

Enclosure n No. 32.

SUMMARY of the

PENDITURE of the INDIAN DEPARTMENT in
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£ 6,300
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Gross Expenditure - £12,572

The Proportion for this Province of the British Parliamentary Grant annually voted for the Indian Department in the Canadas is 13,380 $\frac{1}{2}$ Sterling.

ACCOUNTING for GENOCIDE

Canada's Bureaucratic Assault on Aboriginal People
Dean Neu & Richard Therrien



Accounting for Genocide

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Dean Neu and Richard Therrien

WITH OUR COMPLIMENTS

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Unlike Richard, I came to this project as an academic with all the baggage that being an academic brings; thanks to Richard for showing me the importance of passion and particularly the importance of moving beyond the pedestrian prose of academic writing.

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Introduction

It seems to me that a really strong show of force is the only way to keep the casualties down to a minimum.... Perhaps at long last, we will bite the bullet and understand that the gun barrel created this country and that once more it will have to be used if Canada is to remain our home and native land.—Canadian journalist, Barbara Amiel, referring to the Oka stand-off between the military and Mohawk peoples, quoted in Barlow and Winter 1997: 184

Two warriors on the television screen square off, nose-to-nose, unblinking, one camouflaged and masked, the other uniformed and helmeted, one Indigenous, the other Caucasian. Neither flinches. The image, burned into the minds of the witnessing Canadian public, is from July 1990, Oka, traditional Mohawk territory in the Province of Quebec. The Quebec Provincial Police have executed a raid on Mohawk warriors who have erected a barricade to prevent the expansion of a golf course over their ancestral burial grounds. The area in dispute, known as “the Pines,” is part of a larger territorial land claim of 266 square miles. After seventy-eight days during which shots will be fired, one life lost and Canadian Armed Forces brought in—vastly outweighing the Mohawks in arms, including heavy artillery—three Mohawk warriors will be apprehended to face over fifty charges.

On another continent a similar drama unfolds. Gold and diamond extraction companies are encroaching on the ancestral territories of the Indigenous Wai Wai, Wapisiana and Macusi peoples of Guyana, which gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1966 (World Rain Forest Movement November 1998). In 1969 the commissioners of the Amerindian Lands Commission deemed the Wai Wai “too unsophisticated” to have title to their traditional homeland. In 1997, immediately after the Wai Wai, Wapisiana and Macusi formed the Tachau’s Amerindian Council, the Minister of Amerindian Affairs accused them of treason and threatened legal action if they refused government surveyors access to their land.

Guyana may be a world away from Quebec, but the global economy’s appetite for resources knows no boundaries. The government surveyors in question are obliged to trespass because their masters, the Guyanese

government, have signed an agreement with Vancouver-based Vanessa Ventures Ltd., granting them 5.1 million acres of land for the purpose of conducting geophysical and geological surveys for gold and diamond sources (Programme 2001).

At about the same time that the Tachau's Amerindian Council is being formed in Guyana, in Mexico's poor southern province of Chiapas forty-five people—mostly women and children—are killed by pro-government paramilitaries (Russell 1998). On the eve of the spring 2000 election that will topple the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), the reigning power in Mexico for over seven decades, paramilitaries ambush a group of Tzotzile Indians, leaving three dead and three wounded, including a six-year-old. Eighty Percent of Chiapas' population is Indigenous Mayan. Three hundred police officers and two hundred army troops search the area of Chenalho, a stronghold of the Zapatista Liberation Army (EZLN). Military presence in the area has reached up to seventy thousand troops. The first uprising of the EZLN, in January 1994, was chosen to coincide with the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The Acteal massacre, in 1997, followed the revelation by human rights activists that the Mexican defence department had drafted plans to use paramilitaries for counter-insurgency purposes and that the most prominent group had received a half-million-dollar contribution from the Governor of Chiapas.

In the same spring of Mexico's democratic turfing of its legendary oppressive regime, former U.S. Vice President Al Gore's campaign for the presidency is marred by demonstrators taking part in an international protest against Occidental Petroleum of Santa Monica, California, on behalf of the five thousand-member U'wa tribe of Colombia. The oil fields near Samore, on U'wa ancestral territory, contain 1.4 billion barrels of crude—worth about \$35 million on the international market. Oil field exploration and development will take away the U'wa livelihood. Since 1940 they have lost over 85 percent of their land to development. In early 2000, several thousand soldiers are needed to guard workers at the multibillion-dollar project. (Occidental paid the Colombian Army to keep a base near one of its refineries.) In February tear-gas is used in a clash with demonstrators. U'wa leaders threaten tribal suicide if Occidental is allowed to continue drilling. Bending to global activist pressure, President Andres Pastrana agrees in 1999 to increase the size of the U'wa reservation, and in March of 2,000 the Colombian Court ordered Occidental to stop drilling on tribal land.

But exploration continues. Occidental is a high profile supporter of President Clinton's \$1.6 million package in military aid to Colombia, and Energy Secretary Bill Richardson is representing Occidental's interests in meetings in Cartagena. The company has "donated nearly half a million dollars to Democratic committees and causes since Gore has joined the

ticket” (Silverstein 2000). The Gore family owns about \$1/4 million in shares of Occidental stock, and in 1970, when Al Gore Senior left the Senate, he accepted a \$1/2 million position at Occidental from his long-time friend and Occidental founder Armand Hammer. Hammer has been a political ally of the Gores for generations, and Vice-President Gore and Occidental CEO Ray Irani are friends, often appearing at social functions together.

According to David Maybury-Lewis (2001), co-founder of the human rights organization Cultural Survival, there are approximately 200–300 million Indigenous people in the world today, and on every continent they are struggling for survival. Indigenous peoples claim their territories on the grounds of prior occupancy and, having been conquered by or incorporated into alien states, are considered outsiders within the countries they call home.

The annihilation of Indigenous peoples is often considered an inevitable by-product of civilization, a process by which backward cultures are naturally eliminated through progress—which can’t be stopped. Cultural elimination is often, by default, accepted government policy. The welfare of the country as a whole is held aloft as a higher moral good, for which traditional tribal customs must be sacrificed. Under this guise, Indigenous peoples’ land is exploited, usually for extractable resources to be used in First-World manufacturing. If Indigenous peoples call for protection against this hegemony, they are accused of wanting special treatment and their political identity is debased by the term “special-interest group.” There is a pervasive misunderstanding, Maybury-Lewis (2001) tells us, that Indigenous peoples are fighting to preserve the traditional ways of their past—but in fact they are fighting for their right to have a say in their own future. They see clearly that they are being dispossessed of their traditional territories, not for the sake of the country as a whole, but for the sake of private profit.

The struggles of the Sami in Scandinavia, the Mohawks, Nisga’a and Inuit in Canada, the Mayans in Chiapas and the U’wa in Colombia are essentially a single struggle. Their enemies use similar forces of government, backed up by similar administrative technologies, and in all cases, from centuries past to the present, Indigenous peoples are fighting to survive the genocide perpetrated against them for the sake of economic exploitation.

Between 1800 and 1914, the amount of the world’s land surface controlled by Europeans increased from 35 to 84 percent (Headrick 1981). And in the majority of places to which the Europeans’ control reached, the problem of Indigenous peoples was, and continues to be, a pervasive theme in internal politics (Barta 1987). The “Indian Question” continues to be of national and international importance. In Canada, the issues of self-government, land claims, taxation and ownership of natural resources

are visible outcroppings of an unstable set of social relations between First Nations and other Canadian peoples (Mercredi and Turpel 1993). In this book we focus on the colonization of Canada's Indigenous peoples, placing it in the context of similar processes occurring globally throughout the last century and before.

In the earlier years of colonization, the settling of Europeans on Indigenous lands was backed by force of arms. But violence can take many forms. The deliberate introduction of diseases, such as smallpox and tuberculosis, the removal of children from their homes, forced acculturation, physical punishment for using one's native tongue, slave labour; these forms of coercion have been accomplished through and even enforced by bureaucratic mechanisms—and by individual bureaucrats. It is in individual actions and face-to-face confrontations that bureaucratic management of entire peoples becomes real and palpable. Throughout this book, the violence of human action, of one group of people imposing its will upon another, is intertwined with the violence of bureaucracy and the economic-political rationalizations that always accompany and empower the more overt uses of force. The recollections of George Manuel, a founder of the Fourth-world movement, active in the seventies, serve as a poignant example of the layering and intertwining of these various levels and types of violence. His statement, for example, referring to residential schools as a “laboratory and the production line of the colonial system” (Manuel and Posluns 1974: 63) may sound polemical and abstract, but when put into the context of a personal story, the details reveal the depth of the crime. A cattle truck pulls up to the reserve; an Indian agent calls out the names of the children who will be trucked to a distant urban centre; children are crying, mothers weeping. The child, as children everywhere always do, blames him- or herself: What have I done wrong, why am I being taken away? The utter foreignness and power of the abductors only adds to the horror. But indoctrination works on many levels; the victims are helpless against this thorough and relentless social engineering, applied twenty-four hours a day. They adapt, in order to survive; the new language, the new food, the new clothes, the new images, symbols and authority figures begin to take hold, a certain bonding between individuals in the captive community somehow strengthens the boundaries that contain them. “Learning to see and hear only what the priests and brothers wanted you to see and hear,” the Native leader George Manuel recalls of his own abduction, “even the people we loved came to look ugly” (Manuel and Posluns 1974: 67). In this simple statement, we witness the brutal sophistication and irresistible force of racism, applied bureaucratically and rationalized economically at arm's length, working insidiously as psychological terrorism. The violence, having been turned inward, becomes a toxic and effective self-loathing, culturally and individually. Can there be a more elegant violence than this?

However, the dreamed-of success of that particular brand of violence is far from having been realized. The Fourth World that George Manuel and his international brothers and sisters in arms have given shape to in the last three decades, as we shall see in the final chapter, is a force to be reckoned with, a force that is meeting head-on the new colonialism of global trade. Landmark court decisions such as *Delgamuukw* (see also chapter eight) and the organizing power of electronic information sharing by resistance groups, for example, the virtual web campaign so effectively utilized by the rebels in Chiapas (see chapter nine), are examples of that challenge and indeed may prove to be the central driving force in thwarting the corporatization of the planet. Here the boardrooms and Indigenous councils meet face to face—because the last reserves of our natural resources remain, ironically, in the far reaches of the planet to which so many traditional cultures have been pushed. Hope springs from seeing and naming the violence of bureaucracies and economic rationalization for what it is: a continuance, no less painful, of the more overt forms of violence that have always driven colonization.

Cultural survival for Indigenous peoples is an economic battle fought on the ground in their own communities and in the bureaucracies of government and the boardrooms of transnational resource-extraction corporations. Accounting is the backbone of the rationalization used in defending this exploitation. Relationships between Indigenous peoples and governments are filtered and managed through a complex field of bureaucratized manipulations, controlled by soft technologies such as strategic planning, law and accounting. By the time individuals sit down to negotiate face to face, the choices available have been severely diminished. Those government processes are firmly entrenched within the broader phenomena of modernity, colonialism and genocide. We will show that accounting techniques and calculations have been, and continue to be, essential tools in translating imperialist/colonialist objectives into practice and that genocide is often the result.

Native protests, including Oka, erupted right across the country in Canada's summer of 1990; it was the beginning of a decade that would see many such confrontations, a decade that would also witness the groundbreaking Supreme Court *Delgamuukw* decision and the first modern treaty, with the Nisga'a Nation of British Columbia (both in 1997). But after Oka, the federal government's response was, predictably, to strike a Royal Commission, with the result—a 3500-page document (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples [RCAP] 1996)—not arriving till five years later. The delay prompted Assembly of First Nations leader Ovide Mercredi to march to the parliament buildings. The Prime Minister refused to see him.

For many Canadians the drama played out in the summer of 1990 seemed either a throw-back to the days of "cowboys and Indians" or an

elaborate publicity stunt meant to bolster Native demands for special status. There was something surreal about watching the real-life stand-off unwind over the hot summer months, a weird mix of Third-World gunboat diplomacy and Hollywood western, right here in the backyard of a nation often heard congratulating itself on its own civility and international peace-keeping reputation. The reality, however, is that if the media were paying closer attention to the issue of Indigenous cultural survival worldwide and if we, as citizens, had had a better understanding of both the contested histories of settler society and our continuing complicity in genocidal practices directed at Indigenous peoples, the Oka stand-off would not have been seen as extraordinary at all. Oka was and continues to be one of many battles in an historically extended war—the struggle for cultural survival on the part of Indigenous peoples shared not only by other First Nations within the borders of Canada but worldwide.

In Canada, as in most other places, these disputes are a consequence and continuance of colonial history. The *Royal Proclamation of 1763* recognized the rights of Indigenous peoples to unceded land and stated that the government would purchase any land that it desired for settlement (Anon. 1983). But what, especially from the Native perspective, is a purchase? Can land be purchased? How symmetrical must the two bargaining positions be in order for the transaction to be equitable? What values are attached, in either case, to the symbols of exchange? Land transactions, and in particular these exchanges, clearly involve accounting. What role did accounting play in the overall process of colonization itself?

This book looks at accounting's mediative role in defining power relationships and how this role was used in the colonization of Canada's First Nations. We argue that since the early 1800s and continuing into the present, accounting—defined as a system of numerical techniques, funding mechanisms and accountability relations—has been used by the state as a method of indirect governance in its containment, control and attempted assimilation of First Nations peoples.

Since 1857, in federal government legislation, accounting has played an important role in manipulating First Nations peoples. Federal government funding has specifically been used to encourage institutional assimilation (Dyck and Institute of Social and Economic Research 1991: 3). The introduction of municipal forms of government, money bylaws and taxation policies have all been referred to as a type of "coercive tutelage" (Frideres and Krosenbrink-Gelissen 1993) aimed at colonizing First Nations' peoples (Boldt 1993: 140–45).

The November 1996 release of the royal commission report dealing with Aboriginal issues (RCAP 1996) is only the most recent in a series of government attempts to redefine relations between themselves and First Nations peoples. Repeated revisions to the *Indian Act*, the release of the 1969 "White Paper on Indian Policy" and the Penner Report on Indian

self-government have all attempted to specify the rights and obligations of the federal government *vis-à-vis* Canada's First Nations peoples (Boldt et al. 1985)

Accounting as a means of indirect governance doesn't exist in a vacuum; rather, it is a central organism in the culture of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy and accounting, we demonstrate, are integral components of modernity in which colonization continues to play a key role. That colonization predicates the mass movement of peoples and the subjugation, displacement or absorption of one culture by another brings to light questions of nationhood, statehood and, by inference, statelessness. Statelessness is a problem of governance, particularly modern governance. We examine how, in seeking solutions, bureaucracies and their accounting techniques have been applied to entire populations, especially "stateless" populations.

Cost-cutting and other numerical "solutions"—at first sight deceptively free of moral entanglements—come to light, upon close scrutiny, as genocidal government policies. We show that solutions sought by colonial governments to the problems they faced in dealing with Indigenous populations is an integral part of the historical arc of modernity, which may have reached its apogee in twentieth-century Europe's Holocaust and which may very well be continuing, under the auspices of global trade, into the new century.

This book makes clear that accounting/funding relations between colonizers and Indigenous peoples have been used by the state since the early 1800s to encourage action-at-a-distance and that, though the techniques of governance vary according to time and circumstance, accounting techniques have been and continue to be used to encourage "governmentality"—a practice that today may have dire ecological and social consequences for those caught in the web of one-world, twenty-first-century global economics.

Note

The name and location of the government department responsible for Aboriginal peoples in Canada has changed many times. We use the term "Indian Department" to refer to this department unless it is important to refer to the specific name at specific junctures in time.