

Presentation to the

Public Hearing on Nanoose Bay Expropriation

*on behalf of the Vancouver Island Public Interest
Research Group (VIPIRG) and the Barnard-Boecker
Centre Foundation (BBCF).*

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Introduction

My name is Stacy Chappel, I'm the Executive Director of the Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group (VIPIRG) and I co-wrote this presentation with Theresa Wolfwood. Theresa is a member of the Board of VIPIRG, and President of the Barnard-Boecker Centre Foundation. Theresa and I have both been active in peace movements for a number of years, and Theresa was a member of the panel for the People's Enquiry into the Implications of the Canadian Forces Maritime Experimental and Test Ranges in Nanoose Bay in 1985.

We vehemently oppose the expropriation of the Nanoose testing ranges, Canadian Forces Maritime Experimental and Test Ranges (CFMETR), by the federal government on the following grounds:

1. Expropriation of CFMETR does not serve the public interest, but rather serves the interests of the military industrial complex, the sex trade, and multinational corporations.
2. The Cold War has ended, and the "justification" for NATO's existence as a military alliance has ended, along with it the supposed "necessity" for US testing ranges like CFMETR on Canadian territory.

3. The military and multinational corporations involved in the military industry are operating outside of the laws which govern the citizens of this province and this country, and this undermines the power and efficacy of Canadian democracy.

Specifically, nuclear ships that come to CFMETR operate outside of Canadian environmental laws.

4. The ecological, economic, democratic and safety risks to the communities surrounding Nanoose, and on the sailing routes of the nuclear vessels, far outweigh any benefits that the CFMETR could possibly offer to these communities.

CFMETR as part of NATO

Canada's Department of National Defence argues that the Nanoose testing range is a vital part of Canada's North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) commitment. Surely we must ask ourselves whether this commitment remains relevant in a post-cold war era. Does the Canadian public wish to continue supporting NATO now that its original mandate has expired? There has been no effort to determine the public will on this matter, no public debate, no inquiry, and no referendum. Surely such an effort would be necessary *before* taking a drastic measure like the expropriation of provincial territory on behalf of NATO activities.

Beyond the question of relevance of NATO's historical goals lies the question of NATO's *emerging* goals. The Pentagon has clearly stated its intent to use NATO to further US power globally. On March 8, 1992, *The New York Times* quoted extensively from a Pentagon document titled, "The Defense Planning Guide."

Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival. . . . First, the US must show the leadership necessary to establish and protect a new order that holds the promise of convincing potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests.

We must account sufficiently for the interests of the advanced industrial nations to discourage them from challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political and economic order. Finally, we must maintain the mechanism for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role.

The document goes on to explicitly state the Pentagon's view of NATO's role in this plan:

It is of fundamental importance to preserve NATO as the primary instrument of Western defence and security as well as the channel for US influence and participation in European security affairs ... We must seek to prevent the emergence of European-only security arrangements which would undermine NATO¹.

Canada's most recent involvement with NATO has been, of course, the war against Yugoslavia. When examining our participation in NATO, Canadians should consider that many thoughtful and well-informed people, including Canada's former ambassador to Yugoslavia, international observer to Bosnia, Roland Keith, and the Lawyers for Social Justice, among others, concluded that NATO was violating international law in its attack.

Multinational and Military interests vs. Public interests

Global economic power of corporations is often linked to military expansion. Corporations have become involved in the effort to expand NATO, due to their interest in marketing their military products.

Corporate support for the NATO summit [in Washington for NATO's 50th Anniversary] is an outgrowth of the active role many US companies, particularly defence contractors such as Lockheed Martin Corp. of Bethesda, have played in the move to enlarge NATO beyond its traditional US-Western Europe axis. US Defence companies lobbied hard in [US] Congress in recent years

¹ Flounders, Sara. "Introduction." *NATO in the Balkans*. Ramsey Clark et al. (New York: International Action Centre, 1998)

to admit the former Soviet satellites Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

"Companies like Lockheed Martin, for example, and all of them were active with me overseas," said former congressman Gerald B. H. Solomon, who headed a House task force appointed by former House speaker Newt-Gingrich to push the membership issue.

Solomon, now a private lobbyist, said he travelled throughout Eastern and Central Europe spreading the message that if the United States was going to be NATO's principal military power, supplying most of its high-tech weaponry, then U.S. defence firms should receive contracts to rearm the former Soviet states².

Global agreements enacted in Canada, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, and those proposed and advocated by our federal government, like the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), protect the subsidisation and financing of national military industries even while they restrict such subsidies for other industries. This creates a situation where the military industries become the only option for government subsidies in job creation or national investment. The MAI draft agreement states that "Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed ... to prevent any Contracting Party from taking any action which it considers necessary for the protection of its essential security interests: ... (iii) relating to the production of arms and ammunition"³.

Just as corporate involvement in military agreements has increased, so has corporate involvement in our trade agreements. While corporations have won the legal status of "persons" in Canada, actual persons—Canadian citizens—have little political lobbying power compared to influential corporate groups like the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI) and corporate think tanks like the CD Howe Institute⁴.

² Smart, Tim. "Count Corporate America Among NATO's Staunchest Allies." *Washington Post*, April 13, 1999. Page E01

³ Section V1. Exceptions and Safeguards. *The MAI Negotiating Text*. OECD. 24 April, 1998.

⁴ Clarke, Tony and Maude Barlow. *MAI: the multilateral agreement on investment and the threat to Canadian Sovereignty*. (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited, 1997.) see also Tony Clarke. *Silent Coup: Confronting the Big Business Takeover of Canada*. (Ottawa: James Lorimer & Co. and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 1997).

These problems are not limited to the issue of Nanoose Bay. Canada is a nuclear colony of the US military—mining and supplying uranium and depleted uranium for weaponry, as well as providing testing grounds for those weapons—and accepting nuclear waste for "storage" in our territory. (See Appendix I)

Of course, the separation of military and industry has always been a false one. In fact, the military is one of the world's top industries, and therefore one of the sectors with the largest clout in the political arena.

The military as outlaw

The federal government exempts the US Navy from Canada's environmental laws.

US warships do not have to report oil spills like the three-mile long slick trailing behind the nuclear powered aircraft carrier Nimitz when it cruised into Nanoose in 1995. And each time a US sub fires a torpedo at ... CFMETR ... it leaves behind lead, copper and other toxic metals in prime salmon habitat. Canada's environmental minister has exempted US warships from that law as well⁵.

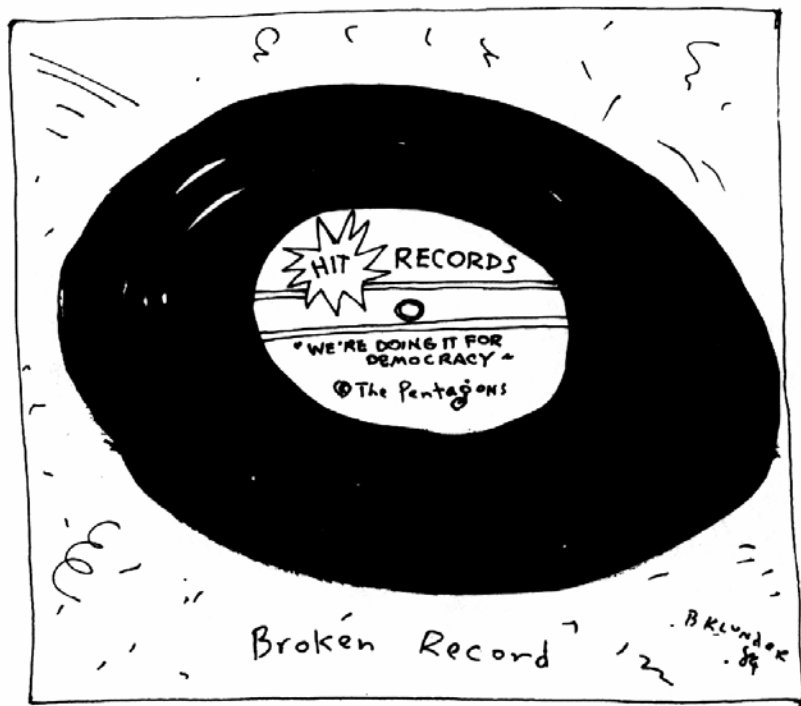
Raphael Girade, Canadian Ambassador to Yugoslavia, in a public talk at Camosun College on June 9, 1999, stated that Canadian soldiers were not under Canadian command while working for NATO in Yugoslavia. Indeed, he said that Canada was excluded from the commanding body, despite our wish to participate.

When defence contractors wield economic power and heavy influence over government, and are the sole industry that can receive government subsidy, public interests in controlling military might and promoting peace are seriously diminished. When the military-based corporations participate in influential lobby groups like the BCNI, and the military itself wins exemptions from the laws governing other industries and Canadian

⁵ Abbey, Norm. "Just Say No to Nukes." *British Columbia Environmental Report*. Vol. 10 #2. (Summer, 1999). pp4-6.

citizens, the military industrial complex begins to operate as its own ungoverned and unquestionable body.

When foreign militaries on our territory, and Canadian soldiers under foreign command, are exempted from the democratic controls of our nation's parliamentary and legal systems, the often touted remark that 'the military serves to protect the democratic interests of the citizens' is exposed as a great lie.



—Barbara Klunder "Broken Record" *Megatons: Cartoonists Against Nuclear War*

The expropriation of Nanose for US military purposes is one part of this great lie. Indeed, what has happened to the April 23, 1992 motion, democratically passed in the British Columbia Legislature, that made British Columbia a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone?⁶ What will become of our participation in these hearings?

⁶ British Columbia *Hansard*. Vol. 2 #9. (Victoria, BC.: Queen's Printer April 23, 1992.)

Public protest of testing at CFMETR, as well as public participation in this hearing, represents more than a mere call to cease the federal government's expropriation proceedings. We are also demanding that democratic control of our communities, our province, and our country be put back into the hands of the public.

Expropriation: in whose interest?

War. What is it good for? It's good for business.
– Billy Bragg.

Whose interests are served when the federal government of Canada expropriates the Nanoose testing range and hands it to the US with a multi-year lease?

The citizens of BC do not benefit—not democratically, not ecologically, and not economically.

The exemption of US military from the rule of law, the choice to ignore BC's Nuclear Weapon Free status, and the heavy influence of corporate military interests over our government, show that the public interest and democracy are not served by furthering US use of Canadian territory for their military testing.

Environmentally, no argument can be made on CFMETR's behalf. The Canadian Department of National Defence's own study in 1995 showed that the sea bed at Nanoose Bay has had "93,000 kilometres of copper wire, and 2,200 tons of lead, lithium batteries, smoke flares, sonobuoy entrails and other toxic materials" dumped on it by the US Navy⁷.

Although MP David Anderson may argue that there is an economic benefit to Nanoose from CFMETR's operation, Dr. Jack Ruitenbeek of the University of Victoria has

⁷ Abbey, Norm. *op cit.*

shown otherwise. He conducted a standard cost benefit analysis of CFMETR that showed a net loss of \$8,000,000 annually to the Canadian taxpayer⁸.

Perhaps Anderson and Ruitenbeek have such different economic forecasts because our federal MP is adding some additional profits to his calculations—the profits made in the sex trade. Our city leaders in Victoria loudly proclaim their love for the tourist dollar spent during visits of US Navy ships to Victoria en route to Nanoose. Indeed, many legitimate businesses do profit from these visits. However, there remains a silence about the increased prostitution in our community. The increase in business for the sex trade is no secret to anyone who has been downtown Victoria on an evening during Naval visits.

An interesting comparison could be made to Subic Bay, on the island of Northern Luzon in the Philippines. Subic Bay, until 1991, was also the site of a US Naval base and testing range. The US Naval presence was the undeniable cause, and sustenance, of a huge prostitution industry. Anyone who has visited Subic Bay since will tell you that there is not much left to that community *except* the sex trade now that the US Naval base has closed. What was that base adding to the local economy?

So, what are the benefits of expropriating Nanoose for continued testing by the US Navy? Whose interests are being served? Only the interests of those who benefit when public democratic power is decreased. Only the interests of those who benefit from decreased public control of military activities—including the activities of foreign militaries on Canadian territory. Only the interests of those who benefit when environmental protection is eliminated. Only those whose interests are served by a dramatically increased market for prostitution.

⁸ Abbey, Norm. *op cit.*

In short, those who benefit include no one who has to live with the safety, environmental, health and economic risks posed by the continuing operation of this base.

In Conclusion

In examination of this issue from the perspective of the public interest, we can find no reasonable justification for the appropriation of Nanoose for continued military purposes. We therefore demand on democratic, economic, environmental, safety, and ethical grounds:

1. that the plans to expropriate Nanoose be ceased immediately.
2. that CFMETR be closed and replaced with an operation that creates economic, democratic, environmental, safety and moral benefit to the community.
3. that the millions of dollars saved annually by the closure of CFMETR be redirected to funding this project.
4. that the US Navy be immediately required to clean up the sea bed of Nanoose
5. that all exemption from Canadian law given to foreign or Canadian military be repealed.
6. that the Canadian military budget be cut in order to provide funding for programs providing true democratic, environmental, and economic benefit
7. that a democratic public inquiry into Canada's participation in NATO be convened.

We believe that Nanoose Bay must remain in the possession of the rightful owners, the people of British Columbia and that the closing of this base will be a major step in the regaining and strengthening of democracy in Canada. We hope that these hearings will be a part of a true democratic process, where the public interest is still of primary concern to our government. In that spirit of hope, we would like to close with a poem by Dorothy Livesay.

Bellhouse Bay

Last night a full silver
moon
shone in the waters of the bay
so serene
one could believe in
an ongoing universe

And today it's summer
noon heat soaking into
arbutus trees blackberry bushes
Today in the cities
rallies and peace demonstrations exhort

SAVE OUR WORLD SAVE OUR CHILDREN

But save also I say
the towhees under the blackberry bushes
eagles playing a mad caper
in the sky above Bellhouse Bay

This is not paradise
dear adam dear eve
but it is a rung on the ladder
upwards
towards a possible
breathaking landscape

—*Dorothy Livesay*

Appendix 1



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