that Natives were forced to petition for Crown grants. A practice of creating reserves emerged belatedly, mainly in imitation of the Ontario model, but they were allocated and on the basis of executive fiat, and thus more susceptible to later "adjustment". As a result, the reserves in these regions are far smaller, and fewer in number, than elsewhere in Canada (averaging from 1 to 5 acres per capita). 74

Though reserves represented only a tiny fraction of ceded territory, they have nonetheless been subject to further erosion, whether or not they were protected by treaty. In some instances this is due to federal failure to discharge treaty obligations regarding reserve allotment, as in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where Natives today claim hundreds of thousands of acres in unfulfilled Treaty Land Entitlements. A more general scourge has been relentless white encroachment on the Native land base; as settlement

73 George F.G. Stanley, "The First Indian Reserves in Canada" (1950) Revue d'histoire de l'Amerique Francaise 168. 74 The statistics in this paragraph are derived from Richard H. Bartlett, Indian Reserves and Aboriginal Lands in Canada: A Homeland (Saskatoon: Native Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan, 1990). The per capita figures are based on population statistics from 1980, and will continue to decline as reserve populations grow.
increased, settler industrialists, land developers and squatters increasingly viewed Native enclaves as impediments to economic development, and federal and provincial governments were all too willing to license their incursions into the remnants of indigenous homelands. In New Brunswick, the 100 thousand acres held by Natives under licenses of occupation in 1810 had been reduced to 61 thousand just 18 years later (and today stands at 40 thousand). In Quebec, remedial action by the legislature between 1851 and 1854 had designated 230 thousand acres as reserve lands; of these, 45 thousand were surrendered between Confederation and 1904 as white settlement moved inland from the St. Lawrence. By far the greatest assault on the Native land base was mounted in the Prairies to make way for the flashflood of European settlers which arrived in the first two decades of the twentieth century: roughly 785 thousand acres were surrendered, almost half in Saskatchewan. Overall, this ongoing process of dispossession has transformed traditional Native territories which encompassed virtually the whole of Canada into a patchwork of 2440 reserves with a total area of approximately 3m hectares (roughly 6 m acres), a paltry .3 %

75 The various legislative measures by which federal and provincial governments have sought to undermine the indigenous land base are too numerous to mention, but they are canvassed in Bartlett, Indian Reserves and Johnson, The Taking of Indian Lands.
76 Johnson, The Taking of Indian Lands.
of Canada's land base. That this represents less than one-fifth of the area of Canada's national parks, and is exceeded by the land allocated for military bases, gives some sense of the priority accorded to Native homelands within the Canadian settler state.

Segregation itself represented only part of the overall program for indigenous assimilation, since geographical isolation was a necessary but not sufficient condition to consolidate settler hegemony and atomize Native societies. The gradual extension of the emerging settler state apparatus into expropriated lands, along with white migration and economic penetration, ensured that the territorial scope of indigenous self-governance was drastically curtailed. Equally urgent, however, was the expansion of that regulatory apparatus into Native enclaves themselves in order to secure their incorporation into the new state structure (albeit on a differential basis). To accomplish this, the imperial government had to repudiate the previous recognition of Native sovereignty implied in the early treaties and recorded in the Royal Proclamation. (As late as 1823, the government of Upper Canada was still

unclear whether it could legally "make individuals of the
Indian tribes amenable to our laws").\(^{79}\)

Instead, a new political model of "trusteeship" was promoted
in which the settler state became the guardian of
presumptively "dependent" and "childlike" Natives. This
authorized the gradual extension of imperial authority over
residual Native homelands, signaled first by the transfer of
jurisdiction over Indian affairs from military to civilian
authority in 1830, and then, more intrusively, by the
enactment of legislation in each of the British colonies
licensing, for the first time, colonial government
interference with Native self-governance.\(^{80}\) In 1860, the
colonies took the decisive step in settler state formation
when, in direct contravention of earlier treaties and the
1763 Proclamation, the imperial government relinquished
control over Native affairs. Under the terms of
Confederation in 1867, the respective colonies transferred
authority over Indian matters to the new federal government
which, by virtue of s. 91 (24) of the BNA Act (now the
Constitution Act), presumed to accept jurisdiction over

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\(^{79}\) Sharon Venne, "Treaty and Constitution in Canada: The
View From Treaty 6", in Ward Churchill, ed. Critical Issues
in Native North America Vol.2 (Copenhagen: International

\(^{80}\) See Bartlett, Indian Reserves, pp. 25-40. See also John
S. Milloy, "The Early Indian Acts: Developmental Strategy
"Indians and lands reserved to Indians". Both the manner and outcome of this imperial restructuring marked the further debasement of indigenous sovereignty, establishing the constitutional framework for future efforts to subjugate Native through comprehensive forms of "Indian Administration".

Economically, indigenous people were to be weaned away from traditional subsistence activities and incorporated into the exploitative relations and disciplinary order of an emerging capitalist economy. This process had begun during the fur trade, but became an explicit component of state policy as indigenous homelands were expropriated. The specific role contemplated by colonial administrators varied according to the nature of local economic development, but it typically revolved around some form of petty commodity production on the model of the independent farmer; or, where economic conditions permitted, indigenous people were incorporated and Constitutional Change", in Getty and Lussier, As Long as the Sun Shines and the Water Flows, pp.56-64.

81 That regional bourgeoisies were willing to concede authority over Natives to the new national government is an indication both of their desire to offload the costs of treatymaking and Native administration and of its crucial significance to the expansionist programme.

into the wage-economy in the burgeoning extractive industries, especially during the early phases of settler colonization when labor shortages were chronic. The proletarianization of indigenous people was only partially successful: first, because in many cases the chosen model carried with it the sexual division of labor characteristic of bourgeois patriarchal traditions; second, because indigenous people seldom broke completely with traditional patterns, often combining wage labor and subsistence activities in a seasonal pattern that approximated traditional cycles. But it was also limited because Indian policy frequently succumbed to the prerogatives of white settlement: on the Prairies, for example, when Native farmers overcame the barriers created by small allocations of poor land, they encountered resistance from white settlers who assailed government assistance as "unfair competition".

Economic dependency was coupled with the enforcement of Native political subordination, which federal Indian legislation accomplished through a variety of means. First, it established a representative system of tribal government,

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84 An important history of Native participation in the wage economy in early B.C., for example, is Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1975).
"the band council system", which was designed to replace traditional political structures (and thus undermine political autonomy). The band focus emphasized "tribal" and "sub-tribal" divisions and thus militated against unity; the electoral system displaced government based on clans and hereditary chiefs; and the emphasis on male representatives eroded the power which women traditionally held in many indigenous nations. At the same time the band council was made completely subordinate to the local government representative, the Indian Agent, in whom was vested all real administrative authority, including the power to depose elected leaders who were insufficiently submissive. Band government was designed from the first to aid in the construction of a homogenous Canadian political geography, transforming the dispersed sovereignty and local autonomy characteristic of indigenous governance into a municipality within the overall structure of Canadian federalism. To complete this system of differential political incorporation into the Canadian state, provincial and federal electoral statutes effectively denied Native peoples the right to vote federally, and in all provinces but New Brunswick and

85 Satzewich and Wotherspoon, "Aboriginal Peoples and Economic Relations", in *First Nations*.
86 Tobias, "Protection, Civilization, Assimilation".
87 For a detailed history of the activities of Indian Agents at the Kamloops Agency in B.C., see Trefor Smith, "John Freemont Smith and Indian Administration in the
Newfoundland, from the late 19th century through the Second World War (final removal of these restrictions would wait until 1960 at the federal level; Quebec, the last province to remove such limits, did so in 1969). 88

Finally, the economic and political components of this colonization program were articulated with a socio-cultural onslaught aimed at the complete eradication of the social and cultural basis of indigenous life. The Indian agent played a pivotal role here too, but equally important were the legion of missionaries and church-based institutions enlisted to transform native life. Various dimensions of social life became targets for repression: language, religion, family relations, sexuality. 89 Overall, the goal was the creation of Christian, hetero-patriarchal families structured around the dominance of a male breadwinner. Because of the assimilationist thrust of this program, children were singled out for special attention, becoming the focus for a specific form of disciplinary institution in the late 19th century, the residential school. 90 These

90 For an overview of these institutions, see Jean Barman, et. al. Indian Education in Canada: Volume 1, The Legacy (Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1986).
authoritarian boarding schools, run by various Christian denominations across the country up until the 1960s, were the linchpin of the assimilationist effort, and are today credited by some Aboriginal people as the colonial institution which above all others destroyed the integrity of indigenous societies.\textsuperscript{91}

III. THE RAGGED GREEN EDGE OF THE WORLD

The Political Economy of Lotusland

Thanks to California gold and the tireless energy of the Yankees, both coasts of the Pacific Ocean will soon be populous, as open to trade and as industrialized as the coast from Boston to New Orleans now. And then the Pacific Ocean will have the same role as the Atlantic has now and the Mediterranean had in antiquity and in the Middle Ages - that of the great water highway of world commerce....

Marx and Engels, 1850\textsuperscript{92}

Imperialism came late to British Columbia. When it did, in the late 18th century, its arrival was largely incidental to the more general European incursion into the Pacific basin as the principal locus of imperial aggression shifted away from the Western hemisphere in the aftermath of the American revolution. Over the next hundred years or so, competition among the Dutch, British and French ruling classes, along

\textsuperscript{91} See Celia Haig-Brown, Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School (Vancouver: Tillacum, 1988).
\textsuperscript{92} Quoted in Mike Davis, Prisoners of the American Dream (London: Verso, 1985) p.251.
with fledgling imperialist powers like Russia, Germany and the U.S., would focus on consolidating economic and strategic power in China, Japan, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands.\(^{93}\) Except for the speed of the onslaught, the pattern of exploitation was not dissimilar from that of the Atlantic zone, with maritime-based mercantile trade (whale and seal fisheries, furs) quickly succeeded by more intensive, land-based forms of colonial appropriation: plantation colonies in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, often created by the wholesale extermination of indigenous inhabitants, whose labor needs spawned a Pacific slave trade in South Sea islanders ("blackbirds") and Chinese peasants ("coolies"); entrepots like Singapore, Hong Kong, and Yokohama (as well as older colonies like Macao and Batavia), through which European elites could dominate regional trade; and white settlement colonies in Australia, New Zealand and western North America based on capitalist agriculture and resource extraction. Thus were laid the foundations of what is lately celebrated, in the amnesiac boosterism of the 1990s, as the "Pacific Rim".

The basic contours of B.C. political economy - importer of foreign manufactured goods and capital, exporter of raw and semi-processed staples - were established early, and conform to the truncated pattern characteristic of "settler capitalism" elsewhere. The fur trade attracted rival imperial powers, primarily Spain, Russia, Britain and the U.S., and eventually produced the politico-territorial boundaries reflecting the division of spoils between them.  

The early prominence of a maritime fur trade on the province's north coast, a byproduct of the renewed Euro-imperialist interest in China at the close of the 18th century, was gradually overtaken by a land-based trade representing the final extension across the continent of the "Empire of the St. Lawrence". By 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) had displaced its erstwhile American and Canadian rivals to become the dominant European presence in the Pacific Northwest, a monopoly position it would occupy for roughly forty years. Relying on existing Native settlements and travel routes, the HBC readily organized a

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95 Naylor, "Fur Trade and Pacific Empire", in Canada in the European Age; Ryerson, "Self-Government on the Pacific Coast", in Unequal Union.
96 See Jean Barman, The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) pp.32-51; and Robin Fisher, Contact and Conflict:
network of forts and trading posts on the coast and throughout the B.C. interior (then called New Caledonia) through which it drained the fur wealth of the territory for the benefit of distant shareholders. When Vancouver Island was officially declared a colony in 1849 the HBC agreed to oversee the "systematic colonization" of the territory, a scheme which was doomed to fail given the competing objectives of fur trade and settlement.\textsuperscript{97} Gold would eventually be the Company's undoing: early gold discoveries in the Queen Charlottes and southern Interior were kept quiet, in the hopes that the HBC might maintain its exclusive authority and monopoly in the event of a bonanza. In early 1858, however, the Company unwittingly sealed its own fate by sending 800 ounces of gold to be minted in San Francisco, where the 1849 Gold Rush had largely petered out; when word of the HBC shipment leaked out, it triggered a flood of "free capital" and Euroamerican and Asian goldseekers (most but not all of them men) into the territory, forcing British imperial authorities to revoke the Company's charter and assume direct control of the colony to foreclose the real possibility of U.S.

annexation. The mainland colony of British Columbia, declared in 1858, became yet another in the long list of colonial possessions added to the empire in the third quarter of the century.

The influx of workers and capital, and the "spread effects" associated with provisioning a gold rush economy, marked the beginning of full-scale colonization in B.C.. During the peak years between 1858 and 1865, gold valued at over $18 million was shipped out of the province; Victoria became a boomtown overnight, watching its population increase tenfold to 5,000, and its property values skyrocket by 3 and 4 thousand percent, in a matter of months. Yet these boom conditions were by nature short-lived. By the late 1860s, alluvial supplies were largely exhausted, and the gold frontier had move further north, leaving in its wake a diminutive settler colony whose economic prospects were rather bleak: gold profits left little residual benefit, contributing instead to private fortunes in San Francisco (whence much of the capital, machinery and supplies had

99 Ibid.
100 Paul A. Phillips, "Confederation and the Economy of British Columbia", in W. George Shelton, ed., British
come) or Britain, while road-building expenditures had left the colony's infant government deeply indebted.\footnote{Ibid. Phillips reports that the public debt of the two colonies increased from approximately $30,000 in 1859 to $1.5 million in 1865.}

Consequently, imperial authorities promoted the merger of the two colonies (achieved in 1864), and then Confederation, as a means of improving the colony's London credit rating, and of securing a permanent imperial presence on the Pacific coast.\footnote{Naylor, "Company Colony to Company Province".} The promise of a transcontinental railroad, and continued preferential trade with Britain, bought the allegiance of the dominant fraction of B.C.'s emerging bourgeoisie. That rail link, when it arrived belatedly in the mid-1880s, provided a much-needed if temporary boost to the now self-governing province, which otherwise spent much of the first two decades after Confederation struggling to develop domestic manufacturing industries through import substitution and export markets for staples other than gold, amidst the local fallout of economic crises in the imperial centers.\footnote{R.M. Galois, "The Indian Rights Association, Native Protest Activity and the 'Land Question' in British}

In the 1890s, the region resumed growth on the scale of the gold rush years, as a surging recovery in the metropolitan

\textit{Columbia and Confederation} (Victoria: University of Victoria Press, 1967) pp.43-60, p.44.
economies (fueled by new rounds of plunder in the "Age of High Imperialism"), and the rapid settlement of the Canadian prairies, spurred an appetite for B.C.'s natural resources, especially lumber, fish and non-precious minerals. The province's settler population exploded, increasing from about 24,000 in 1881 to half a million in 1921. The provincial state, as the preserve of resource barons, real estate speculators and other capitalist entrepreneurs, remained rather limited in its functions, focusing on the establishment of a minimal regulatory framework required to promote resource extraction, and the repression of outbursts of working class militancy that the extreme exploitation characteristic of resource capitalism tended to produce. Crucial transportation infrastructure was added in these years, "opening up" more and more of the province to capitalist activity. By the turn of the century, Vancouver had replaced Victoria as the metropolitan center.


104 Galois notes that "the value of mineral production, for example, increased from 3.5 million in 1891 to $30.5 million in 1913; fishery production expanded from $3 million to $13.9 million in the same period." Ibid. p. 2.

105 Galois, "Indian Rights Association", p.2.


for the provincial resource hinterland, largely as a result of its role as the transshipment point for the transcontinental railway and overseas shipping.\footnote{See Graeme Wynn, "The Rise of Vancouver", in Graeme Wynn and Timothy Oke, eds., Vancouver and Its Region (Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1992) pp.69-148; and L.D. McCann, "Urban Growth in a Staple Economy: The Emergence of Vancouver as a Regional Metropolis, 1886-1914", in L.J. Evenden, ed., Vancouver, Western Metropolis (Victoria: University of Victoria, 1978) pp. 17-41.}

After the boom and bust of the interwar period, which, despite the acute distress of the Depression years, saw the "filling out" of B.C.'s secondary and tertiary sectors, and continued growth in the settler population, the province settled into a long period of prosperity by riding on the coattails of the American-led postwar boom.\footnote{For a review of developments in the interwar period, see R.E. Caves and R.H. Holton, "An Outline of the Economic History of British Columbia, 1881-1951" in J. Friesen and H.K. Ralston, eds., Historical Essays on British Columbia (Toronto: Gage, 1980). A detailed analysis of the structure of the B.C. economy during the postwar boom may be found in Ronald A. Shearer, "The Economy of British Columbia", in Harry J. Shearer, ed., Trade Liberalization and a Regional Economy: Studies of the Impact of Free Trade on B.C. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971) pp. 3-41.} Capitalism in its monopoly phase was encouraged by provincial government policy, especially under W.A.C. Bennett's Socred dynasty, which consolidated B.C.'s role as a producer of bulk commodities - above all wood products - for export to the U.S..\footnote{Resnick, "The Political Economy of B.C.", p.7-11.} Socred policies encouraged the concentration of
ownership in large-scale resource companies financed by central Canadian or U.S. corporations and integrated into the continental economy as suppliers of raw materials. Capital was coddled with scandalously low resource royalties (in forestry these failed to cover even the cost of replenishing the resource) and the lavish provision of infrastructure - hydroelectric dams, railways, highways, company towns - at public expense. To secure industrial peace, and forestall the threat of social democracy (if not socialism), workers were offered high wages, an expanding "social safety net" to reduce the impact of often erratic economic patterns in the resource sector, and the enticements of American-style mass consumerism.

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113 See Trevor Barnes, et.al., "Vancouver, the Province, and the Pacific Rim", in Wynn and Oke, eds., *Vancouver and Its Region*, pp. 171-199. Of course, the expansion of the welfare state in this period was not a phenomenon limited to B.C., or even Canada. See, for example, Alvin Finkel, "Origins of the Welfare State in Canada", in Panitch, ed., *The Canadian State*, pp.344-372.
Vancouver, as the supply, service and transport center for this hinterland zone, continued its rapid growth. The end of the postwar boom in the early 1970s, however, marked the beginning of a turbulent period of crisis and reorganization in the B.C. economy from which it has yet to emerge. The resource sector has been squeezed at both ends: unstable export markets and competition from new production zones with lower wage structures and relaxed regulatory regimes has threatened permanently to undermine demand, especially in forest products, while a dwindling stock of forest and mineral reserves, coupled with industry shifts to capital-intensive production methods, have provoked large-scale "downsizing" and consequent job losses. Temporary recoveries in the late 70s and late 80s, accompanied by an infusion of Japanese and central Canadian capital (which was filling the void created by U.S. disinvestment), mitigated but could not postpone forever the organic crisis implied by market restructuring and the

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114 Barnes, et. al., "Vancouver, the Province and the Pacific Rim".
115 Ibid.
incipient depletion of a once seemingly inexhaustible endowment of natural wealth: the province now struggles to contend with the aftermath of what has been described as the "profligate century".\textsuperscript{117}

Echoing the apostles of post-industrialism in other parts of the capitalist world, local boosters have pointed to the province's tertiary sector, notably "sunrise" industries like financial services, tourism and film, as the way forward. Though Expo '86, the world exhibition designed to showcase Vancouver as an aspiring world city, provoked a mini-boom which afforded partial relief from the recessionary 90s, it is easy to exaggerate the trend to post-industrialism.\textsuperscript{118} The dominance of service-based employment is nothing new in B.C. and provides a dubious basis for general prosperity: the service sector is segmented into high and low-wage sectors, and most new employment arises in the latter; moreover, as recent studies


have made clear, once underlying linkages are taken into account, the resource sector remains very much the engine of the provincial economy.\textsuperscript{119} All of which bodes ill for the future of those whose livelihood is tied, directly or indirectly, to the material wealth of B.C.'s forests and waters; and much worse, for the province's original inhabitants, the Aboriginal Nations, whose very existence hangs in the balance.

\textbf{Ethnic Cleansing on the Pacific Slope}

Probably savagism was never so deftly and delicately stripped of its belongings, and laid away to rot, as in British Columbia.

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H.H. Bancroft, 1887\textsuperscript{120}
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In its basic motives, methods and historical trajectories, the colonization of British Columbia fits comfortably within the general framework already described. Undoubtedly there are "local" factors which modified the particular insertion of European power into this corner of the world - the difficulty of the terrain, the size and composition of the indigenous population, the timing and rapidity of the

\textsuperscript{119} See Barnes, et. al., "Vancouver, the Province, and the Pacific Rim" and British Columbia Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, "The Structure of the British Columbia Economy: A Land-Use Perspective" (Victoria:1993). A riposte of sorts to those who forecast the demise of resource dependency is offered by Ronald A. Shearer, "The Economy", \textit{B.C. Studies} 100 (1993-94) pp.121-139.

\textsuperscript{120} H.H. Bancroft, \textit{History of British Columbia 1792-1887} (San Francisco: History Company, 1887) p. 44.
settler invasion, the achievement of imperialist objectives without protracted military campaigns, the extreme disregard for indigenous rights under international and British imperial law - but ultimately these cannot distinguish the seizure of British Columbia qualitatively from the process which unfolded elsewhere.

During the roughly eighty years of mercantile hegemony, European fur traders and Natives met on terms that were relatively reciprocal, compared to what would follow. Demonstrating a capacity to adapt to new conditions, Aboriginal Nations on the coast and, later, in the Interior utilized European dependency on Native trade networks, trapping skills and production of the means of subsistence to acquire European trade goods which enhanced traditional communal practices, even though in capitalist terms the unequal exchange enabled Europeans to realize extravagant profits.\textsuperscript{121} At the same time, a variety of forces were unleashed which signaled the beginning of a secular decline in Native economy and society that would result in a reduced capacity to resist when imperialism adopted a more

\textsuperscript{121} Ryerson, in \textit{The Founding of Canada}, portrays the fur trade in B.C as a vastly unequal affair, and is upbraided by Fisher for failing to recognize the degree to which Native traders held their own against the interlopers, maintaining, as he puts it, "control over their culture during this period". See Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict}, p. 1. Therein, perhaps, lies the difference between them: Ryerson is directly engaged with questions of economic exploitation and
interventionist posture. Foremost among these was disease, which ravaged the indigenous population with successive epidemics throughout the fur trade era: the Native population in 1835, towards the end of this period, has been estimated at 70,000, a reduction of at least 75% from pre-contact times. The commercial logic of the trade encouraged overtrapping, ensuring not only the eventual extirpation of animal populations, but increased competition among tribal groups, leading perhaps to greater inter-tribal conflict (whose lethality was no doubt increased by the introduction of European weaponry). Given the absence of any centralized indigenous authority, trader security could often be maintained by skillful manipulation of traditional rivalries between tribal groups; but it was ultimately guaranteed by violence, or the threat of it, and Native

unequal exchange which for Fisher are secondary to notions of culture.

The figure of 70,000 is derived from Wilson Duff, The Indian History of British Columbia: Volume 1, The Impact of the White Man (Victoria: Provincial Museum, 1965) p.39. The pre-contact estimate for B.C. as a whole is now somewhere in the three to five hundred thousand range, though Dobyns suggests that the province's salmon-rich river systems might have supported a population approaching 1 million. See "Indian Smallpox Toll Worse, Scholar Says" Vancouver Sun 21 November, 1987 and Henry F. Dobyns, Their Numbers Become Thinned (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), p.38. At its nadir, the population would reach 22,000, suggesting an overall decline from pre-contact times of over 90%. This figure is consistent with current estimates for rates of population decline in North America as a whole. See Cole Harris, "Voices of Disaster: Smallpox around the Strait of Georgia in 1782" Ethnohistory 41 (1994) pp.591-626. Of course, demographic estimates are thoroughly
transgressions against HBC employees typically resulted in brutal spectacles - floggings, shootings or hangings - designed to serve as object lessons. By the 1840s, steam power and superior armaments, the fruits of capitalist industry, had given traders a decided military advantage, at least on the coast.\(^{123}\)

The "colonial period" (1849-1871) marked the transition to permanent settler colonization, and the beginning of a period of frontier conflict, featuring early attempts by a still skeletal colonial state apparatus to pacify, and dispossess, Aboriginal Nations, mostly on the south coast and in the southern interior.\(^{124}\) The task of subjugation was no doubt made easier by mid-century epidemics of measles and smallpox, which may have killed as many as 40% of the remaining indigenous population.\(^{125}\) The depredations of

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\(^{124}\) I put the term colonial in scare quotes because entry into Confederation marked the end of the colonial relationship, in constitutional terms, between settlers and the imperial government. The Aboriginal Nations have yet to be granted even the formal trappings of home rule.

white men against Native land, resources, and women were a constant source of antagonism, and settler authorities relied on a combination of persuasion and coercion to avoid the outbreak of a U.S.-style "Indian War" which the colony could ill afford. Sir James Douglas, chief strategist of the settler invasion in its early years, was a master of this carrot-and-stick approach who sought generally to placate Natives by recognizing their right to continued use and occupation of traditional lands, and by promising them a sort of formal equality with settlers within the new system. Hence his sortie to the Lower Fraser, in the early months of the Gold Rush, where he attempted to defuse an explosive situation by appointing local chiefs as magistrates to keep order among their people, and by warning miners that the law would protect "Indians as well as whites"; hence also the colonies earliest "Indian" legislation, prohibiting the sale of liquor to Natives and

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127 Douglas' policy was manifested in the treaties concluded with Aboriginal Nations on Vancouver Island in the early 1850s, and in the reserves allocated on the south Coast and southern Interior during his tenure as governor of the two Pacific colonies. For different views on Douglas' role in the shaping of Native-non-Native relations in B.C., see Paul Tennant, Aboriginal People and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989 (Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1990) pp.26-38; Robin Fisher, "Preface to the Second Edition", in Contact and Conflict 2d ed. (Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1992).
the desecration of Native cemeteries. Douglas also signed fourteen land surrender treaties with Aboriginal Nations covering a small portion of Vancouver Island. Although he had plans to continue this practice on the mainland, the colonial government was short of funds and the imperial government was reluctant to provide further subsidies, so treatymaking was abandoned. With the exception of the northeast corner of the province, where some Carrier bands signed on to Treaty 11, the so-called "Fort Victoria treaties" were the only treaties concluded in British Columbia.

Where the strategy of co-optation failed to produce submission, Douglas and his immediate successors were more than ready to resort to "gunboat diplomacy" to defend the new order they were imposing, and the period up to Confederation witnessed a series of punitive expeditions involving the shelling of Native villages, skirmishes, and summary executions, the "unrecorded battlefields" of settler colonization. Where possible, force was dressed up in the

130 The notion of "unrecorded battlefields" derives from Henry Reynolds, whose work has helped to explode myths about the peaceful colonization of Australia by, among other things, recovering the repressed history of settler violence and Aboriginal resistance. See his The Other Side of the
pomp and ceremony of British justice, anticipating the moment when a battery of civilian institutions, especially the legal machinery represented by magistrates and a constabulary, could replace the naked repression characteristic of early settlement. (This judicialization of colonial power was no less lethal to the indigenous population: of the 26 men hanged between 1864 and 1871, 23 were Native.\textsuperscript{131}

The post-Confederation period, especially from the early 1880s, witnessed the steady consolidation of settler power, as the demographic balance shifted irrevocably in favour of the interlopers, and the installation of an apartheid system proceeded apace. Constitutional authority "over" B.C. Natives was peremptorily assigned to the Federal government when B.C. joined Confederation, though it would be ten years before the Department of Indian Affairs would establish a system of direct administration involving detailed

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regulation by Indian agents under the Indian Act. After Douglas, government authorities in B.C. tended to assume that Natives had no legitimate claims to ownership of their territories, so the enclosure of Native territories was effected by administrative fiat under the aegis of a specially appointed Indian Reserve Commission. This process was more or less complete by the turn of the century, though federal-provincial wrangling over the extent and status of "Indian lands" would continue into the 1930s. At the same time, pressure from settler capitalists induced continual "adjustments", relocations, and expropriations of Indian reserves so that indigenous homelands would eventually be reduced to just .35 % of the province's land base. The advance of extractive industry, and elaboration of related federal and provincial regulatory regimes, ensured declining


134 See Bartlett, Canada's Indian Reserves, p.94. See also Reuben Ware, The Lands We Lost: A History of Cut-Off Lands and Land Losses from Indian Reserves in British Columbia (Vancouver: Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, 1974).
access to traditional subsistence activities, while Native labour, an indispensable element to European capitalists in the mercantile and early settlement era, was rendered more and more marginal as the settler population increased. Catholic and Protestant missionaries functioned as invaluable supports to the system of colonial rule, especially through their management of the residential schools which began to appear in the late 19th century. Overall, then, the settlement period witnessed a relentless constriction of the realm in which Native communal traditions could survive.

Aboriginal Nations, far from accepting this onslaught, organized themselves politically within the new circumstances, particularly around the so-called "land question": their efforts to invoke Anglo-Canadian law and legal institutions against settler incursions began in the 1860 and 70s and continued right up to the 1927 amendment to the Indian Act prohibiting land claims activities forced them underground. A full-scale revival of Native political activity would not emerge until the 1960s, when Aboriginal

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136 Fisher, Contact and Conflict, pp.119-145; Haig-Brown, Resistance and Renewal.
Nations joined other anti-systemic movements seeking to challenge and transform the prevailing social order.\textsuperscript{137}

Since then, B.C. Natives have successfully used a combination court action, protest and negotiation to force the settler power structure to address Native demands for land and self-determination. Indeed, it is fair to say that since the early 1970s, British Columbia has been in the midst of a protracted decolonization struggle.

\textsuperscript{137} Galois, "Indian Rights"; Tennant, \textit{Aboriginal People and Politics}. 
Socialism is a dead political and economic philosophy in about 99 percent of the world, but it is alive and well in one place in Canada - and that is on Indian reserves.

Preston Manning, 1995

Not an inch. On the weekend I founded the Not An Inch Club. Sole member, myself. The Not An Inch Club opposes negotiating away even a square inch (or centimetre if you insist) of British Columbia soil to Native Indians.... I say: the biggest can of worms in Canadian history is being stealthily opened. I say: not an inch.

Trevor Lautens, 1995

On February 12th, 1996, negotiators representing the Nisga'a Tribal Council and the governments of B.C. and Canada announced that they had reached an agreement in principle (AIP) regarding the Nisga'a claim for land and self-government in their traditional territories in the Nass Valley, on the province's northwest coast. The deal was a long time coming for the Nisga'a, who had been agitating for a just settlement ever since white settlers had first encroached upon this remote corner of the province in the late nineteenth century. The Nisga'a have been at the forefront of the movement for treaty settlements in B.C. ever since, their qualified victory in the Supreme Court of Canada in 1973 in particular marking a watershed insofar as it resuscitated the long dormant common law recognition of

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1 Vancouver Sun, 7 October, 1995.
2 Vancouver Sun, 4 April, 1995.
aboriginal rights and persuaded the federal government to abandon its overtly assimilationist policies and begin to negotiate treaties.\textsuperscript{3} The Nisga'a began talks with Ottawa in 1975, and would wait another 15 years before an intransigent B.C. government would alter its rejectionist posture and join the negotiations that eventually produced the February deal. It is precisely their dogged determination to secure a treaty through state-sanctioned processes that has earned the Nisga'a regular accolades from sympathetic settlers, like Premier Mike Harcourt, who see them as exemplars of the "moderate" approach that might eventually permit a reconciliation of Native claims without disturbing the basic prerogatives of Canadian sovereignty and a resource-based settler capitalism.

Of course, on its face the February agreement seems more like a Faustian bargain for the 5500 or so Nisga'a than a generous accommodation of their rights; it is the sort of vastly one-sided deal one would expect between a beleaguered indigenous minority and an uncompromising colonial power structure (whose overriding interests largely dictated the terms). The original Nisga'a claim to jurisdiction over

\textsuperscript{3} The decision in Calder v. Attorney General of B.C. is reported at [1973] S.C.R. 313 (S.C.C.). For a summary account of events preceding and following the decision, see Tennant, Aboriginal People and Politics pp.213-226. A more complete account of the Nisga'a land claim can be found in Daniel Raunet, Without Surrender, Without Consent: A History
roughly 24,000 square kilometres of territory and $2b compensation was pared down to a comparatively meager 1930 square kilometers and $190m, in per capita terms (85 acres and $34,545) the "equivalent of a small farm-sized lot and enough to build a third of a modest house." Each square kilometre of land (and associated trees, minerals, fish and furs) was traded for the value of about 25 old growth logs, or $33 per acre. 4 Contrast these amounts with the estimated $2 to $4 billion in resource revenues which non-Nisga'a have siphoned off Nisga'a territories since colonization began, the $1.2 trillion generated from B.C. lands and resources in the twenty years since Nisga'a negotiations began, or the $80 million which a single resource company, Repap, is claiming as compensation for the portion of its forestry license falling within Nisga'a treaty lands, and the colonial calculus underlying modern treatymaking is plainly revealed. 5 Politically, the Nisga'a were compelled to renounce claims to sovereignty in any meaningful sense and accept instead a "super-municipal" status that ensures the

of the Nisga'a Land Claims (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1984).

4 "Precedents indicate everyone got a good deal", Vancouver Sun, 1 March, 1996, A19.

5 The estimate for Nisga'a lands is derived from a Price-Waterhouse study commissioned by the Nisga'a. See B.C. Report 20 March 1995, p.9. The $1.2 trillion estimate is from Sun columnist Stephen Hume, "Backroom duplicity thwarts efforts to sign simple treaty", Vancouver Sun, 25 August 1995. For the Repap claim, see the Vancouver Sun, 27 January, 1996.
law-making and administrative powers of the new Nisga'a government on Nisga'a lands are almost completely subordinate to federal and, astonishingly, provincial legislatures.

Predictably, the forces of settler reaction, like some West coast version of Ulster unionists or Algerian pied noirs, mobilized quickly to defend the not-so-ancien régime against this perilous breach of security. The first attacks were initiated by representatives of the various "stakeholder" groups - a euphemism in this case for major resource companies and their proxies - which had already devoted much effort to undermining support for treaty negotiations by now underway with other indigenous nations in the province. Spokesmen for the rabidly anti-Native B.C. Fisheries Survival Coalition, for example, targeted the provisions reserving a proportion of the Nass salmon catch to the Nisga'a, denouncing the creation of what they called a "race-based fishery". The two main opposition parties, each hoping to corral the right wing vote in the run up to a provincial election, seized on yet another opportunity to inflame settler bigotry and display their truculent disdain for aboriginal claims. BC Reform leader Jack Weisgerber, relying on the ersatz populism that is the trademark of both federal and provincial "Reformers", demanded that the deal

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6 Vancouver Sun, February 16, 1996.
be put to a local referendum (tantamount to a veto for non-Nisga'a in the Nass region), while Gordon Campbell, Liberal leader and latest "Great Right Hope" of the B.C. bourgeoisie, insisted he would tear up the deal if it violated the hallowed principle of "one law for all British Columbians" (an election year slogan whose mantra-like repetition earned Campbell the title "Gordon Custer" among some indigenous leaders). Media commentators helped circle the wagons with screeds about the creation of "politically correct bantustans (PCBs)" or "affirmative apartheid" and the transformation of B.C. into the "new South Africa." Then, on Mar. 28th, the cavalry arrived as lobby groups representing the major resource industries of the province placed full-page ads in the major daily newspapers claiming that the deal had been cut in secret and should be delayed until proper public consultation could take place.

And so unfolded yet another fractious chapter in the history of Native-settler relations in B.C., the Nisga'a deal marking a watershed whose ultimate significance - prelude to indigenous autonomy or renovation of settler supremacy - has yet to be determined. In B.C. in the 1990s, the settler response to Native demands for self-determination has become a curiously Jekyll' and Hyde affair. If the official program

7 Among many articles, see the Vancouver Sun, 20 November, 1995; 25 November, 1995; and February 24, 1996.
for the refurbishment of settler supremacy in B.C. revolves around the fashioning of a corporatist equilibrium through the B.C. Treaty Process - settlerism with a human face - it has spawned simultaneously its own evil offspring in the form of an obstreperous, anti-Native coalition which has succeeded in substantially rerouting, if not yet altogether derailing, the treaty process and associated self-government initiatives. Spearheading this backlash is the Reform Party of Canada which, along with the various right wing parties competing for power at the provincial level, has skillfully played on the deeply historical and material roots of anti-Native sentiment to build a motley coalition of resource industry workers, middle class homeowners and corporate interests. Though the immediate aims of this New Custerism are the reversal of the reformist tendencies of recent years and the imposition of a final solution that will dispense once and for all with the "Indian problem" in B.C. (and Canada), its more basic objective is to hegemonize the antagonistic elements of a settler social formation around a fundamentally conservative programme which seeks to subordinate Canadian political economy to an emerging transnational order. To this end, it has adopted a discourse which skillfully weaves together some of the traditional tropes of anti-Native racism with progressive themes associated with the "anti-systemic" movements of the postwar period (anti-colonial, women's, civil rights, anti-
Vietnam war, Green). To fully appreciate the political significance of the new wave of colon chauvinism in B.C., we must first look southward, to the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave, where right wing populism and modern anti-Indian organization were forged in the maelstrom of post-Sixties conservative agitation.

THE NEW RIGHT JUGGERNAUT

It is the social issues that got us this far, and that's what will take us into the future. We never really won until we began stressing issues like busing, abortion, school prayer and gun control. We talked about the sanctity of free enterprise, about the Communist onslaught until we were blue in the face. But we didn't start winning majorities in elections until we got down to the gut level issues.

U.S. New Right activist Richard Viguerie, 1981

The genesis of reactionary populism can be traced back to the 1960s, when U.S. conservatives, already contending with popular revulsion at the genocidal crimes of Nazism and imperialism, confronted the historic resurgence of social movements (civil rights, women's, anti-war) promoting progressive, even radical, visions of equality, community and the interventionist state. The electoral failures of Goldwater in 1964 and Wallace in 1968 taught the Right that the hypothesized "silent majority" of conservative Americans was not simply "waiting in the wings" for the appropriate vehicle, but instead had to be actively constructed on a
political terrain where the discourse of liberal humanism increasingly held sway. The lessons were twofold: first, a cultural politics of reaction - focusing, for example, on white racial resentment against federal desegregation initiatives - could be far more effective in winning popular support than free market evangelism; and second, such cultural warfare could be most successfully prosecuted by appropriating the progressive discourse of the Right's Left-liberal opponents. If equality was now a legitimate social objective, the defense of inequality would have to assume a different guise, adopting a variety of codewords and symbols which Edgar describes as a "politics of euphemism".  

Wallace's defence of Southern segregationism in terms of "state's rights" was prototypical in this regard, while the Boston busing controversy of 1974, where defenders of separate schooling masqueraded as promoters of "community control" and "parental involvement", marked a key moment in the dissemination of this strategy. 

By the early 1970s, conservative strategists had formulated these lessons into a new political mythology, and electoral

gameplan, which "sought to combine in one acceptable construct the radical instincts of the vast middle layers of society (those instincts of hatred and resentment directed to the rich above them) with a rationale for retaining their superiority over the masses of poor below them." It proposed a veritable conspiracy between a revolving array of deviants who violated in some way the norms of the free market and white, heteropatriarchal family life (Black welfare mothers and youth gangs, illegal immigrants) and a "New Class" or "liberal elite" of left-leaning professionals (university professors, government bureaucrats, media personnel) who purported to represent these deviant sectors but only to further their own hidden agenda, the selfish pursuit of state power. According to this now familiar liturgy, the new class was the main architect of the dramatic, post-Depression expansion of government activity embodied in New Deal and Great Society programs (the nanny state), which represented not only a massive assault on the individual freedom and equality of the "productive" sectors of society (white workers, capitalists and suburban families), but a colossal betrayal of the "truly disadvantaged" whose consequent welfare dependency ensured moral degradation and perpetual poverty. Meanwhile the "new class" and legions of welfare cheats selfishly reaped the

benefits of tax, borrow and spend policies. With this diagnosis of social decline in place, the New Right cast itself as the agent of "revolutionary" change and the true defender of universal values, which would obliterate the bloated Nanny state and the parasitic elements it supposedly fed. ¹³

Lewis Lapham, among others, has effectively described the ludicrousness of this posturing by "the heirs and servants of American oligarchy": "here were the people who owned most of what was worth owning in the country (the banks and business corporations as well as the television networks and most of the members of Congress) pretending that they were the victims of a conspiracy raised against them by the institutions that they themselves controlled". ¹⁴

Nevertheless, the New Right's calculated exploitation of the contradictory tendencies toward anti-elitism and blaming the victim embedded in popular consciousness has helped to transform the American political landscape in the last two decades, a seismic shift manifested not only in the Reagan-Bush presidential victories of the 1980s and the Gingrich-

¹² Edgar, "Reagan's Hidden Agenda".
¹³ For an excellent sociological dissection of this rhetoric which demonstrates that its advocates are themselves members of the New Class see Barbara Ehrenreich, Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class (New York: Harper Collins, 1989).
led congressional "revolution" of 1994, but also in the stunning rightward trajectory followed by the Democratic party in the passage from Carter to Clinton.

TWO HUNDRED MILLION CUSTERS

The Great Fear, within any settler state, is that if indigenous land rights are ever openly acknowledged, and native people therefore begin to recover some significant portion of their land, the immigrants will correspondingly be dis-possessed of what they've come to consider "theirs".... Tellingly, every major Indian land recovery initiative in the U.S. during the second half of the 20th century - those in Maine, the Black Hills, the Oneida claims in New York state, and Western Shoshone are prime examples - has been met by a propaganda barrage from right-wing organizations ranging from the Ku Klux Klan to the John Birch society to the Republican party warning individual non-Indian property holders of exactly this 'peril'.

Ward Churchill

Overlapping with the emergence of "authoritarian populism" in the U.S. was the birth, in the mid-1970s, of a vigorous, well-organized "anti-Indian" movement, ostensibly rooted in the local resistance of white property owners and resource users to initiatives designed to redress a wide range of indigenous grievances, but bent on advancing the erosion of

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the Indian land base and political autonomy.\textsuperscript{16} The anti-Indian movement was a key constituent of the so-called "white backlash" against various anti-discrimination measures adopted by U.S. governments in response to mass political movements of people of color in the 1960s, including opposition to school busing, electoral redistricting, and affirmative action in employment and education. These, along with the other single-issue, right wing movements of the 1970s - the anti-feminist campaigns against the ERA and reproductive freedom, Anita Bryant's anti-gay rights crusade - were the engine of the New Right's electoral machine.\textsuperscript{17}

Though the movement sought from the outset to mobilize on a national basis, its organizational core remains restricted to three states - Washington, Wisconsin and Montana - where groups with names like the Interstate Congress for Equal Rights and Responsibilities, Montanans Opposed to


\textsuperscript{17} See Mike Davis, "The New Right's Road to Power", in \textit{Prisoners of the American Dream}, pp.157-180.
Discrimination, Wisconsin Alliance for Rights and Resources, Equal Rights for Everyone, and Stop Treaty Abuse continue to flourish. The movement has focused its attacks in two areas: challenges to tribal government jurisdiction to regulate on-reserve activities of non-members (typically but not always white property owners) and to treaty-based fishing rights recognized by landmark federal court decisions in Washington and Wisconsin (the "Boldt" and "Voigt" decisions of 1974 and 1983 respectively).

Movement rhetoric has tended to revolve around the defense of "white civil rights" in the face of attempts by federal and tribal governments to create Indian "supercitizens", but has also appropriated the language of the Green movement: the umbrella organization for anti-Indian activity in Washington for much of the 1980s, for example, was Salmon-Steelhead Preservation Action Now (S/SPAWN). While the failure of federal and state governments to discharge their historic obligations to indigenous nations has undoubtedly

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18 Reiser, The Anti-Indian Movement.
left some whites with legitimate concerns about land and resource policy, there is little doubt that the movement - led by professional lobbyists, funded by large corporations, and frequently connected with state Republican parties - has as its main objective not reconciliation but the complete eradication of indigenous nations as separate entities and the absorption of indigenous people into the general population so as to remove barriers to corporate exploitation of Native lands and resources. Indeed, the U.S. anti-Indian movement in the 1990s is part and parcel of a dense network of right wing organizations that includes a potpourri of anti-environmentalists, Christian fundamentalists, white supremacists and anti-government militias.

THE TWILIGHT OF EXTRACTIONISM

A crisis occurs, sometimes lasting for decades. This exceptional duration means that incurable structural contradictions have revealed themselves (reached maturity), and that, despite this, the political forces which are struggling to conserve and defend the existing structures itself are making every effort to cure them, within certain limits, and to overcome them. These increased and persistent efforts (since no social formation will ever admit that it has been superseded) form the terrain of the 'conjunctural', and it is upon this terrain that the forces of opposition organize.

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21 Stillwagon, "Anti-Indian Agitation".
22 Reiser provides an excellent review of the inter-connections, both ideologically and organizationally, between these various right wing groups.
Antonio Gramsci

It would not be long before Canada could add these two overlapping and reactionary political trends to its list of U.S. imports; in B.C., they would effectively merge, as developments in the 1980s and early 1990s paved the way for the rise to prominence of an anti-Native movement. In one sense, there is nothing new about settler mobilizations against Native interests and initiatives - it has been, rather, a recurring feature of political life in the province since settlement began. But the novelty of the most recent round of anti-Native agitation lies in its centrality to a particular political programme - right wing populism - and in its function as an ideological response to underlying shifts in the structure of settler capitalism (in particular, the protracted crisis in the extractive industries). The result is that the political battle over Native rights has moved to center stage in B.C. politics for the first time, perhaps, in the twentieth century.

Three overlapping political dynamics have condensed in this moment to produce the present conjuncture. The first was the flare-up in the late 1980s of conflicts over resource policy which had been smoldering for decades. In a series of high profile, valley-by-valley confrontations, First

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Nations and environmentalists (frequently working in alliance) began to contest openly the suzerainty of multinational resource corporations whose overcutting had consumed much of B.C.'s old growth forests and threatened the long term viability of a key economic sector. Then, in 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada handed down its decision in Regina v. Sparrow, with far-reaching implications for the west coast fishing industry. The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, which had disregarded Native fishing rights in B.C. for decades, subordinating them to the prerogatives of the commercial and sport fishing industries, was required to overhaul its regulatory scheme to accord Native ceremonial and food fisheries a priority second only to conservation requirements. Corporate interests responded to this

24 Meares Island, Lyall Island, the Carmanah Valley, the Stein Valley - these are just some of the flashpoints for struggle between resource companies and their opponents in the 1980s. Glavin notes that at the end of the decade, during the Oka summer of 1990, there were Native blockades at Alert Bay, Agassiz, Fountain, Gitwangak, Kitwancool, Meziadin Junction, North Vancouver, Oliver, Pavilion, Pemberton, Penticton, Toosey and Vernon. See Terry Glavin, "Roadblocks to Reconciliation", Georgia Straight, July 7-14, 1995.


26 The resulting changes, eventually formulated into a comprehensive Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, were paltry compared to the redistribution wrought by the Boldt decision in Washington (where a full 50% of the state's commercial catch was allocated to Natives), but managed nonetheless to provoke increasingly vitriolic attacks from white fishing interests perceiving a threat to their privileged access to
series of setbacks by creating and bankrolling the front groups - Share B.C., the Forest Alliance, the B.C. Fisheries Survival Coalition - that would form the backbone of anti-Native organizing efforts. To further this agenda, they forged links anti-Native and anti-environmental groups in the U.S., which had by then developed a wealth of experience in countering legislative efforts to curtail private interests.27

A second factor was the electoral insurgency of the Reform Party of Canada, dedicated to the pursuit of political power using the right wing populist formula. Like Reaganism in the U.S., the Canadian version of populist reaction emerged in the west and was bankrolled a new and relatively autonomous fraction of the bourgeoisie (in Reform's case, Alberta oil barons).28 Founded in Vancouver in 1987 under dwindling fish stocks. For an overview of the century-long conflict between Native and non-Native fishers in B.C., including the aftermath of the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, see Diane Newell, Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993). On the situation in neighboring Washington, see Fay G. Cohen, Treaties on Trial: The Continuing Controversy Over Northwest Indian Fishing Rights (Seattle: University of Washington, 1986).

27 See Glavin, "Roadblocks to Reconciliation". Background on the SHARE B.C., which rose to prominence during in some of the environmental battles of the late 1980s, may be found in Greenpeace, The Greenpeace Guide to Anti-Environmental Organizations (Berkeley: Odonian Press, 1996) pp. 93-95.

28 See Murray Dobbin, Preston Manning and the Reform Party (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1991) for an evaluation of the origins and development of the Reform phenomenon. As Mike
the leadership of Preston Manning, the party developed a platform which combined the standard "hot button" issues with a facade of direct, grassroots democracy. Though it sought initial support by promoting itself as a voice for "western alienation", it has managed to transmute regional resentment into belligerent opposition to constitutional recognition of Quebecois rights, couching an aggressive Anglo chauvinism in terms of "provincial equality" and opposition to "special status". Its prominent role in the referendum defeat of the 1992 Charlottetown Accord (a package of constitutional reforms which contained modest concessions to Quebecois and Aboriginal nationalism) translated directly into electoral success in the 1993 federal election, where it captured over 50 seats (including 24 of B.C.'s 32 federal seats) and narrowly missed forming the official opposition. Since then, the main challenge for Reform has been to transmogrify itself from a regional protest party into a national political contender, a project rendered difficult by its lackluster performance in Quebec and Ontario and the continuing suspicion that its democratic populism (however illusory) evokes among the dominant fractions of the Canadian bourgeoisie - as one analyst put it, the "business community is a little worried about whether Reformers are really conservatives or are they

Davis has pointed out, Reagan's political machine was funded by a number of prominent Sunbelt capitalists. See Prisoners of the American Dream, pp.171-176.
really populists...populists tend to be very exploitative of the business community." 30 Nonetheless, since first electing MPs in the late 1980s, Reform's main achievement has been to shift the political center of gravity in Canada substantially to the right with a political programme that artfully hitches the familiar wagon of western protest to the "authoritarian populism" of Reagan and Thatcher. 31 In casting about for issues which have the potential to mobilize mass support on a national basis, Reform has increasingly focused its attacks upon the "Native agenda". In B.C., Reform's profile has been enhanced by the large number of federal seats it holds, but also because its pseudo-populist strategies have been emulated by the provincial opposition parties competing to fill the vacuum created by the Socred's electoral implosion in 1991.

Finally, changes in government, and associated changes in government policy, marked the beginning of a full-blown backlash. The election of the NDP in 1991 and the federal

29 Ibid.
30 "Corporate Donors Cold-Shoulder Reform", Vancouver Sun February 10, 1996. The distribution of corporate donations among federal political parties reveals that the Liberals and Tories remain the parties of choice for Canada's major corporations, forcing Reform to rely on support from other sources.
31 For an interesting theoretical analysis of the Reform Party's populist discourse, see Steve Patten, "Preston Manning's Populism: Constructing the Common Sense of the
Liberals in 1993, both committed on paper to the resolution of Native land claims, served up the perfect combination of "parlor socialists" and "bleeding heart" Liberals on which to pin the crimes of a New Class. It also guaranteed the inauguration of the B.C. Treaty process, ensuring anti-Native forces a steady flow of opportunities for demagoguery. In 1994, with the process barely off the ground, the B.C. right began to manufacture one false controversy after another: first accusing the NDP of secretly cutting "backroom deals" with Natives that threatened the interests of ordinary British Columbians; then assailing the exclusion of "third parties" from negotiations; and finally, when it became apparent that the NDP was entering into Interim Measures Agreements (IMAs) with First Nations to limit resource activities and ensure Native policy input in lands subject to treaty negotiations, holding these up as proof that the provincial government was preparing for a wholesale sellout to Natives.  

In each instance, anti-Native forces denounced a negotiation process which was far more open and democratic, and far less determinative of job security and economic well-being, than the resource management decisions that industry and the

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various levels of government routinely make behind closed
doors.  

SUMMER OF HATE

We are so close to violence in rural B.C. that it's not even funny

Reform MP Mike Scott

The steady clamour generated by anti-Native forces in 1993 and 1994 reached a crescendo in the spring and summer of 1995, when B.C. First Nations launched the most intense round of protests since the Oka-inspired resistance of 1990. The main targets of settler fury were a series of roadblocks established by different First Nations to protest ongoing settler infringements on traditional territories and activities and to secure input into decisions regarding environmental and resource policies. In May and June, the Upper Nicola First Nation blocked access to the Douglas Lake Ranch near Merritt to protest attempts to prevent fishing in ancestral lakes located on ranch property; for most of the spring and summer, the Adams Lake, Little Shuswap, and

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33 As Sun columnist Stephen Hume pointed out, Gordon Campbell, leader of the Liberal opposition and outspoken critic of the supposed "secrecy" surrounding treaty negotiations, had himself signed a protocol (in his former capacity as chair of the Union of B.C. Municipalities) which gave municipalities the power to exclude the public from consultations with the provincial government on treaty implementation. Vancouver Sun, December 20, 1995.

34 Quoted in Glavin, "Roadblocks to Reconciliation".
Neskonlith First Nations maintained a roadblock along the access road to Adams Lake to prevent construction of an RV park on traditional burial grounds; from late July to mid-September, the province (and the country) was transfixed by the tense standoff at Gustafsen Lake; and in the fall, the Penticton First Nation began building bunkers above the access road to Apex as part of their ongoing opposition to the expansion of a ski resort.  

Media accounts, continuing the local tradition of aggressive white supremacy and racist fearmongering begun by Amor de Cosmos in the 1860s, dwelled on the harassment, intimidation and hardship to which local whites were subjected by this rash of "Indian uprisings". Residents spoke of being "close to civil war" and "sleeping with guns at the side of their beds". Pundits and opposition politicians railed against Native "terrorists" and "thugs" holding the province hostage to their outlandish demands, calling for the use of force to demonstrate that British Columbians had "zero tolerance" for Native blockades. They castigated the NDP for being "weak kneed" and "too soft on the Indians" (a perception the government tried eventually to dispell with their Afrikaner-style handling of the Gustafsen Lake standoff). August  

36 Vancouver Sun, 19 July and 29 August, 1995.
witnessed the formation of yet another anti-Native group, the Federation for Individual Rights and Equality (FIRE), composed mainly of outraged residents from areas targeted by Native protests. Organized by a former aide to a Penticton-area Reform MP, the group claimed that "the so-called land-claims settlements which these government's propose exceed all legal entitlement and will destroy the livelihoods of many citizens and communities", and by summer's end was claiming to have signed up thousands of angry whites.\(^{38}\)

With a provincial election looming, the right wing parties rushed to cash in on a rising tide of public exasperation that they had largely helped to foment. In the summer and fall of 1995, each issued policy statements displaying their willingness, a la John Wayne, to defend white rights against uppity Indians. Gordon Campbell, for example, borrowing directly from U.S. anti-Native groups, began electioneering with a call for "one law for all British Columbians", and later threatened to "tear up any Nisga'a deal" which failed to respect that principle.\(^{39}\) In September, the federal Reform party announced its own aboriginal policy, the

\(^{37}\) See, e.g., Vancouver Sun, 31 May, 2 June, 1995.


culmination of a much advertised series of "town hall meetings" conducted for the party faithful in B.C. and Ontario. Ultimately, the policies of all the parties emphasize the same principles: a pseudo-democratic emphasis on public participation in negotiations, and ratification of resulting treaties, typically through some form of referendum; a stipulation that self-government be limited to the municipal form available to other British Columbians, and strictly subordinate to provincial and federal legislatures; an insistence that settlements should consist primarily of cash, not land, and be "affordable" to Canadian taxpayers; and a demand that treaties should establish "certainty" by explicitly extinguishing aboriginal rights in areas excluded from the settlements. The hypocrisy of these requirements was neatly captured in one letter to the Vancouver Sun, which pointedly asked "those who want a treaty that eliminates uncertainty, or guarantees that no one will feel a better deal could have been reached" what sort of model they envisioned: "the BNA Act, perhaps? NAFTA? The Sun's collective agreement with its unions?".

ANTI-NATIVE NATIVISM

A comparison of the B.C. Liberal and Reform B.C. positions may be found in the Vancouver Sun, June 28, 1995.
Vancouver Sun, 21 March 1996.
Native treaties will change B.C. forever. Will it be Equality or Apartheid?... Should B.C. be divided into a patchwork of jurisdictions with different laws for different types of Canadians? Do you want your children to grow up and raise families in a racially segregated British Columbia?

B.C. Fisheries Survival Coalition pamphlet, 1996

The positions staked out by these parties, along with allied lobby groups, resource corporations, and media pundits, represent a complex articulation of race, nation and class. Firstly, as Schwarz suggests in his analysis of settlerism's denouement in Southern Rhodesia, decolonization struggles become the occasion for a dramatic re-ethnicization of the settler populace, which suddenly rediscovers and reasserts its (white) caste identity in the face of Native resurgence. Popular chauvinism is productively fused with broader economic anxieties, and a new demonology emerges, featuring the multi-dimensional figure of the threatening Native: armed Natives, sporting

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42 Unlike other contexts, so far gender has not been explicitly called into play in the political jockeying surrounding treaty negotiations, perhaps because public discourse is firmly controlled by the predominantly male leadership on both sides. This contrasts with the role played, for example, by the Native Women's Association of Canada in the controversies surrounding the Charlottetown Accord. See Joel C. Bakan and Michael Smith, "Rights, Nationalism and Social Movements in Canadian Constitutional Politics", Social and Legal Studies 4 (1995) pp.367-390.

43 Bill Schwarz, "The only white man in there: the re-racialisation of England, 1956-1968" Race and Class 38 (1996) pp.65-78. The slippage between settler and white is a significant factor, the analysis of which is beyond the scope of the present discussion. Clearly, however, not all settlers are "white", though many will have internalized the values of a system based on white and settler supremacy.
masks and camouflage gear, erect roadblocks to destroy public order and safety; tribalist Natives claiming sovereignty and self-government, seek to dismember the Canadian body politic; greedy Natives, milking the state for welfare handouts and treaty settlements, drain the public purse; ecological Natives, opposing resource development, threaten jobs and economic growth. At work here is a process of reversal, not simply of reality - the ideological inversion of the actual relations of force in a settler formation - but of the traditional modalities of racist representation. Gone are the confident assertions of white supremacy and native subhumanity characteristic of an earlier period; now it is white settlers who are the weak, the oppressed, the colonized. It is settlers who today face dispossession (Natives claim 110% of Province, trumpets the Vancouver Sun); who risk disenfranchisement at the hands of Native governments ("if denying a vote to people because they were Indian was wrong before, how can it be any less wrong to deny voting rights because they are white?" asks the Council of Forest Industries); and who must confront the potential loss of livelihoods and traditional ways of life ("if the NDP succeeds in giving away this great province, what will you tell your children and their

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44 "Negotiations and the Third Party Experience: The Precedent of Nisga'a?"; speech delivered by Marlie Beets, Vice-President, Aboriginal Affairs, Council of Forest Industries, to the Share B.C. Conference, Prince George, B.C., March 3 1996.
children after them?" implores the Nanaimo-based All Canadian's Equal). This emerging "white victimology" parallels the attempts in other "backlash" contexts, such as the debates over affirmative action, political correctness, and "false memory syndrome", to portray the powerful and privileged as victims, and the powerless as victimizers.

But the focus of this backlash is not as straight-forward as it first seems. In this discourse, Native people themselves are typically targeted indirectly, through what Stuart Hall calls "inferential racism" in which the chosen codewords invoke by connotation a whole repository of racist imagery sedimented over long historical periods in the collective memory of white settlerdom. At the same time, the position of Natives vis-a-vis the state is directly

45 The inflated claim appeared in a banner headline in the Vancouver Sun, April 1, 1995; the fear of white disenfranchisement is expressed in Beets, "Negotiations and the Third Party Experience"; and the lament from All Canadians Equal is quoted in Glavin, "Roadblocks to Reconciliation".

46 For an overview of this new victimology, with a particular focus on the politics of male violence against women and children, see Annabel Webb, Misty Water Colored Mysogyny: The Politics of False Memory Syndrome, unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Counselling Psychology, U.B.C., 1996.

47 See Stuart Hall, "The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media", in Manuel Alvarado and John O. Thompson, eds., The Media Reader (London: British Film Institute, 1990) pp.7-23. Thus, for example, references to "welfare dependency" readily conjure up images of the "lazy" or "drunken Indian".
attacked. Indeed, these standard images seem to bear out Balibar's claim that "modern racism is never simply a relation to the other...it is a relationship to the other mediated by the intervention of the state;...a conflictual relationship to the state which is 'lived' distortedly and 'projected' as a relationship to the Other". In contemporary B.C., the true marker of Native difference, and focus of white settler antipathy, is a "special status" conferred by the state: settler antipathy derives from the perception that Natives are exempt from certain taxes; receive massive amounts of government money; have their own governments which exercise special powers; and are not punished when they break the law. It is perhaps accurate to say, then, that we are dealing with a new modality of white supremacy, featuring neither the biological racism of the pre-World War II period, nor the cultural racism that replaced it, but a "political racism" that focuses on differential incorporation into the state as citizens.

It is no accident that the right fastens on government administration as the key locus for the production of racial divisions, for it enables simultaneously the deflection of charges of racism and promotion of an anti-statist agenda. Anti-Native forces can disclaim racism, because they do not

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blame Natives for this sorry state of affairs. ("I've got a lot of sensitivity on the Native issue" declares Reform MP John Duncan; "Not the Enemy" declares the editorial in the local business magazine.) Instead, it is governments, managed by cadres of the New Class, which must be held responsible for their betrayal of "ordinary Canadians", Native and non-Native alike. The Reform Party's Aboriginal Task Force sums up this stance:

"Many 'rank and file' aboriginal people view the multi-billion dollar DIAND and the entire 'Indian Industry' (made up primarily of lawyers, consultants, advisors, negotiators, and some of the Indian leadership) as self-serving interests. Past and present governments as well as the 'Indian industry' have fostered divisions along racial lines, are undemocratic and therefore unaccountable to the people they serve..."  

It is government that is the true promoter of racism, drawing distinctions on the basis of race. The anti-Native forces are the true "anti-racists", because they oppose the

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49 Duncan, as Aboriginal Affairs critic, is point man for Reform's media campaign to incite hysteria among non-Natives. He was quoted in the Vancouver Sun, September, 19, 1994; the editorial appeared in Equity, September 1995.  
50 Reform Party of Canada, Aboriginal Affairs Task Force Report, October 6, 1995. See also the background paper prepared by John Duncan after the signing of the Nisga'a
fostering of racial divisions, the extension (through treaties) of Canadian apartheid.

The remedies proposed for this situation are intriguing. The overall objective is the abolition, or at least the drastic minimization, of differential status. Natives are to be assimilated into the mainstream economically and politically, the residue of difference safely consigned to a realm of culture abstracted from any material basis. (Here we see how anti-Native racism diverges from the neo-racism described by Balibar, which chastises government, primarily in the area of immigration, for dismantling racial boundaries and thereby failing to respect immutable cultural difference.) The settler program for assimilation of natives is at one and the same time a program for simulation, for enforcing sameness. To accomplish this will require the displacement of government, in two respects: public participation will be increased via a variety of populist mechanisms (free legislative votes, referenda, consultations), thereby reducing the discretion of government elites; second, the bureaucratic distinctions between native and non-Native will be eliminated by dismantling the DIAND.

Lurking throughout this looking-glass world is the specter of the market. The struggle between settler and Native Agreement in Principle, "What the Nisga'a Deal Means to
always today occurs on a terrain prestructured by a capitalist economy. Though it is integral to much of the discourse on Native rights - in the calls for self-sufficiency, the fears that self-government will mean more bureaucratic regulation, the constant clamour about costs - it is most evident in relation to the perennial question of land where, as Kuper observes, "dialectical opposition between natives and settlers is particularly marked." The basic objective of the anti-native forces is to minimize the extent of native communal ownership and maximize the amount of private property, preferably under settler control. Thus, in a sinister replication of the "location tickets" system imposed on Indian reserves in the 19th century, Reform proposes that individual band members be permitted to convert their share of treaty settlement land into fee simple parcels; while the Liberals stretch the definition of private property to include the various forms of resource tenure (range leases, tree farm licenses, etc.), thereby insulating the bulk of valuable provincial land from claims; and Reform B.C. urges the exclusion of land from treaty settlements altogether. All three parties demand assurances

You", March, 1996.

that private property rights will not be affected.\textsuperscript{52} This logic is extended to the point of absurdity by the Fraser Institute, which suggests that in lieu of land claims settlements the province privatize all Crown land, permitting sympathetic settlers to convey their entitlements to Natives.\textsuperscript{53}

\textbf{THE SOCIALISM OF REDNECKS}

As long as you think you're white, there's no hope for you.

\textit{James Baldwin, The Price of the Ticket}\textsuperscript{54}

The popular grievances that Reform and the provincial right-wing parties draws upon are not illusory, but flow directly from the contradictions embedded in the very structure of settler capitalism. In a classic bait-and-switch operation, they seek to channel the profound alienation and antipathy generated by a social formation based on power and domination into hostility toward those without power. They can do so because historically the subaltern strata of the settler caste have been accorded a modicum of power and privilege in relation to Natives, in exchange for their allegiance to a system which exploits them. It is this

\textsuperscript{52} See Reform Party of Canada, "Aboriginal Affairs Task Force Report"; Malcomson, "One Law For All"; and
\textsuperscript{53} Owen Lippert, \textit{Out of Our Past: A New Perspective on Aboriginal Land Claims} (Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 1995).
historic compromise which Baldwin calls the "price of the ticket", and which forms the necessary precondition populist anti-Nativism. Thus, the right wing parties demand an end to special status for Natives, not the white male ruling class. They object to claims by the indigenous minority for land and separate government, but encourage the massive concentration of wealth and power under private control. They insist on democratization of the treaty process, but not of government and civil society in general. They decry Native tax exemptions and welfare dependency, but smiles on corporate tax evasion and subsidies. And they fear that self-government will fragment the Canadian state into hundreds of tribal enclaves, but promote a corporate agenda whose fiscal, trade and regulatory policies already threaten disintegration.

Meanwhile, with public attention thus diverted, the restructuring of the B.C. resource economy continues apace. Thousands of forestry jobs have been lost in the 1980s and 90s, not due to environmental "over-regulation" or Native

54 Quoted in David Roediger, Towards the Abolition of Whiteness: Essays on Race, Politics and Working Class History (London: Verso, 1994).

claims, but to mechanization and downsizing. In the fishing industry, where the Fisheries Survival Coalition repeatedly stages sit-ins at DFO offices and blockades Native fishing vessels to protest a "racially segregated fishery", the West coast seems headed for a Newfoundland scenario, as corporate concentration, promoted by the federal Liberals through its so-called "Mifflin plan", puts a stranglehold on the independent operators, coastal communities, and healthy fish stocks that are the foundations of a sustainable fishery (Terry Glavin has pointed out that in a good year, two companies obtain more fish than all the Native people in B.C. combined). B.C. mining companies are increasingly looking outside the province for profitable ventures. Yet few if any observers speak of the corporate threat to economic security or national unity, or government appeasement of major resource companies pressing for reduced regulation or greater subsidies. Nor is anyone calling for "openness" or popular referenda when industry and politicians emerge from private

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56 See Ben Parfitt, "Will We Beat Our Forests to a Pulp?", Georgia Straight, March 7-14, 1996. Parfitt notes that in 1980, there were 1.5 full time jobs generated for every 1000 m$^3$ logged, while in 1990 the figure had been reduced to 1. Throughout the 1980s, an average of 2000 jobs per year were lost due to increasingly automated and "efficient" logging and milling.

57 Terry Glavin, "Shooting Fish in a Barrel", Georgia Straight June 13-20, 1996. As Glavin argues, the Mifflin plan, though couched in the rhetoric of sustainability and conservation, is in fact a blueprint for the creation of a
meetings to announce new dispositions of public resources. All of this is tribute to the massive conjuring trick performed by the major corporations and their spoilsment who are trying to pit the subordinate strata among the settler caste against Native people in a zero-sum game, while effectively stifling a genuine public debate on the future of a staples economy with a dwindling endowment of natural resources.

In general, therefore, it is possible to see the programme of the B.C. Right as an attempt to displace popular anti-elitism onto Natives, dissolving actual and potential solidarities and blunting more radical forms of consciousness. In this sense, Natives in contemporary B.C. have begun to serve a political function similar to that of the Jews in pre-war Europe, where fascist parties invoked historically rooted myths of a wealthy, powerful and conspiratorial "enemy within" to aid in the defeat of progressive forces. If anti-semitism in Europe was and is the "socialism of fools", then perhaps in today's B.C. anti-indigenism is best described as "the socialism of rednecks".

"highly capitalized, high-tech, urban-based fleet", a veritable gift horse to B.C.'s largest fishing companies.

58 For an analysis of the political uses of anti-Semitism, see Balibar, "Is There a Neo-Racism?".
CANARIES IN A COALMINE: THE GUSTAFSEN LAKE STANDOFF AND THE REMILITARIZATION OF SETTLER SECURITY

First we must study how colonization works to decivilize the colonizer, to brutalize him in the true sense of the word, to degrade him, to awaken him to buried instincts, to covetousness, violence, race hatred, and moral relativism;... and at the end of all these treaties that have been violated, all these lies that have been propagated, all these punitive expeditions that have been tolerated, all these prisoners who have been tied up and 'interrogated', all these patriots who have been tortured, at the end of all the racial pride that has been encouraged, all the boastfulness that has been displayed, a poison has been instilled into the veins of Europe and, slowly but surely, the continent proceeds toward savagery.

Aime Cesaire

_Discourse on Colonialism_¹

Massacre is one of the last resorts of the government in stable industrial societies, since (unless directed at outsiders of one kind or another) it destroys the impression of popular consent on which they rest.

Eric Hobsbawm²

As we saw in the preceding chapter, both direct political action by Aboriginal Nations and the commencement of the B.C. Treaty process have provoked feverish efforts to mobilize the settler populace in defence of the status quo. The current round of treatymaking originated during the twilight of the Socred dynasty, as Bill Van der Zalm and the other epigones of W.A.C. Bennet belatedly recognized the prudence of retooing the machinery of settler rule. When

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Mike Harcourt's New Democrats succeeded the Socreds in 1991, they vowed to carry forward, and even extend, their own longstanding commitment to resolving Native claims, presenting it as the only viable alternative to the seemingly endless series of Native court challenges, blockades, and protests which had characterized the Socred denouement. In 1991, the NDP accepted the final report of the B.C. Land Claims Task Force, a select committee established by the Socreds to design a "made-in-B.C." format for modern day treaty negotiations involving the provincial government, the federal government, and B.C.'s Aboriginal Nations. The report's first recommendation was that "the First Nations, Canada, and British Columbia establish a new relationship based on mutual trust, respect, and understanding - through political negotiations."³

Five years later, the gangrenous state of relations between settlers and Natives in B.C. suggests that the fundamental contradiction between Aboriginal Nationalism and a resource-based settler capitalism is not so readily dissolved. The NDP has spent recent years backpedaling from its earlier pledges, partly due to fiscal constraints and partly because of the pressure applied by the province's anti-Native

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fronde, for whom reconciliation, however nominal and deferential to their interests, represents the death knell of the White Nation. On the other hand, there are growing signs of disquiet among the supposed beneficiaries of treatymaking, the Aboriginal Nations, a substantial minority of which regard the treatymaking process as an insidious form of "decolonization from above", a calculated effort to subvert Aboriginal sovereignty and extinguish Aboriginal rights. Indeed, if nothing else, the blockades mounted by the Penticton, Upper Nicola and Adams Lake bands in 1995 ought to have served as an emphatic reminder to the architects of indigenous Home Rule that the days of militant resistance were far from over.

In this chapter, I want to explore the most signal instance of militant Aboriginal resistance yet to disrupt the official agenda for a "post-colonial" British Columbia, namely, the armed standoff at Gustafsen Lake which transfixed the province for 31 days during the long, hot "Indian Summer" of 1995 and once again attracted national and international attention to Canada's "settler problem".

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4 See "Native Indians split on treaty-talks process", Vancouver Sun, September 25, 1995. See also the views expressed by members of the Okanagan Nation in Lee Maracle, et al., We Get Our Living Like Milk From the Land (Penticton: Theytus Books, 1993/94).

From mid-August, this picturesque Cariboo lake, located 35 km west of the Interior milltown of 100 Mile House in the heart of the traditional territory of the Secwepemc (Shuswap) Nation, was the scene of a paramilitary operation - touted by the *Vancouver Sun* as "the largest since the Mounties marched west to bring stability to the Prairies" - which would ultimately cost 5.5 million dollars and involve more than 400 RCMP and Canadian Forces personnel. The target of this massive mobilization was a group of eighteen Secwepemc sovereigntists and their supporters, who refused to abandon the sacred Sundance site at Ts'peten (the Secwepemc name for Gustafsen Lake). As sovereigntists, the Sundancers (who would eventually proclaim themselves to be the Ts'peten Defenders) pointed to the absence of treaties in B.C. as a basis for rejecting both the validity of settler land ownership and the jurisdiction of settler governments on "unceded Secwepemc territory". They insisted that the dispute be adjudicated by an independent, third party tribunal. Of course, to the settler regime such claims were simply inadmissible, and local white power brokers, including the putative owner of the lake, cattle

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6 See "All the news that's fit to...be manipulated", *Vancouver Sun*, September 22, 1995; and "RCMP overtime bill hit $3.3 million at standoff", *Vancouver Sun*, January 6, 1996. Incidentally, I have used "Secwepemc" (pronounced Sh-wep-m), rather than the more commonly recognized Shuswap, throughout this chapter.

7 Ts'peten is pronounced "Ch-pat-n".
rancher Lyle James, began threatening to take the law into their own hands. Before long, the confrontation had escalated, in the hands of a pugnacious RCMP, desperate provincial government, and servile fifth estate, into a full-blown "internal security crisis" and media spectacle.

Yet the ensuing standoff was by no means a neatly demarcated conflict between "Cowboys and Indians". As we will see, the Native community was itself deeply divided over the Defender's defiant stand, with many moderates, including most of the official leadership of the Secwepemc bands, denouncing the Defenders as "renegades", "malcontents" and "outside agitators", and actively cooperating the RCMP in their efforts to eject them. For the mainstream Native leadership, the Defender's actions offered additonal ammunition to the settler right, and therefore threatened to upset the already precarious progress of the B.C. treaty process. To the Defenders, on the other hand, the mainstream leaders were simply "sellouts" or "Uncle Tomahawks", a comprador class of educated, assimilated Natives prepared to sacrifice principle and the long-term welfare of the indigenous masses for short term, or personal, gain. In this view, the moderate leaders had no legitimate claim to authority since their power derived, not from traditional systems of governance, but from the machinery of Native administration (in particular, the system of elected Band Councils) imposed by the Department
of Indian Affairs. The Gustafsen Lake standoff, then, raised not only the fundamental question of "who owns B.C.?", but also, "who speaks for Natives?"

This issue of political authority and representation - of who speaks and who is authorized to speak - also raises the question of representation in its other, depictive sense. This question, as Edward Said, Bell Hooks, Gayatri Spivak and many others have powerfully demonstrated, is always already political. From the very moment that they entered the informational circuits of the settler-dominated public sphere, events at Gustafsen Lake were portrayed so as to discredit and demonize Aboriginal resistance: the Defender's demands were outrageous; their worldview irrational; their methods dangerously criminal; and their stand unsupported by their own people. Much of the distortion stemmed from the RCMP's largely successful efforts to control the flow of information from the area, an exercise in "impression management" in which the mass media actively colluded. But the Standoff also revealed how the mass media itself functions as a crucial support for settler hegemony by selectively disseminating images and information which ensure that popular culture and consciousness remain firmly
ensconced within the colonial framework that Francis Jennings once described as "the cant of conquest".8

In this sense, the Gustafsen Lake Standoff was as much a war of words and images as of weapons. The Defenders were forced to contend not only with state security forces but with a media apparatus that defined them as an internal enemy without legitimate aims. To circumvent this information embargo, the Defender's and their supporters used a combination of faxed press releases and Internet communications to publicize their own version of events and galvanize support for their stand. This vastly uneven struggle to represent the Standoff, to fix its meaning for the broader public, underscores how thoroughly the politics of decolonization is entangled with what Michel Foucault called "the politics of truth".9 It also has implications for my own account insofar as it renders the task of documenting "what really happened" deeply problematic. The only honest solution, I think, is to dispense with any pretense of disinterested knowledge and recognize that research and writing in such politically charged circumstances inevitably entails a set of political choices.


In my case, I have chosen to rely heavily on alternative sources whose reports tended to favour the Defenders: independent community newspapers and radio, "Left" journals, faxed press releases and, in particular, the virtual archive of the Internet. Together this "counter-media" provided the raw material for a corrective account of the Standoff which serves as both a critical reading of the dominant narrative and a reconstruction of the "other side of the story". If nothing else, I hope this version has the virtue of openly acknowledging its political commitments and biases from the outset.

In the end, my thesis is simple: the Ts'peten Standoff reveals that the coercive tactics of an allegedly remote colonial past are part and parcel of British Columbia's putatively postcolonial present. Moreover, it is an ominous sign of things to come for those - especially Aboriginal peoples - who dare question the conventional wisdom that treaty negotiations represent the conclusive settling of accounts between settlers and Natives, or a panacea for indigenous subordination and deprivation. If the hopes of a stabilized regime of settler prosperity are now pinned to the municipalization of Aboriginal Nations, under the aegis of a New Class of Native professionals and entrepreneurs, it appears that those who contest this "administrative decolonization" in defense of indigenous traditions of communal welfare, egalitarianism, and reverence for the
natural world, will increasingly be cast as villains and traitors, and subject to various forms of state repression. In a less parochial sense, the fate of the Defenders is linked indissolubly to all those, indigenous and non-indigenous alike, who militantly oppose the injustice and impoverishment associated with the reconfigured, but no less dangerous, imperialisms of the late twentieth century. As indigenous peoples, however, they, like the Ogoni of Nigeria, or the Zapatistas of Chiapas, occupy a uniquely precarious position: when it comes to policing the New World Order, it seems, the last shall indeed be first.

COLONIZING THE CARIBOO

The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history which is in keeping with this insight.

Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" ¹⁰

The traditional territory of the Secwepemc Nation encompasses much of the southeastern quarter of British Columbia, from the Fraser River in the west to the Rockies in the east, with the Cariboo and Shuswap regions of the Interior Plateau as its core. Though it is difficult to estimate with any precision, the pre-contact Secwepemc population probably ranged between twenty to forty thousand

people, most of them concentrated in the valleys of the Fraser, and North and South Thompson rivers. Like other indigenous nations which form part of the so-called "Plateau" culture area, the Secwepemc were a semi-nomadic people whose social existence was organized around the seasonal cycles of resource procurement in which the salmon staple, harvested each summer along the major river systems, was supplemented by game-hunting and the gathering of plant foods (mostly roots, berries and medicinal herbs). The basic unit of social life was the extended family, but each family group was part of a larger community of related families which tended to congregate at designated village sites every winter; related village groups in turn formed the basic political unit of the Secwepemc, the "band". In the pre-contact era, the Secwepemc Nation was composed of approximately thirty autonomous bands, each with its own defined territory and system of hereditary authority through which access to different resources was strictly regulated.

11 I take the 20,000 figure from Rita Jack, et. al. The Shuswap Community Handbook (Kamloops: Secwepemc Cultural Education Society, 1993). It should be noted that the demographic history of British Columbia Natives remains a source of some dispute. Estimates for a particular group like the Secwepemc were extrapolated from post-contact levels without properly taking into account the cumulative impact of early epidemics; they were also set in relation to the continental and hemispheric estimates proposed by an earlier generation of anthropologists whose biases have been convincingly demonstrated. Consequently, Wilson Duff's long accepted B.C. estimate of "80,000 plus" needs to be reevaluated. See my discussion at note 121 of Chapter 2, and sources cited therein.
Ts'peten falls within the traditional territory of what is today known as the Canoe Creek band.\(^{12}\)

At least four thousand years of stable Secwepemc life in this ecologically diverse, intermontane landscape of linked plateaus and north-south valleys would be cataclysmically disrupted in the nineteenth century as the tentacles of Eurocapitalist progress belatedly reached into the B.C. Interior.\(^{13}\) The vanguard of the white invasion was, as elsewhere in the province, the fur trade: both Alexander Mackenzie and Simon Fraser passed through Secwepemc territory in their fabled voyages of 1793 and 1808 respectively, and fur trading posts were established in the vicinity of present day Kamloops and Soda Creek soon thereafter as the land-based trade was extended throughout


\(^{13}\) Archaeological investigation in the interior of B.C. lags behind that of the coastal region. A Shuswap presence can be traced back at least four thousand years, but there is evidence of human habitation going back as far as 8900 years. See Jim Cooperman, "History of Adams Lake", Shuswap Chronicles 2 (1989) pp. 4-15. The phrase "tentacles of progress" I borrow from Daniel Headricks, The Tentacles of Progress: ( ).
the Interior. The first decade or so of fur trade activity in Secwepemc territory seems to have been mutually beneficial, and business at the trading posts was brisk: during the peak years after 1811, Natives sold an annual average of 2000 beaver pelts at Fort Kamloops alone, in exchange for the usual variety of European foodstuffs, weapons, tools and clothing. Undoubtedly the mercantile intervention exposed the Secwepemc to alien disease and periodic outbursts of white violence, but the most immediate pressures were environmental, as European technology and commercial logic began to upset the local cultural ecology: beaver populations were rapidly exterminated, forcing the Secwepemc to spend more time trapping fewer animals, while the subsistence and other requirements of white traders began to deplete traditional supplies of fish and game; as a result, the Secwepemc became more dependent on the trading posts for their own subsistence just as their capacity to generate the commodities desired by Europeans declined.

From the early 1820s onwards European-Native relations gradually deteriorated, as the latter were hit by repeated food shortages which on some occasions pushed particular bands to the brink of starvation.¹⁴

¹⁴ A history of starvation as an adjunct to colonial invasion in B.C. remains to be written. Coffey et. al. identify bouts of starvation for different groups of Secwepemc in 1822, 1827, 1829, 1841-43, 1850-52, 1855, and 1859. See John Coffey, et.al., Shuswap History: The First 100 Years of Contact (Kamloops: Secwepemc Cultural Education Society,1990).
The Gold Rush of 1858 was a watershed event in early post-contact history, bringing as many as thirty thousand miners flooding up the Fraser between April and December. Whereas relations between traders and Natives had originally required at least a modicum of cooperation, and thus deteriorated gradually over several decades, open conflict between miners and Natives erupted almost immediately due to the scale and nature of the goldseeker's intrusion. Miners appropriated traditional fishing and village sites for their activities, pillaged local food supplies, took gold which the Secwepemc rightfully regarded as their own, and frequently assaulted the Natives they encountered. Like other Aboriginal Nations facing such trespasses, the Secwepemc responded at times with violence, but also by exacting tribute from the miners, controlling their movements, and asserting control over new trade opportunities. Still, Native territories were being overrun, and at the annual summer gathering at Lac La Hache in 1858, chiefs of the Shuswap, Chilcotin and Carrier nations debated how to address the foreign invasion. Some leaders called for forcible expulsion, while others, perhaps influenced by news of the bloody campaigns being waged against Natives in the Washington and Oregon territories, and of white paramilitary actions in the Okanagan and along the lower Fraser, argued that "our resistance would only
lead to needless bloodshed and possible annihilation." The more accommodating view appears to have prevailed, at least temporarily, though the Secwepemc continued to threaten white trespassers, and the Chilcotin would eventually resort to armed rebellion. Meanwhile, fearing both U.S. annexation of the gold country and the outbreak of an Indian war, Governor James Douglas intervened along the lower Fraser to impose British law and order, having earlier proclaimed "all mines of gold and all gold within the Fraser and Thompson River districts to be the property of the Crown." London moved quickly to fortify its imperial claims, and by August the new mainland colony of British Columbia had been officially declared, without Native knowledge or consent.

By 1865, the Cariboo gold rush was largely over, but the balance of power in the region had been fundamentally altered. The 1864 war in neighboring Chilcotin territory, which ended with the execution of five chiefs, underscored the ascendancy, if not the legitimacy, of white power. The cumulative impact of recurrent food shortages and European diseases, especially the catastrophic 1862 smallpox

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15 Ibid.
16 James Douglas, then governor of the Vancouver Island colony, not only lacked constitutional authority to thus extend imperial jurisdiction, he did so in total disregard of Native sovereignty. Ibid. See also, Barry Gough, "Turbulent Frontiers and British Expansion: Governor Douglas, the Royal Navy, and the British Columbia Gold Rushes" *Pacific Historical Review* 41 (1972) 15-32.
epidemic, precipitated a demographic collapse: the Secwépemc population dropped from an estimated 7200 in 1850, a figure which itself represents less than half the pre-contact level, to just 2185 by 1903. Only 17 of the original 30 or so Secwépemc bands would survive beyond the turn of the century.\(^{17}\) In the wake of transient miners, the beleaguered Secwépemc now faced the threat of white agricultural settlement, first from retired fur traders, and then, on a larger scale, from American cattlemen seeking to exploit the ranching potential of the Interior's rolling grasslands. Settlement was promoted with the completion of the Cariboo wagon road in late 1863, and the subsequent promulgation of a land ordinance enabling whites - but not Natives - to preempt 160 acres, and buy another 480 (in the arid Interior the preemption limit was increased to 320 acres in 1870).\(^{18}\)

The transition to full-blown colonization was hastened by the arrival in 1867 of Catholic missionaries who, having sojourned periodically in Secwépemc territory during the later fur trade years, now established their first permanent mission, St. Josephs, on prime agricultural land south of

\(^{17}\) Coffey, et. al., Shuswap History, p.37.

\(^{18}\) The 1865 land ordinance was silent on the possibility of Native preemption, but an 1866 order-in-council stipulated that such grants would henceforth be denied to B.C. Natives. An 1870 amendment extended that prohibition to all North American Natives. See Paul Tennant, Aboriginal People and Politics (Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1990) pp.40-41.
William's Lake. Within a few years, they had succeeded in converting the majority of Natives in the region.  

With the onset of settler colonization, land quickly became the principal focus of settler-Native conflict. Secwepemc traditional territory encompassed some 180 thousand km\(^2\), but within a few decades they would be deprived of all but a tiny fraction of this homeland, as white ranchers and farmers enclosed thousands of acres for cultivation and rangelands.  

The first efforts at "Indian removal" were mounted at the height of the Cariboo Gold Rush, when Governor Douglas instructed William Cox, gold commissioner for the Cariboo region, to begin demarcating reserves for the Secwepemc. In the early 1860s, Cox laid out comparatively large reserves near Bonaparte Lake and Kamloops, and along the North Fraser (at Soda Creek, Alkali Lake, and Canoe Creek) but these were never properly surveyed or recorded, and were among the first to be targeted for "adjustment" by Joseph Trutch when he took charge of colonial land administration in 1864. One Cox reserve was reduced from a 40 mile stretch along the North and South Thompson rivers to 3 parcels of 4 square miles,

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while the Bonaparte reserve was reduced by two-thirds, and others were eliminated altogether.\footnote{This paragraph is based on M. Balf, \textit{The Dispossessed: Interior Indians in the 1800s} (Kamloops: Kamloops Museum, 1978); and Robin Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia} (Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1977) pp.162-63.}

In a 1910 petition, Secwepemc, Okanagan and Nlakapamux chiefs recounted the dispossession of the Interior Aboriginal Nations in terms which are worth reproducing at length:

Gradually, as the whites of this country became more and more powerful, and we less and less powerful, they little by little changed their policy towards us, and commenced to put restrictions on us. Their governments or chiefs have taken every advantage of our friendliness, weakness and ignorance, to impose on us in every way. They treat us as subjects without any agreement to that effect, and force their laws on us without our consent, and irrespective of whether they are good for us or not. They say they have authority over us. They have broken down our old laws and customs (no matter how good) by which we regulated ourselves. They laugh at our chiefs and brush them aside. For minor affairs amongst ourselves, which do not affect them in the least, and which we can easily
settle better than they can, they drag us into their courts. They enforce their own laws one way for the rich white man, one way for the poor white man, and yet another for the Indian...they have taken possession of all the Indian country, and claim it as their own. Just the same as taking the 'house' or 'ranch', and, therefore, the life of every Indian tribe into their possession. They have never consulted us in any of these matters, nor made any agreement, nor signed any papers with us. They have stolen our lands and everything on them and continue to use same for their own purposes. 

After stripping the Secwepemc of their capacity to lead a traditional life, settler authorities made it impossible to thrive even within the new system. In a now famous 1874 letter to a Victoria newspaper, Father C.J. Grandidier, a sympathetic missionary from Okanagan Mission, relayed Native resentment about paltry reserve allotments which left them unable to pursue the agricultural vocations now prescribed by white authorities.

They do not think that, when a white man can preempt 320 acres and buy as much more, besides the facility of

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leasing more, that they are unreasonable in asking 80 acres of their own land per family. If a white man can scarcely eke out a living with his 320 acres, how can an Indian do it with 20? Which white family would try it?  

By the late 1870s, the continuing depredations and encroachments of white settlers had pushed indigenous nations in the southern Interior to the point of armed resistance. British Columbia had joined Confederation in 1871, but Ottawa's assumption of responsibility for "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" had done little to improve local conditions, despite federal irritation over B.C.'s Native policies - which led Ottawa to take the extraordinary measure of disallowing B.C.'s first consolidated land legislation - and the creation of a joint Indian Reserve Commission in 1876 charged with settling the land question.  

In the summer of 1877, almost two decades after the Lac La Hache gathering, the embattled Secwépemc once

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24 There are several accounts of the inter-governmental wrangling in this period: see Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, pp. 175-211; Tennant, *Aboriginal People and Politics*, pp. 39-52; and Forest E. LaViolette, *The Struggle for Survival*: 
again met with other Interior nations (this time the Okanagan and northern Nlaka'pamux) to discuss the formation of a military alliance to compel a just settlement of their claims. Some of the Secwepemc had recently been in contact with Chief Joseph's insurgent Nez Perce, and advocated a cross-border alliance against settler expansionism. Settler opinion was mixed about the likelihood of an "Indian war", but the Reserve Commissioners who visited Kamloops in July to assess the crisis were sufficiently alarmed to send an anxious message to Ottawa: "Indian situation very desperate from Kamloops to American border - general dissatisfaction - outbreak possible". In the end, settler authorities, with the assistance of local missionaries like the above-named Father Grandidier, were able to defuse the threat of a general uprising by playing off different bands and factions among the Secwepemc so as to thwart efforts to confederate.  

From the 1880s onward, a segregationist system gradually emerged that would remain relatively stable up to the end of the Second World War. The balance of Secwepemc reserves were demarcated by the Indian Reserve Commission in the early 1880s, confining them to miniscule parcels of land

\textit{Indian Cultures and the Protestant Ethic in British Columbia} (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1961) pp. 98-144.

25 I derive my account of this episode from Robin Fisher's description of these events. See Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict}, pp 191-93.
even as the dynamics of a developing Interior land market enabled white cattle barons and syndicates to monopolize huge tracts of rangeland (the massive spreads of the Douglas Lake Cattle Company and James Cattle Company, both of which exceed 180,000 hectares, exemplify the present day outcome of this process).\(^{26}\) When Indian Agencies were established in B.C. in 1881, the Secwepemc people and territory were "administratively quartered" between four different agencies, and brought within the compass of the Indian Act's regime of bureaucratic oppression.\(^{27}\) Catholic missionization complemented the assimilationist programme of the colonial state, as missionaries persuaded many chiefs to adopt an ecclesiastical (so-called "Durieu") method of local government, a system based on a strictly enforced Christian moralism repugnant to Native traditions.\(^{28}\) They also established residential schools at William's Lake and

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\(^{26}\) By 1893, in the Alkali Lake-Big Bar-Dog Creek district, 51,495 acres of rangeland, and 3809 acres of cultivated land, were concentrated in the hands of just 41 settlers, a rate of enclosure exceeded only in the Nicola Valley, the center of the province's ranching industry. It is also interesting to note that Peter O'Reilly, the man responsible for demarcating most of Interior reserves, was also one of the principals of the Douglas Lake Cattle Company. See Greg Thomas, *The B.C. Ranching Frontier 1858-1896*, (unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of History, UBC: 1976) p. 174.


\(^{28}\) For an account of the Secwepemc encounter with the Durieu system, see Elizabeth Furniss, "Resistance, Coercion, Revitalization" *Ethnohistory* 42 (1995) pp. 231-263.
Kamloops whose bitter legacy of cultural repression and physical and sexual abuse has only recently, and grudgingly, been acknowledged by settler society.\textsuperscript{29}

Despite this comprehensive assault on traditional lifeways, the Secwepemc proved remarkably adept at adjusting to, and in some measure subverting, the consolidation of colonial rule (though always within the coercive limits imposed upon them).\textsuperscript{30} Sequestered on small, and largely unproductive, reserves, and facing drastically reduced access to traditional fishing, hunting and gathering sites, they nonetheless managed to eke out a living by combining wage labour as guides, packers and farm or domestic labourers with small-scale production for market and those seasonal subsistence activities still open to them.\textsuperscript{31} One landmark study confirmed that as late as 1960, this "semi-

\textsuperscript{29} Furniss, Victims of Benevolence; and Celia Haig-Brown, \textit{Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School} (Vancouver: Tillacum, 1988).

\textsuperscript{30} I am mindful here of Elizabeth Furniss's warning against emphasizing Native resistance in a manner which implicitly or explicitly downplays the extent of colonial coercion. See Furniss, \textit{Victims of Benevolence}, p. 32.

proletarianized" pattern persisted for most Natives outside the Lower Mainland, enabling them to preserve a certain degree of autonomy: "to the extent that Indians can maintain themselves on fish and game and other foods which they acquire for themselves, they can remain independent of white society".\textsuperscript{32} Meanwhile, the Secwepemc tried to mitigate the impact of cultural imperialism, adapting the Durieu system to their own purposes, and protesting against the severities imposed on their children at the residential schools.\textsuperscript{33} And, until such activities were banned in 1927, they organized themselves politically along with other B.C. Aboriginal Nations for a just resolution of the land question - sending representatives to petition governments in Ottawa and London, participating in province-wide political organizations like the Allied Tribes, and lobbying Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier during his 1910 visit to Kamloops.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{32} Hawthorn, et. al., \textit{The Indians of British Columbia}, p.95.
\textsuperscript{33} Elizabeth Furniss has documented the oscillation between accommodation and resistance in these two contexts. See Furniss, \textit{Victims of Benevolence}; and "Resistance, Coercion, Accomodation ".
The post-World War II period, which witnessed the rise of multinational capitalism and the accelerated integration of Canada directly into a U.S.-dominated continental economy, presented the next dire challenge to Secwepemc survival. The consequent expansion of resource exploitation in B.C., especially the establishment of an Interior forest industry, further reduced Secwepemc capacity to pursue traditional subsistence practices, while job segregation ensured that forest revenues and employment would accrue largely to whites.\textsuperscript{35} In their 1960 report, Hawthorn and his colleagues unwittingly captured the essence of this new round of colonial exploitation - the Green Gold Rush - noting that the Williams Lake Agency "underwent probably the most rapid expansion of lumber output of any area immediately after the war and...is likely to enjoy continued expansion for the foreseeable future", but doubting whether Natives there "would derive much benefit from the expansion".\textsuperscript{36} The


\textsuperscript{36} Hawthorn, et.al., \textit{Indians of British Columbia}, p.134. By "new round of colonial exploitation" I mean new to this region; the plunder of forest resources was by this time well advanced in other parts of the province, though it too
resulting economic dislocation, and cumulative impact of settler colonization on indigenous cultural and social institutions, provoked a renewed period of crisis in Secwepemc society, comparable in many ways to that of the mid-nineteenth century. This time the scourges were, among other things, immiseration, alcoholism, male violence and sexual abuse, and suicide, all of which provided the pretext for greater intervention by the agents of "welfare colonialism", the social workers, child protection officers, and law enforcement personnel who together constituted the institutional bulwark of Cariboo apartheid. 37

Today, some thirty five years later, the political economy of colonialism in the 100 Mile House area remains essentially unchanged, as various Secwepemc bands confront the continuing plunder of their territories by what is now the region's number one industry. 80 percent of the local timber supply is controlled by three outside companies - Ainsworth, Weldwood and Lignum - leaving local First Nations to scramble for some residual portion of the "allowable cut" prescribed by provincial authorities. Job discrimination is blatant: forestry directly employs 30 percent of the general population, but only 10 percent of Natives, most of whom would undergo dramatic transformations in the postwar period.

37 Terry Glavin, "The Judge of Alexis Creek", The Georgia Straight, 24-31 October, 1996, pp. 15-22; see also Geoffrey
are relegated to peripheral sectors of the forest economy, such as tree-planting and firefighting. Reserve unemployment typically ranges between 20 and 50 percent, and consistently exceeds the rate among non-Natives in the region by at least 20 percent; in most cases, band governments remain the largest single provider of jobs, employing as much as 70 percent of the workforce among the southern Secwépemc. And, in a textbook illustration of the mechanics of internal colonialism, the wealth that trickles into Secwépemc reserves is quickly siphoned off by adjacent white communities - reserve residents spend close to 85 percent of their meagre incomes off-reserve. Writing about the Chilcotin communities west of Williams Lake, Terry Glavin sums up the impact of such colonial economics in terms which apply equally to their Secwépemc neighbours:

The younger people notice how people died. Up at Kluskus, Chief Roger Jimmy said that when he looked to the southwest, he could tally the number of Indians who would die a violent death that year by adding up the miles of new logging roads into the country. The old Chilcotin economy, a mix of cattle-ranching and guide-


outfitting, fishing and hunting, was falling to pieces. More than 200 fully loaded logging trucks were rumbling out of the Chilcotin country into Williams Lake every day, roaring past Indian reserves where eight out of ten adults were on welfare...the Indians were dying along with the countryside.\textsuperscript{40}

The results of postwar restructuring were not totally bleak, however, since the renewed assault on Secwepemc society produced in turn a cultural and political resurgence, part of a much wider movement among the indigenous peoples of Canada (and indeed of all the Americas) to reassert their national and human rights. The 1970s saw Secwepemc people taking to the streets of Kamloops to protest Department of Indian Affairs' control, eventually forcing the DIA to close its regional office and transfer local administration to band councils - an early victory in the struggle for greater autonomy. This period also witnessed moves towards greater national integration through the formation of two tribal organizations, the Cariboo Tribal Council and the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, and the promotion of cultural nationalism, culminating in the 1982 Shuswap Declaration, a joint statement from all 17 Secwepemc bands expressing their common commitment to preserving and promoting Secwepemc

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid. See also, Jack, et. al., \textit{Shuswap Community Handbook}. The survey results were for the Kamloops reserve. \textsuperscript{40} Glavin, "The Judge of Alexis Creek", p. 20.
history, language and culture. More recently, various bands have begun to develop their own initiatives in forestry, fisheries, and real estate to build an economic base for their communities. Perhaps the most compelling developments, however, were grassroots efforts to expunge colonial residues from key areas of Secwepemc life, including the now famous sobriety movement developed by the Alkali Lake Band, successive campaigns to combat systemic racism in the justice system (of which more below), and the organized effort to redress residential school abuse (which recently culminated in the conviction of Bishop Hubert O'Connor). A significant, if less well known, aspect of this process of "internal decolonization" was the reassertion of indigenous identity through the adoption of traditional cultural forms, in particular, the Sundance. It

41 Brief accounts of these developments can be found in Rita Jack, et. al., Shuswap Community Handbook; and Coffey et. al., Shuswap History. An account of the formation and early development of the Cariboo Tribal Council, which originated as a DIA-sponsored organ and initially incorporated bands from the Chilcotin and Carrier Nations, can be found in David Zirnhelt, The Caribou Tribal Council (unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Political Science, UBC: 1976). Coincidentally, Zirnhelt is the current NDP Minister of Forests.

42 A concise account of the Alkali Lake story can be found in Geoffrey York, The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada (London: Vintage, 1990) pp. 175-200. The history of residential school abuse in Secwepemc territory has been compellingly recorded in Celia Haig-Brown, Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School (Vancouver: Tillacum, 1988) and Elizabeth Furniss, Victims of Benevolence.
was this development that would set the stage for the
dramatic events of the summer of 1995.

**SECWEPEMC INTIFADA**

...shall we allow a few red vagrants to prevent forever industrious settlers from settling on the unoccupied lands? Not at all. We would treat the red vagrants as we would white ones. Locate reservations for them on which to earn their own livings, and if they trespassed on white settlers punish them severely. A few lessons would soon enable them to form a correct estimate of their own inferiority, and settle the Indian title too.

Amor de Cosmos, Editor of Victoria Daily Colonist and future Premier, 1861

The immediate origins of the Ts'peten Standoff can be traced to the revival of the Sundance, in the late 1980s, by a group of Secwepemc traditionalists, among whom Percy Rosette, an elder with family ties to the Alkali Lake band, was a key figure. According to Rosette, whose traditionalist views led him to refuse government money and on-reserve living,

We wanted to revive the Sundance, the way our elders, the way the old ones told us we had the Sundance in our area.... We were trying to hold onto something for our children, something spiritual;...we were trying to revive a culture because that is the heart of spiritual

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43 *The British Colonist*, 8 March, 1861.
government. It's always been a spiritual government, because it serves all.\textsuperscript{44}

This core group of Secwepemc Sundancers joined a far-flung network of traditionalists throughout western North America - as Rosette recalls, "we were dancing in Alberta, Oregon, every which way - even down to the Sioux country". During a 1988 visionquest, three members of the group (including Rosette) had a vision of Ts'peten as a "power point", a site invested with special spiritual significance. Ts'peten had for some years been a popular fishing and recreational destination, accessible to the general public though officially it fell within the boundaries of the James Cattle Company, which occupied most of the land between the Fraser River and Highway 97 through a combination of freehold tenure and range leases. Lyle James had purchased his 180,000 hectare spread in 1970 for about $1.5 million and lived in a ranchhouse immediately adjacent to the original owners of Ts'peten, the Canoe Creek/Dog Creek Band.\textsuperscript{45} As a member of the Cariboo Tribal Council, the band was now engaged in land claims negotiations through the B.C. Treaty


\textsuperscript{45} Ts'peten lies at the headwaters of Dog Creek, and originally fell within the territory of the Dog Creek Band, but it amalgamated with Canoe Creek in the 1920s. See Coffey, et.al., \textit{Shuswap History}, p.21.
Commission, but regarded Ts'peten as private land, and hence outside the purview of treaty negotiations.

The Sundancers, on the other hand, now viewed Ts'peten as a sacred site, and would eventually compile evidence that the area had traditionally served as a burial ground and fishing location. Moreover, like other Native sovereigntists in B.C., they asserted that the land there had never been properly ceded to the Crown, and thus remained Secwepemc territory. Percy Rosette underscored this claim by recounting an old story about failed efforts to secure the surrender of Ts'peten:

...the [colonial land] commissioners, when they first came on this land, they met with the Indians and the commissioners had a box of money. The Indians couldn't understand what these commissioners, these surveyors were talking about, so they had to have a translator talk to the commissioners. So the Indians built a sacred fire then at Ts'peten and spoke through the interpreter to these colonials. They had quite a debate over the land. These colonials were trying to buy this land with that money in the box. They set the box next to the sacred fire. So in the end, the Indians said, 'Whatever these colonials want, we will
do it proper.' So they told them, we're going to see if it comes from the Creator. So with the money sitting there there's many days of debate about whether they want to sell the land. So these Indians had a ceremony and told the colonials to step back a little, that they were going to see if this money comes from the Creator; they were going to purify it in the sacred fire. So they took the money and they put it in the fire. And the money burned all to nothing. So they said "there's no sale for this land". That's the legend of Ts'peten. That land's still not for sale. We've always lived that, and that resides in our ceremonies at all times.\(^{47}\)

Significantly, though these contending views of Ts'peten lie at the root of the subsequent standoff, and encapsulate the whole, ramified history of the land question in B.C., this crucial dimension of the dispute would never be seriously addressed during the resulting crisis.

In 1989, Rosette approached Lyall James to inform him about plans to use a portion of the Ts'peten lakefront as a

\(^{46}\) Ts'peten Defenders, Press Release, August 1995. Available at SISIS homepage.

\(^{47}\) Percy Rosette interview.
Sundance site. James gave his approval somewhat reluctantly, and stipulated that the Sundancers must not erect any permanent structures or interfere with ranch operations or recreational users. To Rosette, who did not recognize James's ownership, and hence the need to obtain his permission, giving notice was simply a courtesy.

Sundances were held for ten days each summer from 1990 through 1994, and were largely uneventful, though by 1993 local non-Natives were becoming irritated by the Native's growing assertiveness, as the Sundancers approached visitors to advise them about the sacredness of the area, and in some instances encourage them to leave. James, who believed that the site would be used on the standard four-year cycle, became increasingly concerned when he learned that the Sundancers planned to return in 1995. After the 1994 Sundance, Rosette and his wife Toby Pena (and, intermittently, other family members) stayed on through the fall and winter to watch over the Sundance grounds. When James discovered this, he made plans to evict them, consulting with lawyers and the local RCMP detachment at 100 Mile House, who advised him that he would be better off invoking a civil rather than criminal procedure, as police involvement would likely increase tensions. Throughout the

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49 Percy Rosette speech, Vancouver, B.C., October 1995.
spring and early summer of 1995, people came and went from
the camp preparing for the Sundance in early July.
Meanwhile, James, his lawyer, provincial government
officials, the RCMP and representatives from the Cariboo
Tribal Council and some of its constituent bands were
consulting each other about cancelling or relocating the
1995 Sundance, and removing the Sundancers. Local non-
Natives, already predisposed to paranoia by incessant, right
wing fear-mongering about Native land claims, became
increasingly agitated, especially area ranchers who regarded
the government's refusal to swiftly eject the Sundancers as
confirmation that lessees of Crown rangelands were to be
sacrificed on the altar of Native appeasement. 50

In this atmosphere, it was probably predictable, if not
inevitable, that matters would escalate. In early June,
some Sundancers erected a fence around the Sundance site to
keep cattle from desecrating ceremonial grounds, further
arousing James' ire. Following the venerable Cariboo
tradition of settler vigilantism, James and a dozen or so of
his ranchhands descended on the Ts'peten campsite to remind
the Sundancers about the penalties customarily imposed on
troublesome Indians. Finding Rosette temporarily absent,
they removed a woodstove from the camp cookhouse, wrongly

50 Terry Glavin, "How the Circus Came to Gustafsen Lake",
The Georgia Straight 22-29 September, 1995. See also ASSC
chronology.
claiming it had been stolen; some sauntered about the campground photographing Sundance regalia, while others brandished rifles and threatened to kill the Sundancers; one belligerent repeatedly cracked a bullwhip, suggesting that the time had come "to string up some red niggers". When Rosette returned a few hours later, he refused to accept an eviction notice James produced, so one of the ranchhands impaled it on a sacred staff as the group left the campsite. Now thoroughly anxious, the Sundancers fired warning shots into the air the next day when a Ministry of Forests vehicle approached the camp; they also sent out an anxious appeal for help through their network of supporters. After discussions with Lyle James on June 15th, self-appointed mediators from the local bands relayed further threats of "physical removal" to the Sundancers. The next day, a drunken ranchhand stumbled into the camp, warning that "the ranchers intended to burn the council lodge and the RCMP were planning an invasion of the camp".

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51 Ibid.
52 One of the occupants of the Forest Ministry vehicle, an adherent of the "one law for all" worldview, circulated his version of the incident far and wide, so that within a few days the local Reform MLA was demanding RCMP action from the floor of the legislature. See Glavin, "How the Circus Came".
On June 25th, an unidentified truck pulled up outside the encampment and the occupants fired shots into the camp.\textsuperscript{54}

Despite these hostile actions, a negotiated solution remained the Sundancer's preferred option, though they were not prepared to allow settler authorities and property owners to dictate the terms. Identifying themselves as the Defenders of the Shuswap Nation, they issued several press releases in mid-June which outlined recent events at Ts'peten and called for investigations into the illegal sale or lease of Native lands by government agencies and local band councils (including presumably the Ts'peten lands) and an audience with the Queen and the Privy Council to renew the treaty obligations recognized by the Royal Proclamation of 1763. They also pleaded with supporters to demand that the RCMP commit itself to a peaceful resolution of the dispute.\textsuperscript{55} On June 17 they met with representatives of the Cariboo Tribal Council, the RCMP, and the James Cattle Company to explain their position, but nothing conclusive was achieved. On June 22, several RCMP officers visited the Sundance camp for further discussions, and thereafter three Native constables were assigned to make daily visits to the camp to monitor activities and gather information. These officers established cordial relations with the Defenders,\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{54} ASSC Chronology.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
and one produced a research report detailing the background to their claim to the Tspeten area.\textsuperscript{56}

The 1995 Sundance was conducted without event in early July (it was dedicated to ending male violence against women and children in Native communities), but when the Defenders still refused to leave after the ceremonies were completed, the RCMP began gearing up for a more coercive approach (they had begun canvassing support for such measures among local band leaders in June).\textsuperscript{57} Negotiations proceeded fitfully throughout July and early August, despite further shooting incidents: on July 20th, shots were fired into the camp after another threatening visit from a James Cattle Co. employee; on July 26th, two Native fisheries officers encountered six men claiming to be from the camp, one of whom fired a shot in the air as the officers left).\textsuperscript{58} By this time, James, backed by the B.C. Cattlemen's Association, was pushing for action, as were the Central Interior Loggers Association, the local Tourism Board, and the local band councils. On July 27th, Reform MP Phillip

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid. See also Trond Halle, Trial Notes, July-August 1996 available at SISIS homepage.
\textsuperscript{57} Trond Halle, Trial Notes.
\textsuperscript{58} Glavin, "How the Circus Came"; ASSC Chronology.
Mayfield called the RCMP to emphasize that the Defender's encampment was illegal and "they should be taken out".\textsuperscript{59}

On August 11, the RCMP found the pretext they required to justify more forceful measures. On that day, two men associated with the camp, David Pena and Ernie Archie, were arrested by fisheries officers on the Fraser River for fishing during a closure (they were fishing for their families' winter food supplies). After roughing them up, the officers searched their car and found a small cache of weapons, some of them illegal.\textsuperscript{60} Now the RCMP had "proof" of the Defender's violent propensities, and began drawing up an operational plan for their removal. A few days later, on August 17th, the Native constables, who had maintained a fairly good rapport with the people in the camp, were re-assigned to other duties (prompting one to query, in a subsequent internal memo, "if a white religious group were to take over the rodeo grounds at Williams Lake would the decision be made to send the white police home and have the Native police storm the camp?").\textsuperscript{61} Later that day, an Emergency Response Team (ERT) from regional headquarters in

\textsuperscript{59} Glavin, "How the Circus Came".
\textsuperscript{60} The weapons included a hunting rifle, an AK-47, a Glock semiautomatic pistol, knives, a garotte, and nunchakus. See ASSC Chronology; Trond Halle, Trial Notes, 14 August, 1996 re testimony of RCMP Staff Sgt. Martin Sarich.
\textsuperscript{61} Trond Halle, Trial Notes, August 15, 1996 re RCMP Constable George Findlay.
Kamloops was sent in on a covert, overnight "probe" of the camp to gather tactical information. The Defenders, understandably rattled by repeated threats and gunshots, feared an attack by redneck vigilantes when they detected armed figures in camouflage gear and face paint in the woods surrounding their campsite. The RCMP received a frantic call from Percy Rosette in the early hours of August 18, but ignored the opportunity to reassure him that there was no imminent danger. As dawn broke, an unidentified Sundancer reportedly fired a shot: the Defenders later claimed it was fired in the air as a warning, but the ERT team insisted it was aimed at one of their members, narrowly missing him.  

With this "shooting incident", the RCMP began to implement the first steps of a "multifaceted operational plan". Control was transferred from the local detachment to the regional command centre in Kamloops, while senior RCMP officials made initial overtures to the Canadian Forces (CF) for assistance; within days, the military began formulating its own plan - code-named Operation Wallaby - for supplying armoured transport to the RCMP, gathering intelligence for daily briefings to Ottawa, and arranging for the secret transport of Bison APC's and crews from Alberta.  

Locally, Trond Halle, Trial Notes, August 14; Glavin, "How the Circus Came"; ASSC chronology.

See Trond Halle, Trial Notes, August 14. The CF wanted to maintain a low profile so that "if anything goes wrong,
the police set up checkpoints along all access roads to Ts'peten, as well as an "electronic eye" to monitor movements around the encampment; these would later be augmented by more sophisticated aerial systems involving video and infrared technology that would together enable comprehensive surveillance of the Defender's movements. At the same time, the RCMP began the buildup of personnel that would eventually bring over 400 officers and staff to the standoff site from all over western Canada, including "psy-ops" (psychological operations) specialists and at least 15 ERT teams. The ERT teams, kitted out in Desert Storm-style infrared goggles and weaponry, would be used to run covert patrols from the secret RCMP base camp - appropriately named Zulu - while the regular officers would perform the various functions required in a siege of this nature, including undercover intelligence-gathering in the pubs of Williams Lake and 100 Mile House. 64

On the afternoon of August 18th, the RCMP contacted major media outlets to alert them to "a major story breaking in the Cariboo", and the next day flew selected reporters into Williams Lake for a press conference with police, Lyall we will not be seen as failing". They insisted that the Bisons be marked with RCMP decals, and hid the vehicles away in a Kamloops armoury until they were deployed in early September. See "RCMP considered asking military to take over at Gustafsen", Vancouver Sun, 12 April, 1996.

64 See Vancouver Sun, 13 September, 1995; Trond Halle, Trial Notes, July 11 and August 14, 1996.
James, and officials from the Cariboo Tribal Council. The RCMP recounted the shooting incidents of that day and of June 14, and displayed the weapons seized on August 11th at the Fraser river. RCMP spokesperson Len Olfert used the term "terrorism" for the first time. Thereafter, media people from outside the region arrived in droves, and were soon publishing inflammatory stories about violent fanatics bent on being "carried out in body bags". The feeding frenzy intensified on August 26, when Ovide Mercredi, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, arrived from Ottawa to try to broker a peaceful end to the standoff. By this time the RCMP had blockaded the camp and cut off the Defender's communications links, and was calling for a "swift, decisive and unconditional surrender"; they gave Mercredi just 48 hours to come up with a solution. After several fruitless visits to the camp, a frustrated Mercredi disclosed the political rationale behind RCMP plans for a swift invasion: "they told me they have to go ahead for two reasons - one, they don't want to set a precedent. And two, they are saying white public opinion demands it." Around this time, the Defenders began to direct attention to their Ottawa-based lawyer Bruce Clark, a controversial figure whose exhaustive legal research and uncompromising advocacy in support of Native sovereignty during previous disputes in

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Ontario and B.C. had attracted both ardent support (from militant sovereigntists across the country) and bitter enmity (from the legal establishment and mainstream native leaders).

After the RCMP clampdown on August 26th, the standoff entered its critical phase, which would last until the Defender's surrendered on September 17th, some three weeks later. This tense period would be punctuated by three "hot" incidents which the RCMP, now firmly in control of information flows, used to justify its combative approach and shape public perception (a fourth incident, not reported at the time, has been disclosed in subsequent court proceedings). The first occurred on August 27th, when

67 The flamboyant and erudite Clark would pay a heavy price for his brief but sensational role in the standoff, which ended with a short period of incarceration and eventual flight from the country (he faced trumped-up charges of contempt and assaulting a police officer after a scuffle in the Williams Lake courthouse). He was portrayed as a megalomaniac and a buffoon in the media, and his arguments for Native sovereignty were never seriously addressed, though he is the author of two widely cited books on the legal history of aboriginal rights in Canada. See his Indian Title in Canada (Toronto: Carswell, 1987) and Native Liberty, Crown Sovereignty (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1990). For a thoughtful account of his activities before the Ts'peten standoff, see Phillip Raphals, "Nations in Waiting", Canadian Forum, May 1991, pp. 10-14.

68 There are widely divergent versions of each, and RCMP disclosures during subsequent criminal proceedings reveal that the stories circulated to the press during the course of the standoff were highly misleading. Interview with John "Doc" Hill, CFRO Radio, October 20 1996; and ASSC, "Chronology".
RCMP patrols discovered trees had been cut across the main access road to the camp. According to the police version, ERT members accompanied a forest service crew to the spot to remove the trees, and were "ambushed" as they prepared to leave. Two officers were "shot in the back", but were saved from serious injury by their flak jackets. The RCMP waited nine days to produce evidence of their version of the skirmish (damaged flak jackets and a bullet-ridden Suburban), but by then the image of hapless ERT cowboys and treacherous Indians was already firmly implanted in the public mind, confirming the necessity of the RCMP's hardline stance.69 There were some skeptics, notably Ovide Mercredi, who claimed the incident was the predictable result of RCMP aggression, and syndicated columnist William Johnston, who doubted the plausibility of the RCMP account and implied that police had manufactured a shootout to deceive the public.70 On August 29th, Bruce Clark emerged from a meeting with his clients at the camp carrying RCMP shell casings and a sworn affidavit indicating that the RCMP had fired on the Defenders first.71 (In the aftermath of the standoff, the Defenders have consistently denied firing at

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69 "RCMP display bullet-ridden vehicle", Vancouver Sun, 5 September, 1995.
71 "Lawyer says police shot at Indians first", Vancouver Sun, 1 September 1995.
the RCMP, and claim that the whole incident was a public relations contrivance.\textsuperscript{72}

The next incident occurred on September 4th, when the RCMP claimed that two Suburbans carrying ERT personnel had come under fire near the end of a patrol in the vicinity of the camp. One of the vehicles was disabled in the firefight, and the ERT team was forced to retreat on foot and take up defensive positions in the forest. They claimed that although the Defenders "stalked" them all night, they passed up numerous opportunities (afforded by their night vision equipment) to fire upon their pursuers. As one RCMP spokesperson put it, "only great restraint on the part of the officers prevented what could have been a very serious incident."\textsuperscript{73} Recent court disclosures, however, paint quite a different picture of what transpired. According to the RCMP's own forensic experts, the vehicle in question was disabled when it ran over a tree branch, and was never hit by any bullets. It now appears that the ERT members, panicking in response to a perceived attack, initiated an imaginary firefight, firing wildly in all directions as they

\textsuperscript{72} RCMP officers have repeated their story in court, but in a curious twist, the otherwise comprehensive video footage provided by the Wescam aerial surveillance system failed to record the crucial 15 minutes. Interview with John "Doc" Hill, CFRO Radio, October 20 1996.
\textsuperscript{73} "RCMP ignored chances to return fire", Vancouver Sun, 6 September, 1995.
abandoned their vehicle. Nevertheless, this second "gunfight" became the pretext for securing direct involvement of the Canadian Forces: within days, 4 Bison armoured personnel carriers (APCs), staffed by CF crews and armed with heavy-calibre machine guns, were rumbling along the dirt road toward Ts'peten to provide ERT teams with an "armoured escort service". Police also used the incident to justify the creation of 200 km² "no-go zone" around Ts'peten, ostensibly to protect hikers and hunters from chance encounters with the Defenders.

The third major incident, undoubtedly the most serious of the standoff, occurred one week later, on September 11. It was the day after RCMP field commander Roger Kemble issued two crucial orders as part of the still unfolding "operational plan": the first tightened the police perimeter around the camp, reducing the scope of the "free-roam zone" previously established around the camp by agreement with the Defenders, and effectively cutting off access to water and firewood; the second was a secret "shoot to kill" order giving RCMP personnel the "green light" to shoot any armed

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74 ASSC Chronology.
75 "RCMP display bullet-ridden vehicle", Vancouver Sun, 5 September, 1995.
Natives they encountered.\textsuperscript{76} The Defenders were worried about maintaining supplies of wood and water, so members of a Native liaison group arranged to visit the camp around 2:00 P.M. on the 11th to discuss this and other issues. Just before 2:00, two Defenders, accompanied by a dog, left the campsite in a red pickup truck to obtain drinking water for the meeting. About a kilometre from the campsite, the truck hit a landmine (a "perimeter marker" in RCMP jargon) and was disabled by the resulting explosion, which sent a plume of smoke spiralling 60 to 100 feet in air (the explosion caused Percy Rosette's brother, one of the Native elders waiting nearby to meet the Defenders, to have a heart attack). In the RCMP's initial report of the incident, Bisons pursued the two Defenders as they fled into the woods on foot, but broke off the chase when they began to fire on the RCMP; one of the Bisons was reportedly disabled in the ensuing firefight, in which "thousands of rounds" were exchanged.\textsuperscript{77} The RCMP used this skirmish to justify the deployment of more ERT squads, and four more CF Bisons, in the woods around the camp.

\textsuperscript{76} Details of this second order have only emerged as part of recent court testimony. See "Snipers at Gustafsen able to 'shoot to kill'", Vancouver Sun, 12 October, 1996.

\textsuperscript{77} In subsequent court testimony, police have admitted that the shots attributed to the fleeing Defenders could have been "friendly fire", since there were more police firing from the other side of the lake during the chase. "Snipers at Gustafsen able to 'shoot to kill'", Vancouver Sun, 12 October, 1996.
The Defender's account differs markedly (and is largely confirmed by court testimony of the officers involved and the RCMP's own Wescam footage).\(^78\) In their version, after the explosion, the two unarmed Defenders ran from the vehicle to the lake and began swimming back to the camp, with the RCMP firing on them continuously (one of the sixty RCMP officers in the field that day estimated he fired 50 or 60 rounds at this stage).\(^79\) Meanwhile, two Bison APCs rammed the truck repeatedly (the smoke was by now so thick they could not have known if others remained inside); the dog jumped out of the back of the pickup, and was promptly gunned down. As the RCMP pursued the fleeing Defenders back to the campsite, they began to exchange gunfire with the other Defenders, who were trying to shift attention away from their comrades. In the ensuing firefight, the RCMP poured up to 20,000 rounds into the campsite, enough, according to one supporter, to denude much of the 400m strip of forest separating the camp from the lake. Miraculously, no Defenders were killed during this onslaught, and only one

\(^78\) The video footage was presented in court and has since been aired by the Defender's supporters on Rogers community television's Nitewatch program in January, 1997.

\(^79\) Ts'peten Defenders, "Gustafsen Lake: A Chronology".
was wounded, a non-Native woman who was hit in the arm by sniper/fire from across the lake.\textsuperscript{80}

Native leaders involved in negotiations with the Defenders were outraged by the RCMP's conduct. Commenting on an RCMP press conference held that evening, Penticton band councillor Stewart Dick said media relations officer Sgt. Peter Montague was "unglued":

He seemed really nervous. He didn't seem sure of what he was saying. I kind of got the impression they had messed up big time and the whole thing was going to blow up in his face.\textsuperscript{81}

Inexplicably, after the standoff ended the RCMP destroyed much of the evidence that would have helped establish what actually happened on September 11th: spent RCMP bullets were removed from the scene without being examined, or even counted; the camp cookhouse, which the Defenders claim was riddled with bullets, was burnt to the ground; and the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{80} Talk given by Bill Lightbown, Kootenai elder and sovereignty activist, at UBC, January 1996.
\textsuperscript{81} "Native leaders fear rise in violence", Vancouver Sun, 12 September, 1995.
\end{flushleft}
forest surrounding the campsite was clearcut by Lyle James, acting on RCMP instructions.\(^{82}\)

The final incident took place on September 12th, the day after the massive firefight, and gives some indication of the technology being deployed by the RCMP. On that morning, an unarmed Defender was walking along the road about 600 metres south of the camp, within the designated "free-roam" (i.e. no shoot) zone. He was observed by three ERTs, a helicopter, and two "Eye-in-the-Sky" airplanes equipped with Wescam cameras.\(^{83}\) The spotter in the helicopter contacted ERT snipers set up in a cabin about 1000 metres across the lake from the man, and asked "Can you get authority from Zulu to make his day unpleasant?". Watching the man on a video monitor via an uplink to the "Eye-in-the-Sky" cameras, the senior RCMP officer on the scene gave the green light to the marksmen, who used a laser-sighting system to fire three shots from a .308 rifle. The first landed between his feet, and he dove for cover, narrowly avoiding the next two shots. This incident was not reported in the media until it came out in court testimony over a year after the standoff ended, presumably because it was an RCMP, not a Native, ambush.

\(^{82}\) Trond Halle, Trial Notes, 11 July, 1996 re testimony of RCMP Const. Fleming.  
\(^{83}\) Video footage of this incident was also given to the defence in the subsequent trial, and has aired on community television.
Throughout the standoff, B.C. Native groups pressured police to abandon their increasingly militarized posture in favour of efforts to reach a negotiated solution. They persuaded police to permit negotiating teams consisting of local Native elders, spiritual leaders and Native police to make regular visits to the camp to discuss possibilities for a peaceful end to the standoff. While the RCMP steadily increased the pressure on the camp with constant ground probes and low-flying aerial patrols (the Defenders maintain that shots were regularly fired into the compound throughout this period), Native negotiators worked tirelessly to bring about a non-violent solution to the increasingly volatile confrontation. Eventually, it was the Defender's Alberta-based medicine man, John Stevens, who persuaded them to leave the camp peacefully on September 18. The eighteen Defenders were arrested and charged with various weapons and property-related offences, including mischief and mischief endangering life; two Secwepemc men, Jones "Wolverine" Ignace and his son Joseph, were charged with attempted murder (Joseph for the August 18th incident; Jones for allegedly shooting at the tires of a Bison that tried to run him down during the September 11 firefight).

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84 Vancouver Sun, September 18, 1995.
85 The 18 Defenders consisted of 3 Native women, 11 Native men (almost all Secwepemc), 2 non-Native women, and 2 non-Native men.
The standoff is over, but the persecution continues. Though all the Defenders were initially released on bail, the two Ignaces had their bail revoked on appeal, after direct intervention by the Attorney-General; Jones Ignace has now been in jail for over a year, and considers himself a political prisoner.86 Joseph Ignace became suicidal after prison guards beat him on several occasions; he was finally released on bail in the spring of this year.87 The Defender's trial began in early July, 1996 and is expected to run well into 1997. Despite repeated pleas that it be held in Kamloops, which would reduce the hardship for the Defenders, most of whom are poor, and some of whom are accustomed to living off the land, the Crown successfully argued, based on "security concerns", that it be held in the Surrey Courthouse, which has the most advanced security systems in the province.88

POLICING THE CRISIS

As far as we're concerned, they are nothing more than a renegade bunch of thugs doing criminal acts with weapons, they are trespassing and making a mockery of the very foundations of Canadian society.

86 Vancouver Sun, September 25, 1995; Stephen Hume, "Gustafsen Lake guilt or innocence a matter for judges not politicians", Vancouver Sun, September 29, 1995.
87 Flora Sampson, speech in Vancouver, March 11, 1996 (Sampson is the wife of Jones Ignace and mother of Joseph).
88 Vancouver Sun, 9 March, 1996; 12 March 1996.
Both during and after the month-long standoff, the RCMP was treated to lavish praise by government officials and media commentators for their judicious handling of the affair. Conveniently effacing the laborious efforts of the Native elders and spiritual advisors who ultimately persuaded the Defenders to leave the camp, conventional wisdom assigned credit for "peaceful resolution" of the dispute to RCMP restraint in the face of "armed thugs". The military spectacle of Ts'peten was henceforth transformed, like some domestic counterpart to UN "peacekeeping operations", into an affirmation of the basic decency and civility of the Canadian polity. Of course, this outpouring of self-congratulation was predicated on ignorance or wilfull misrecognition of what actually transpired at the lake, and served to obscure the more troubling moral and political questions raised by yet another deployment of the state security apparatus and military hardware against Canada's Native peoples.

Despite the massive effort to present Gustafsen Lake as a marker of national difference and superiority, its primary significance was rather to underscores the continuing centrality of state security systems for the maintenance of

89 "Mercredi given two days to end Indian standoff", 
settler supremacy. Ryser, in his discussion of "fourth world wars" - forms of "internal" conflict between the "descendants of ancient nations" and the "massive, modern states that surround and exploit them" - distinguishes between "hot" and "cold" indigenous wars, the former involving direct military aggression (of Indonesia against the Timorese and Papuans, for example, or Israel against the Palestinians), the latter "fought with political and economic weapons, although sporadic physical violence will erupt in isolation". The difference between them is, in one sense, largely historical since those nation-states now locked in cold wars with indigenous peoples - among them, the U.S., New Zealand, Japan and Canada - have generally fought "hot" wars, often over protracted periods, to establish territorial hegemony. This historical passage marks a transition, familiar in most colonial contexts, from a purely militaristic mode of subordination based on conquest and pacification, towards a more "professional" model, involving a mixture of military and civilian techniques geared to securing both the economic infrastructure and general social relations for sustained economic exploitation of the occupied territory (the Middle


East "peace process" is the most visible contemporary instantiation of this principle.91

Without this shift from military to bureaucratic repression most regimes will lack the ideological legitimacy to survive in the long run. (As Napoleon reportedly quipped, you can do anything with bayonets but sit on them). Hence from early on there is an impulse to convert rule by force into the rule of law, with Native societies subjected to a comprehensive criminalization, and the criminal law adapted to function as the "central support of colonial domination."92 In B.C., effecting this transition was a preoccupation of settler government from its inception, though, as Barry Gough has shown in his study of gunboat diplomacy on the Pacific Coast, it was the 1880s before full


92 Peter Fitzpatrick, "Crime as Resistance: The Colonial Situation", The Howard Journal 28 (1989) pp. 272-281, at 272. It is this basic function of the criminal law as colonial instrument that even today generates the appalling rates of Native incarceration which incite so much hand-wringing among the settler establishment.
reliance could be placed on civilian policing. It is crucial to recognize, however, that this legalization of colonial power, not only the criminal law but the intricate machinery of "Native administration" in its entirety, is inherently unstable, being susceptible in particular to the perennial resistance of the colonized, and thus relies (however discreetly) on the machinery of state violence as its ultimate guarantor. Of course, the form and frequency of coercive action will vary across time and "national situations", but the very nature of settler rule, lacking as it does the consent of the indigenous population, will require the periodic resort to violence, even in advanced settler states like Canada which have developed more subtle mechanisms of social control.

It should be noted too that, in Canada at least, the demilitarization of colonial domination has not necessarily implied a concomitant reduction in the brutality of

94 Weitzer notes that "the system of control may be so successful in disorganizing political mobilization, restricting physical mobility, and ensuring economic dependency of the subordinate group that overt physical repression is rarely necessary to maintain stability". See Transforming Settler States: Communal Conflict and Internal Security in Northern Ireland and Zanzibar (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). The Canadian system, in contrast, would seem to rely on the channeling of
treatment meted out to indigenous people. In recent years, Native protests against police abuse and the operation of the "injustice system" have undermined the universalist mythology of liberal legality, forcing state intervention to shore up the ideological legitimacy of the legal system. The wrongful conviction of Donald Marshall, Jr., a Mic Mac from Nova Scotia who spent 11 years in prison for a murder he did not commit, and the police assassination of J.J. Harper, a prominent Native activist in Winnipeg, prompted official inquiries into the operations of the justice system in Nova Scotia and Manitoba which revealed widespread discrimination and abuse.95

Such grievances are hardly unknown in B.C.'s central Interior: in the 1970s, the area was the focus of a high profile controversy over the killing of Fred Quilt, a Chilcotin man from the Alexis Creek Band who died after a political protest, and promotion of urbanization and economic dependency, to achieve the same result. 

roadside beating by an RCMP officer. The protest from the local Native community drew national attention to the system of "Herrenvolk justice" which then prevailed in the Cariboo-Chilcotin region. As Terry Glavin describes it,

...the business of judging was done by people like the local hotel manager or sawmill owner. It was that way all over the Interior. A man would be sworn in as judge when necessary, to do mainly what the RCMP suggested he do....The prevailing opinion throughout the Chilcotin and Cariboo was that the RCMP's job was to keep the Indians in check and to stay away, for the most part, from the affairs of the white community. In some circles, even the idea of criminal trials for Indians was considered rather novel. Criminal and civil matters involving Indians were regarded as best dispatched expeditiously, without benefit of much decorum or due process, and drawing attention to these cases was bad policy.

Recent events suggest that perhaps not much has changed. In 1993, the NDP government ordered an official inquiry into the administration of justice in the Cariboo-Chilcotin

region in response to longstanding Native complaints about RCMP conduct. In the course of his seven month investigation, Judge Anthony Sarich received over 179 complaints from Native people, and his findings criticized the force for failing to address adequately a pattern of contemptful behaviour and excessive force and intimidation. (Significantly, Sarich's report carefully avoided mention of the RCMP's unsuccessful attempt to obtain a court order halting the inquiry after he began to investigate complaints of assaults against Native men in police jail cells).  

If nothing else, these public inquiries, which are ultimately little more than exercises in public relations, have helped to accelerate devolutionary tendencies in Native administration incipient since the 1960s. Then, the advancing immiseration of Native people, owing both to large-scale capitalist encroachments on traditional lands and subsistence practices and the consequent implementation of full-blown "welfare colonialism", produced a growing awareness of the need to retool a whole range of administrative practices, including policing, if only to contain the "legitimation crisis" which an unreconstructed system of colonial domination threatened to provoke. The

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political response was, in effect, twofold. On the one hand, within the sphere of criminal justice administration, the Canadian state began to promote a cooptive or consensual approach designed to foster the appearance of enlightened progress toward self-government for First Nations. Problems were defined according to an ethnic model in which questions of power and history were effaced by notions of culture and community: police were no longer the whip hand of settler domination, but providers of a "culturally appropriate" community service. The preferred policy response was and remains a superficial "Nativization" of policing through a variety of programmes: for example, the establishment of community policing and liaison offices, recruitment and promotion of First Nations constables, cultural sensitivity training for non-Native police, and, in some cases, the creation of reserve-based Native police forces.99

On the other hand, coinciding with (and belying) this apparently kinder, gentler approach to law enforcement, the Canadian state began to gird itself for the forceful suppression of a newly emerging threat to internal security: Native militancy. Deteriorating conditions on the reserves, and in the "Native ghettos" developing in Canadian inner cities, were producing profound discontent, and increasingly radical protest, within various sectors of Native society, but especially among youth. The infamous 1969 White Paper hinted at this emerging settler demonology, with its ominous warning that

Canadians, Indians and non-Indians alike stand at the crossroads. For Canadian society the issue is whether a growing element of its population will become full participants contributing in a positive way to the general well-being or whether, conversely, the present social and economic gap will lead to their increasing frustration and isolation, a threat to the general well-being of society.100

Similar views are reflected in more recent government pronouncements and activities. A 1993 Federal policy paper

Authority (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) pp. 121-137.
on Aboriginal policing, adopting the newspeak of "service provision," emphasized the impact of economic restructuring, and the attendant fiscal crisis of the state, on a Native population that was increasingly alienated from, and in conflict with, the law. "The polarization between various groups could have serious public safety implications for the delivery of police services," the report concluded, noting that "law enforcement agencies face a considerable challenge in responding to Aboriginal needs while being subjected to a climate of continued fiscal constraint." More disturbing, however, were the 1989 revelations that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) had commissioned a report on "Native Extremism" out of concern over the political activities of certain Native nations (the Innu of Labrador, the Mohawks of Kahnawake, and the Lubicon Cree) which claimed to provide "a detailed assessment of a potential threat".

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102 The report was completed in March, 1989 and news of its existence was leaked to the media in late April. The resulting uproar led to an investigation by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, the largely toothless CSIS watchdog, whose own exculpatory report "The Innu Interview and Native Extremism Report" was released in February, 1990 (after being censored by CSIS for reasons of national security).
This manufacture of a new internal enemy carried with it the latent potentiality, rendered more and more manifest from the 1980s onward, for increasingly repressive responses to Native political dissent. There are numerous examples from across the country over the last twenty years, most notably the 1981 "Salmon War" involving a massive RCMP operation against the Micmacs on the Restigouche reserve; a similar invasion of the Kahnawake reserve in June, 1988; the Oka siege of summer 1990; and the 1991 police attacks on the Lil'wat Nation's Duffy Lake Road blockades. Of course, Oka remains the most vivid and notorious example of this combative approach, and the relative success of Mohawk resistance (combined with outrage over the death of a police officer during the initial assault on Mohawk barricades) have no doubt convinced police and their supporters of the need for "tougher measures". Indeed, in the midst of the Oka crisis, the Canadian Police Association issued a statement expressing unreserved support for the SQ and a blanket condemnation of the Mohawks: "As Canadian police officers and citizens, we must oppose terrorism as a means of resolving disputes. We shall continue to uphold and

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enforce the laws of Canada and protect our citizens. In the wake of that crisis, right wing opinion begin to call for a more militaristic approach to "counter-terrorism". Reform MP Bob Ringma, a retired RCMP commander opposed cutbacks to the Canadian military budget on the grounds that the armed forces would increasingly be called upon to deal with Native protests. In a similar vein, the Mackenzie Institute, an Ontario-based think tank with links to right wing organizations like the Northern Foundation and the World Anti-Communist League, circulated The Legacy of Oka, a position paper arguing that the Canadian state should hire, equip and train special counter-insurgency units to be used "quietly" and without resort to "prolonged negotiation" in future confrontations with First Nations.

Such brazen proposals might be readily dismissed as the wishful thinking of reactionary crackpots and colonial recidivists, but the long, hot summer of 1995 seemed to indicate just such an "Ulsterization" in defence of settler


105 Ringma's statement, which went largely unremarked in the media, is referred to in Terry Glavin, "Roadblocks to Reconciliation", Georgia Straight, July 7-14, 1995.
prerogatives. RCMP operations at Gustafsen Lake - replete with Gulf War military hardware, shoot-to-kill orders, a 200 square kilometre No-Go zone, and comprehensive media embargo - certainly seemed to reflect a Mackenzie Institute model of conflict resolution. And even as settler elites in B.C. worked to put a genial face on this New Model RCMP - Sam Steele as Navy Seal - the Ontario Provincial Police were brutally suppressing the peaceful efforts of the Stoney Point First Nation to reclaim expropriated reserve lands, fatally shooting one Native man (Dudley George), wounding another, and savagely beating many more.

108 The Stoney Point reserve was expropriated by the Department of National Defence in 1942 and never returned. Some residents were relocated to swampland on the nearby Kettle Point reserve, while many others scattered throughout Ontario. Instead of returning the land to the band, the Ontario government has attempted to turn it into Ipperwash Provincial Park. On Sept. 6, Ontario Provincial Police stormed the area protesters were occupying at Ipperwash, with deadly results. As a result of a subsequent investigation into the incident, the officer in charge of tactical operations has been charged with criminal negligence causing death. See Tony Hall, "Who Killed Dudley George?", Canadian Dimension, December 1995-January 1996, pp. 8-12; and "The Standoff at Aazhoodena - Stoney Point", Akwesasne Notes 2:1 (1996) pp.39-41. In a curious parallel to the Gustafsen Lake standoff, where the B.C.-based FIRE claimed to attract hordes of new angry white members, a group called ON-FIRE (Ontario Federation for Individual Rights and Equality) has mobilized in support of the OPP officer.
Just what precisely averted a Waco or Ipperwash solution at Gustafsen Lake is difficult to know, and, given the veil of secrecy which shrouds matters of "internal security", perhaps unknowable; what can be said with some degree of confidence, however, is that the main explanation since on offer - judicious restraint by the RCMP - is basically untenable. The RCMP, perhaps under political pressure to avoid "coddling" Native claimants to private land, escalated the conflict from mid-August onward instead of persisting with negotiations. They implemented an operational plan which fed the Defender's fears of an armed invasion, while fostering a climate of public paranoia and hostility that quickly inflamed settler bloodlust for a return to "frontier justice" (during the Standoff there were at least two demonstrations on the streets of 100 Mile House where signs bearing slogans like "Honk for the End of Gustafsen" and "1 Land, 1 People, 1 Law" abounded). Evidence coming to light at trial has begun to challenge the RCMP claim that the Defenders instigated each of the shooting incidents: indeed, by itself the September 11th "firefight", where police fired thousands of rounds at the fleeing occupants of the red pickup and into the camp, should be sufficient to cast doubt on any myths of restraint. Even more telling, perhaps, was the increasingly angry criticism police actions were evoking from Native leaders outside the camp as the standoff progressed, who voiced mounting concern that a "national
anti-terrorist presence" was now controlling the operation and was "all set out to kill people" to discourage future militancy and placate "white public opinion". 109

In the end, a massacre was probably averted based, not on humanitarian principles, but on a calculation of the political costs associated with a large-scale bloodletting. Killing Natives might have earned the NDP some prestige among the Indian-hating segment of the population, but it also would have created a public relations nightmare in less fascistic circles, provoked substantial international censure, and - most seriously of all - shaken the confidence of foreign investors already nervous about the state of Native affairs in the province. Indeed, the spectre haunting the RCMP's Zulu base camp, as well as the corridors of power in Victoria and Ottawa, was probably not the massacre of a ragged band of Native radicals at Ts'peten, but the prospect of future Ts'petens across B.C. and across the country. This was precisely the message conveyed to settler authorities by the "mainstream" Native leadership, who warned against making martyrs of the Defenders, since

109 See articles in Vancouver Sun, 28 August, 12 and 13 September, 1995 quoting Ken Dennis from the Shuswap Liaison Council, Giktsan chief Don Ryan, Penticton Chief Stewart Phillip, and Ovide Mercredi.
this could only accelerate the spread of "radicalism" and "extremism" among an already angry Native populace.  

DIVIDE AND RULE

There are extremists in this province who have been disowned by the aboriginal people in the Cariboo area, who have taken things into their own hands, and are prepared to come from outside of the province, and to bring in illegal weapons, and to fire them at police officers.

ex-Premier Mike Harcourt

Implicit in this two-pronged approach to settler security - the mailed fist of "rapid containment" and the velvet glove of an ethnicized "aboriginal policing" - is the strategic exploitation of divisions within the First Nations community. Before, during and after the standoff, official pronouncements and media accounts highlighted the distinction between the moderate Natives, like the officials of the Cariboo Tribal Council (the "good Indians"), and the violent, fanatical, extremist elements defiantly refusing to abandon the sacred Sundance site (the "bad Indians"). Press reports repeatedly quoted local chiefs denouncing the Defenders as paranoid malingerers lacking cultural or political legitimacy, or asserting (wrongly as it turns out)

110 See, e.g. "Radicals to reap support in shootout, leaders warn", 
Vancouver Sun, 29 August, 1995.
111 "Premier vows to continue treaty negotiations", 
Vancouver Sun, 6 September 1995.
that few if any of the Natives in the camp were even Shuswap, thereby summoning up the age-old phantasm of "outside agitation". Meanwhile, the Defenders themselves inveighed against "collaborators" associated with the "DIA band council system".

While these recriminations were broadcast widely by the RCMP in order to confuse and hence disorganize potential supporters of the Defenders, they also reflect genuine political faultlines. Colonization has undoubtedly deepened and multiplied the divisions within Native communities. Some, like those stemming from treaties and the Indian Act, are traceable directly to the machinations of settler governments. Others are ethno-cultural, the legacy of traditional "tribal" divisions incorporated into, and activated by, the colonial state. At another level, they are inter-generational, as contemporary Aboriginal youth become increasingly frustrated by the manifest failure of a more moderate approach to improve the lived reality of the indigenous masses. At still another level, they reflect growing class stratification among Natives, as the process of embourgeoisement ("whitification") increasingly divides the elite corps of well-educated, well-off Native leaders and entrepreneurs from the impoverished masses they putatively represent. As we saw in the preceding chapter,
this is a division which the Reform Party has adroitly seized upon in its campaign against settler reforms.\textsuperscript{112}

The Defenders represent a radical and increasingly vocal element within the indigenous population in Canada, the so-called sovereigntist movement, which has begun to challenge the hegemony of the mainstream leadership of the Native movement embodied in band councils, and representative bodies like the First Nations Summit and AFN.\textsuperscript{113} Perhaps surprisingly, the two political tendencies do not differ markedly in their conceptions of pre-contact indigenous societies and the history of colonization: both acknowledge that First Nations were self-governing in their respective territories from time immemorial, that indigenous sovereignty was recognized in European law and diplomacy in the early post-contact period, that settler colonization was a genocidal process involving a thoroughgoing attack on the existential foundations of indigenous societies, and, finally, that the Canadian state is burdened by a host of


moral, legal and political obligations that remain unfulfilled.114

Where sovereigntists and mainstream leaders differ, however, is in their visions of the future and, consequently, in their views on the perennial question of "what is to be done". At the risk of grossly dichotomizing and oversimplifying a very complex political reality, it might be said that mainstream leaders, cognizant of the urgent need to arrest the ongoing degradation of their people and territories, seek an expedited accommodation within the framework of industrial capitalism and the Canadian nation-state. They view settler colonization as a fait accompli, and the settler power structure as intransigent, and hope to negotiate a transfer of sufficient money, land, resources and politico-administrative power from settler governments to secure the viability of First Nations as distinct societies. In practical terms, this has meant the pursuit of local "self-government" through treaties (as in B.C.), constitutional amendments (the now largely abandoned AFN strategy during the Mulroney era), or devolution of administrative powers, and the promotion of economic development through (quasi) capitalist enterprise. As Ed John, head of the First Nations Summit in B.C. puts it, "we want an accommodation of our interests and Canadian interests

114 Deloria and Lytle, The Nations Within.
at large, and a working relationship between the two."\textsuperscript{115} To these mainstream leaders, the sovereigntist agenda indulges in a dangerous romanticism and utopianism, elevating abstract principle over the desperate need for immediate, concrete change.

For sovereigntists, on the other hand, this mainstream strategy is tantamount to national suicide, an abject capitulation to the prerogatives of settler capitalist domination that can only lead to moral, cultural, spiritual and ecological annihilation.\textsuperscript{116} They seek, not accommodation within the status quo, but its transcendence, a fundamental restructuring of the social order based on a recovery or re-invention of traditional indigenous existence, what Galeano has described as "a community-based mode of production and way of life, based not on greed but on solidarity, age-old

\textsuperscript{115} "Indians opt for Coexistence", Vancouver Sun, October 21, 1996.

freedoms, and identity between human beings and nature."  
This programme is frequently infused by forms of millenarian spiritualism, and a desire to resurrect, albeit in a modern form, a "natural economy" centred on intimate, subsistence use of the land. In practice, this means asserting a conception of sovereignty which comes much closer to independent statehood, and implies a drastic curtailment of settler proprietary interests and extractive activities. This articulation of indigenous nationalism has led inexorably to an efflorescence of political activity at the international level in order to achieve broad recognition of the national status of indigenous peoples, and bring external pressure to bear on existing nation-states for their oppression of "national minorities" or "entrapped nations" within their borders. From the 1970s onward, activity focused on the formation of organizations like the International Indian Treaty Council (created in 1975 as the international arm of the American Indian Movement) and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (established in 1975 under the leadership of George Manuel, a member of the

118 Deloria and Lytle, The Nations Within.
119 The term "entrapped nations" comes from Richard Falk, "The Struggle of Indigenous Peoples and the Promise of Natural Political Communities", in R. Thompson, ed., The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in International Law: Selected
Secwepemc Nation); convening of forums, like the Russell tribunals and the International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs (a sub-committee of the UN Human Rights committee) to compile records of human rights abuses in different countries; and the promotion of international legal instruments, either existing (like the UN Declaration on Decolonization) or new (like the Draft declaration on Indigenous Peoples), capable of defending indigenous sovereignty. Indeed, given settlerdom's implacable hostility to all but the most modest reforms, sovereigntists have had little choice but to engage in the defiant, rearguard actions which have become such a familiar feature of the Canadian political landscape in recent years.

In this context, then, the Ts'peten Defender's political demands were the local expression of an emerging indigenous internationalism. They invoked a substantial body of international and British imperial law and diplomatic practice to, in effect, call the bluff of settler constitutionalism, the myth that settler rule was

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As Ward Churchill points out, the demand for statehood is in large part a reaction to the settler denial of any form of indigenous autonomy. See *Struggle for the Land*, p.445.
established through scrupulous adherence to international and domestic laws. They argued that, in the absence of legitimate treaties between the British crown and the Secwepemc Nation, Ts'peten constituted unceded Secwepemc territory over which settler governments could exercise no lawful jurisdiction; consequently, the government's previous alienation of Shuswap land to private owners, and present attempts to evict and prosecute the Defenders, were illegal. Moreover, by appealing to third-party tribunals - the world court, the Queen - for an independent review of their claims, they explicitly challenged the competence of Canadian state institutions to adjudicate questions going to their own legitimacy.

Of course, to a settler public congenitally ignorant of its own ignoble history and thoroughly invested, fiscally, politically and emotionally, in nationalist creation myths, the Defender's repudiation of the territorial jurisdiction of the Canadian state and appeals to archaic imperial

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connections were not only anachronistic but, quite simply, incomprehensible. Though the Defenders were dismissed as lunatics, they were in fact invoking a long and honorable politico-legal tradition, running from the eastern First Nations who signed innumerable treaties with European powers prior to the 19th century; to the various delegations of B.C. Native leaders who travelled to Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seeking resolution of the land question; to the Cayuga sachem Deskaheh, who petitioned the League of Nations in the 1920s to recognize the "independent statehood" of the Six Nations; to the Native leaders of the early 1980s who lobbied Westminster to require recognition of aboriginal rights as a condition of constitutional patriation. Few if any attempts were made to thus contextualize the Defender's demands because, as UBCIC president Saul Terry pointed out in an eloquent but largely ignored press release, it would complicate the official story:

the RCMP, the Attorney-General and the media have gone to great lengths to discredit the Shuswap Sundancers and their supporters at Gustafsen Lake as dangerous

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123 The Gustafsen Lake archive at the SISIS homepage contains a variety of documents expressing the Defender's demands.
fanatics in order to justify the use of armed force to remove them from the Sundance grounds....In trying to discredit and isolate the Sundancers, the RCMP and Attorney General are laying the groundwork for bloodshed - needless bloodshed. The positions expressed by the Sundancer's on their nation's sovereignty and aboriginal title are not 'extremist'. They are shared by many Indian peoples across this province. British Columbia is unceded Indian land.... Our peoples demand JUSTICE and RECOGNITION but whenever they stand up for their rights they are subjected to the RULE OF LAW and POLICE STATE TACTICS.125

Nor was this reaction confined to Canadian indigenous leaders. Tupac Enrique, a representative from the Pheonix-based Continental Coordinating Council of Indigenous Nations and Organizations (CONIC), came to Ts'peten at the request of traditionalists from the Secwepemc and Okanagan Nations to serve as an international observer. He commented:

I witnessed firsthand the evidence of thousands of rounds of which had been fired into the camp by the Canadian paramilitary forces. I counted by the hundreds the number of these troops used to militarize

the entire zone around Ts'peten..., along with Armored Personnel Carriers, scores of troop transport vehicles, helicopters and commando squads in camouflage gear. These were the physical evidence of the assault at Ts'peten that nearly resulted in a tragic loss of human life.... From the beginning, the Canadian government and provincial authorities of British Columbia attempted to criminalize the Sundance Camp defenders without addressing the underlying issues of Aboriginal sovereign rights on unceded Indigenous territories.¹²⁶

Thus, it took the near massacre of a dozen or so Native sovereigntists and their supporters at Gustafsen Lake for the settler population to discover a homegrown sovereigntist movement in its midst. Certainly its existence ought to have been clear enough, given that roughly one-third of B.C. bands, most of them located in the central and southern interior and closely associated with the more radical Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, have elected not to participate in the treatymaking process.¹²⁷ But public attention has been largely focused on the "moderate" bands operating more or less within the framework of the treaty process, which have

been granted a monopoly on legitimacy at least as far as settler society is concerned. The problem is, this does not necessarily accord with the wishes of Native communities the Band councils claim to represent.\textsuperscript{128} It also has the tendency to deny sovereigntists access to conventional political channels, forcing them to adopt unconventional means to register their concerns.

\textbf{SETTLER SOLIDARITY}

If the standoff thus highlighted, and exagerrated, the political faultlines within the Native population, it illustrated simultaneously the latent capacity for caste solidarity which is for Weitzer one of the "pillars of settler supremacy".\textsuperscript{129} Faced with the threat of an "Indian uprising", the warring factions of "Left" and "Right", hitherto locked in mortal combat over the question of Native claims, quickly closed ranks to present a united front against a perceived challenge to settler dominion. Demagogic politicians and pundits had already begun to play upon anti-Native animus during the blockades earlier in the summer in effort to organize reflexive hostility to Native

\textsuperscript{127} "Native Indians Split on treaty-talks process", \textit{Vancouver Sun}, September 25, 1995.
\textsuperscript{128} See Roslin, "A Conversation with Tony Hall".
\textsuperscript{129} Weitzer suggests that divisions in a settler formation can compromise the state's capacity to deliver repression, and offer Natives an opportunity to mobilize. See Weitzer, \textit{Transforming Settler States}, p. 27.
protest into a groundswell of public opposition to Native land claims. By late June, Sun columnist Barbara Yaffe, certainly no slouch in this regard, could offer this (no doubt self-serving) description of the province's degraded political climate, well before the Ts'peten resistance had attracted widespread attention:

Public opinion creeps to the right with every new barricade. People want to know why justice for Natives comes specially wrapped. Barricade bargaining has also left non-aboriginals wondering about native people's willingness to be reasonable about land claims. And so, B.C.'s opposition Liberal and Reform parties are calling on Mike Harcourt's government to get tough on the native blockades, whatever the risks.\footnote{130}{"Why ode to Oka might be heard a lot this summer in B.C." Vancouver Sun, June 29, 1995.} 

Thus, once news of the standoff was out, right wing responses were predictably pugnacious: the Sun editorialized about "the thugs of Gustafsen and our moment of truth", while the newly formed Foundation for Individual Rights and Equality (FIRE) promised vigilante action unless the government took "some firm action to let Natives know we mean business."\footnote{131}{Vancouver Sun, August 25, 1995.}
More scandalous, however, was the reaction from the left-liberal architects and advocates of the treaty process, the supposed standard-bearers of settler humanism and enlightenment, whose hardline stance stirred even the most retrograde defenders of white plutocracy to praise them.\textsuperscript{132} The NDP government, its principled support for a just resolution to Native land claims already foundering on the rocks of electoral reality in a resource-dependent economy, practically leapt at the opportunity to deflect the charges of "appeasement" and "capitulation" that opposition parties had been churning out for months. Rather than seek a political solution to the standoff, the provincial government unleashed state security forces against the Defenders and devoted the bulk of its efforts to vilification. Premier Mike Harcourt's major contribution to public understanding, for example, was to condemn the Defenders as "fanatical conspiracy theorists". The government's chief hatchet man was newly appointed Attorney-General Ujjal Dosanjh, whose great-grandfather was jailed by the British for revolutionary activities in India, and who cut his political teeth in B.C. organizing Indo-Canadian farm workers in the Fraser Valley. Abjuring these anti-colonial roots, Dosanjh refused to negotiate with

"terrorists", relinquishing full operational control to the RCMP, and spent the standoff vehemently insisting that this was a "criminal matter that has nothing to do with aboriginal land claims". Early on he indicated that "if force has to be used to maintain law and order, I will have no hesitation in sanctioning it", and later denounced the Defenders for "having no regard for human life or law". He continued to "spin" even after the Defenders surrendered, taking media people on a guided tour of the Defender's encampment (from outside "you don't get the serious, horrible, and offensive dimension of the structures that have been built here"), and declaring that "I'll let the people of British Columbia be the judge of whether those who illegally occupy private land and then shoot at police officers at sight and hunt them and actually aggressively pursue them to kill - whether they're heroes or zeroes ". Overall, in light of the performance of Dosanjh and his cabinet colleagues, the subsequent claim by one Defender -

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133 "Dosanjh's Past Paved with Political Actions", Sun, 2 September; "A-G Fears peaceful end dimming", Sun, 12 September, 1995.

134 Vancouver Sun, 25 September 1995. The apostles of white settler supremacy no doubt gloated over the spectacle of B.C.'s first non-white Attorney-General disciplining recalcitrant Natives. As paleo-conservative Trevor Lautens put it in his November 18, 1995 Sun column, Dosanjh "acquitted himself as well as anyone could in a society that trembles to think of attacking terrorists if they call themselves Indians. No burden of white guilt. Native Indian nationalists could hardly murmur that he has the wrong skin color."
that "the NDP wanted to kill Natives to get votes" - possessed a disturbing ring of truth.\textsuperscript{135}

Supplementing the grim spectacle of social democracy in action, the liberal intelligentsia wasted little time before training their own rhetorical guns on the Defenders, portraying them as a grave threat to the treaty process and its moderate Native participants. UBC professor Paul Tennant, putative authority on B.C. "aboriginal politics" and academic booster for the Treaty Commission, warned about the growing Native constituency for "radicalism" and dismissed the Defenders as "misfits and malcontents" led by "charatans".\textsuperscript{136} SFU criminologist John Ekstedt compared the Sundance camp to "a 70s encounter group that went wrong". Terry Glavin, usually a perceptive analyst of B.C. Native affairs and a one-time employee of the B.C. Treaty Commission, blithely equated white backlash and Native militancy as "parallel forms of extremism", belittling the Defenders as "a ragged band of outcasts" and "sad little midway freaks" beset with "apocalyptic visions". Sun

\textsuperscript{135} Jones Ignace, statement in B.C. Supreme Court, July 1996.
\textsuperscript{136} Tennant is quoted in "Showdown", Maclean's 11 September 1995. Earlier in the summer, in the aftermath of blockades at Douglas Lake and Adams Lake, Tennant warned that "if blockades are seen as a way to get your way fast, we could see the legitimate treaty process falling apart"; according to his interviewer, Tennant felt that the "kid gloves approach" adopted by the provincial government left Natives
Columnist Elizabeth Aird, an erratic but often trenchant critic of the B.C. overclass, wrote patronizingly that "rebels without a reason to live are [their] own people's worst enemies". Even Stephen Hume, another Sun columnist who remains the mainstream's most indefatigable and trenchant critic of the white overclass, and who distinguished himself during the standoff with columns encouraging the settler public to confront its larger historical and political responsibilities, succumbed to this line of thinking. Though unsparingly derisive of settler hysteria and government hypocrisy, his ultimate concern was to bolster faltering reformist efforts (i.e. the treaty process) so as to contain the threat of "a burgeoning anti-establishment underground" and the further spread of "militant new evangelisms". "You don't have to be Buffalo Bill," he wrote, "to figure out that everytime we make another reasonable chief look foolish, we make the radicals at Gustafsen Lake look reasonable to all those hotheads who figure they have nothing left to lose". In essence, his columns represent a stern warning to settlerdom about the consequences of squandering present opportunities to settle Native claims, so to speak, on the cheap.  

137 Ekstedt is quoted in "Renegade leader not alone in his conspiracy theories", Sun, 31 August 1995; Glavin's statements appear in his "How the Circus Came to Gustafsen Lake"; Aird's column appeared in the Sun, August 25, 1995;
Perhaps the only notable dissent from the general pattern of settler wagon-circling came from a relatively small number of grassroots, solidarity activists, many of them long-time participants in the environmental movement, who worked tirelessly throughout the standoff to generate public support for the Defenders and pressure the RCMP into abandoning its invasion plans. Some of these people were inside the camp itself, bearing witness to the Defender's stand, while others worked in nearby communities like 100 Mile House and Williams Lake, disrupting RCMP press conferences and organizing supplies. Still others, like the Victoria-based Settlers in Support of Indigenous Sovereignty (SISIS) and Vancouver's Aboriginal Sovereignty Support Committee (ASSC), creatively utilized the resources of the Internet to circumvent the RCMP's propaganda machine, galvanizing overseas supporters to demonstrate outside Canadian diplomatic offices and fax letters of protest to Canadian politicians. These groups, along with community-based radio stations in both cities, were virtually the only independent source of information both during and after the Standoff. Unfortunately, the bulk of the province's non-Natives remained at the mercy of a corporate and state-owned media complex which was dutifully disseminating a steady stream of RCMP-crafted deceptions.

and Hume's columns appeared in the Sun on August 30 and September 11, 1995.
As the Israelis have shown so successfully with terrorists, you never ever make a deal that allows a terrorist tactic to 'win'. If there is no cooperation... it is time for a steady escalation of pressure. The first stage is to make life uncomfortable and unproductive, especially by a total severing of communications, including the cutoff of cell phones and access to the media. This latter is the essential oxygen of many disturbances, so it needs to be denied.

Sun columnist Gordon Gibson
offering tactical advice to the
RCMP, August 1995

Gustafsen Lake illustrated that the Mounties have absorbed the primary tactical innovation associated with counter-insurgency operations in the post-Vietnam era, a stratagem put effectively into practice by U.S. imperialism in the "brilliant little feats of arms" - Grenada, Nicaragua, Panama, and above all, the Gulf War - which punctuated the Reagan-Bush era. Ignoring for the moment its practical elaborations and local adaptations, the lesson can be stated succinctly: neutralize the media. For the reconfigured imperialisms of the post-colonial (and now post-Communist) era, a form of "mediatized militarism" has become essential, not only to avoid impolitic images of G.I.s "ronsoning hootches", "freedom fighters" perpetrating civilian massacres, and Stealth bombers obliterating hospitals and schools, but also to silence the sundry criminals, fanatics and terrorists who contest the imposition of a not-quite-so
New World Order. As Mike Davis puts it, "it is... a tactical absolute of 'anti-terrorism' - whether practiced in Belfast, Jerusalem, or Los Angeles - to deny terrorism a public voice. Although terrorism is always portrayed precisely as inarticulate malevolence, authorities expend enormous energy to protect us from its 'ravings'...." In Canada, where imperial designs are oriented towards internal pacification rather than global domination, this lesson was not yet fully mastered by the time of Oka, with irksome consequences for the Canadian military and provincial police, whose "freedom of action" was hampered by the troublesome presence of independent journalists within the Oka encampment and the resulting effusion of public support for Mohawk resistance. (As Donna Goodleaf has shown, this failure was not for lack of trying).

At any rate, by the time events at Ts'peten were underway, the RCMP were demonstrating a remarkable flair for orchestrating a media spectacle: alerting a few key news outlets to a "major story breaking in the Cariboo" on August 18th, and flying selected reporters into Williams Lake the next day (on an RCMP jet) for a press conference with police, the aggrieved rancher James, and representatives

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138 "Increase Pressure Bit by Bit", Vancouver Sun, 25 August, 1995.
from the local tribal council; and erecting an communications _cordon sanitaire_ around the Defender's encampment on August 26th, leaving journalists to loiter sullenly at the 17 km checkpoint as they waited for the next RCMP briefing session or staged photo opportunity. As a result, for the duration of the most serious crisis in Native-settler relations to face the Canadian state since Oka, and the largest police operation in Canadian history, Canada's ostensibly free and independent media was effectively reduced to the basest of propaganda machines.

This prostration was reflected directly in the content of reportage, which faithfully served up the main elements of the RCMP-NDP "smear campaign" for public consumption; namely, that the Ts'peten standoff had nothing to do with land claims or Native rights and was instead a criminal matter involving trespass on private property, and violent attacks on police, by deluded thugs.\(^{141}\) With the basic parameters thus established, press coverage fell into a simple, dichotomous pattern discernible across the whole range of media representations. On the one hand, reports

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\(^{140}\) Goodleaf, _Entering the Warzone_

\(^{141}\) "Smear campaign" may appear hyperbolic, but it is in fact the term used by two senior RCMP officials during the standoff. One of them was recorded on videotape at a meeting in the Zulu command centre on September 1, 1995 saying "smear campaigns are our specialty". The tape became public in January, 1997. See "RCMP say talk of smear campaign 'in jest'!", _Vancouver Sun_, January 23, 1997.
which confirmed the "law and order" framework were widely circulated, however misleading: tales of outside agitators, "Indian ambushes", heavy armaments, phony spirituality, U.S. militia connections and lengthy criminal records dominated public discourse. Above all, the Defenders were vilified for resorting to repugnant displays of macho violence, since violence is the cardinal political sin within the prevailing liberal worldview. (This vilification required a denial both of the vast preponderance of violent machismo on the RCMP side, and of the significant role played by women Defenders). On the other hand, the colonial dimensions of the Standoff were repressed or discounted: there were few if any attempts to contextualize the Defender's actions within the broader sweep of Cariboo colonization, or the tangled legal relations between Aboriginal Nations and the Canadian state. In fact, there was little effort even to convey the Defenders position, let alone explain or examine it. They were indeed reduced to "inarticulate malevolence".

It would be a mistake, however, to attribute this almost unexceptionally one-sided and jingoistic coverage solely to RCMP manipulation. This not only credits the Mounties with an omniscience they doubtfully possess, it denies the active role media institutions and personnel played in thus constructing the Standoff. For even if access to the Defenders was denied, there were undoubtedly alternative sources outside the camp which could have supplied the other
side of the story to a suitably inquisitive Fifth Estate. At least in part, then, the explanation for this prostration must be found in the systemic features of privately owned mass media organizations themselves - features perhaps most famously and controversially analyzed by Noam Chomsky and others - as well as in the generalized antagonism demonstrated towards indigenous peoples at all levels (economic, political, ideological) of a settler formation, particularly when Natives mount challenges to settler power and privilege. Indeed, Fitzpatrick's dissection of settler ideology in the colonial era might just as well have been written with the Ts'peten Standoff in mind:

in the colonial scheme of things, resistance on the part of the oppressed could only be marginal or non-existent. Colonists, caught by their image of the colonised as fragmented and tradition-bound, could not conceive of extensive and innovative resistance on the part of their charges. This is why resistance, when it became manifest, was usually such a surprise to the colonists. Resistance could only be against the sure flow of human development and rational progress and hence manifest resistance had to be designated in terms

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of the primordial, the instinctual, the irrational, the effect of outside agitation.\footnote{Fitzpatrick, "Crime as Resistance", p.273.}

As with Desert Storm, it was only in the aftermath of the standoff, with the crisis safely (if temporarily) averted, that the media demonstrated any interest in reflecting on its own, abject performance. Most notably, the Vancouver Sun, having played an instrumental role in demonizing the Ts'peten Defenders, and spearheaded the backlash against Native claims for much of the previous two years, aired its concerns in a pious editorial adverting to the perils of media manipulation. Decrying the role played by a "compliant media... adroitly ensnared in a web of self-censorship", the Sun belatedly posed the elementary questions it had hitherto taken great care to avoid.

"Who were the people in the camp? What were their motives? We had only the word of the authorities, who clearly had a vested interest in presenting a particular perspective."

Of course, the Sun's editors had no intention of trying to answer these question, since from a media standpoint the Standoff was now "over". Despite recycling a few radical-sounding platitudes ("Tyranny always insists that only the
official version is valid"), the editorial concluded by confirming its own continued allegiance to the official mythology of Ts'peten, proclaiming it a "justly-celebrated triumph for the RCMP" and "demonstration that the force is worthy of its reputation for restraint, decency and common sense." Thus has the mainstream media adapted to its new mission, in the age of Conrad Black and Rupert Murdoch, of comforting the comfortable, and afflicting the afflicted.\footnote{"All the news that's fit to be manipulated", Vancouver Sun, September 22, 1996.}
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