

**Critical Infrastructure Protection or Persuasion? The Hegemonic and Repressive Function
of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police during the Coastal Gaslink Flashpoint**

By

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B.A., University of Victoria, 2022

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of

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We acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

Throughout the Canadian settler-colonial project, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has been a dominant police force within critical infrastructure protection (CIP). CIP, often focused on the securitization of resource extraction projects, repeatedly confronts Indigenous dissent and Indigenous assertion of sovereignty. In adherence with the RCMP's historical role, a division of the British Columbia RCMP, Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG), was specifically created to police pipeline projects. This project looks at the function C-IRG performed during the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) pipeline project (constructed by TC Energy), which trespasses through unceded Wet'suwet'en land without consent.

In order to better understand C-IRG's role within CIP, Freedom of Information (FOI) and Access to Information (ATI) requests were submitted to multiple government organizations. The key findings from this research underline that C-IRG operates as both an ideological and repressive force. The force, shifting towards a more intelligence-led approach, can result in greater coercion, as enforcements are informed by risk assessments. At the same time, C-IRG assessed land defenders as illegal and occupying protesters, which allowed C-IRG to position themselves as a neutral peacekeeping force, adhering to the "benevolent Mountie" myth, which the force reproduced within legacy media. The CGL flashpoint revealed C-IRG's coercion on Wet'suwet'en territory and confronted the RCMP's benevolent image. Thus, C-IRG used the reach of legacy media to attempt to restore its ideological image, which was simultaneously supported by other fossil fuel allies within the media during the flashpoint.

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Acronyms

ATI	Access to Information
BCER	BC Energy Regulator
BC EAO	BC Environmental Assessment Office
CAPP	Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CER	Canadian Energy Regulator
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railway
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CRCC	Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP
CGL	Coastal Gaslink Pipeline
C-IRG	Community-Industry Response Group
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CIP	Critical Infrastructure Protection
CRU-BC	Critical Response Unit-British Columbia
DIA	Department of Indian Affairs
DMs	Deputy Ministers
DLT	Division Liaison Team
FSR	Forest Service Road
FOI	Freedom of Information
GHGs	Greenhouse Gases
HQ	Head Quarters
KKR	Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts & Co
LNG	Liquid Natural Gas
LMD ERT	Lower Mainland Emergency Response Team
MINOs	Minister Offices
MMIWG2S	Missing Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit peoples
NEB	National Energy Board
NRCan	Natural Resources Canada
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NWMP	Northwest Mounted Police
TMX	Trans Mountain Expansion
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
ISA	Ideological State Apparatus
OW	Office of the Wet'suwet'en
OPP	Ontario Provincial Police

OCR	Optical Character Recognition
POPS	Public Order Profile Scale
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
RTIC	Real Time Intelligence Centre
RSA	Repressive State Apparatus
RBC	Royal Bank of Canada
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary
TAC	Tactical Troop
TD	Toronto-Dominion Bank
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction

The economic and political power of Canada's fossil fuel industry poses challenges for solutions to the climate crisis, Indigenous sovereignty, and meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The corporate power of the fossil fuel industry significantly influences political, cultural, and economic modalities, creating tension between fossil fuel interests and climate change action (Hume & Walby, 2021; Hussey et al., 2021). This thesis project focuses on the BC Coastal Gaslink (CGL) pipeline project, which is owned by TC Energy, a key fossil capital corporation in the constellation of what has been termed a “regime of obstruction” (Carroll, 2020; Carroll & Huijzer, 2021; MacPhail & Bowles, 2021; McCreary & Turner, 2018). The regime of obstruction, a multi-scalar corporate bloc wielding economic, political, and cultural power, actively impedes alternatives to fossil fuels (Carroll & Huijzer, 2021) through practices that include extensive lobbying (Carroll et al., 2021) and captured regulation (Carroll, 2022). Currently under construction and supported by both the federal and provincial governments, the CGL pipeline project is “the single largest private sector investment in Canadian history” (Unist’ot’en, 2017). This investment demonstrates the government’s commitment to fossil fuel expansion and how fossil fuel interests are a significant barrier to addressing climate change.

The CGL pipeline will transport fracked natural gas from the Montney Play, north of Prince George, through Wet’suwet’en territory to Kitimat, BC (Carroll, 2020; Unist’ot’en, 2017). However, a barrier to the CGL pipeline has been the Indigenous resistance on Wet’suwet’en territory. While TC Energy has gained the support of elected band councils along the route through economic incentives, it has failed to gain the consent and support of the hereditary chiefs, whose roles predate colonial band councils (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Despite the

Crown's responsibility to consult, consultation on proposed infrastructure is often taken up by corporations (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Correspondingly, for the CGL project TC Energy conducted the consultation process with the Wet'suwet'en (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). The neoliberal outsourcing of the duty to consult with Indigenous nations raises issues of corporations taking on roles of state responsibility. Despite such a neoliberal delegation of responsibility to corporations, the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs have been opposing the project through the assertion of their Indigenous rights to their territory (Crosby, 2021; Monaghan & Walby, 2017). However, for the Wet'suwet'en the Supreme Court of Canada, the RCMP, Provincial governments, and TC Energy refuse to recognize Indigenous title to land or sovereignty. Thus, the Wet'suwet'en must assert their rights through blockades and camps on Wet'suwet'en territory.

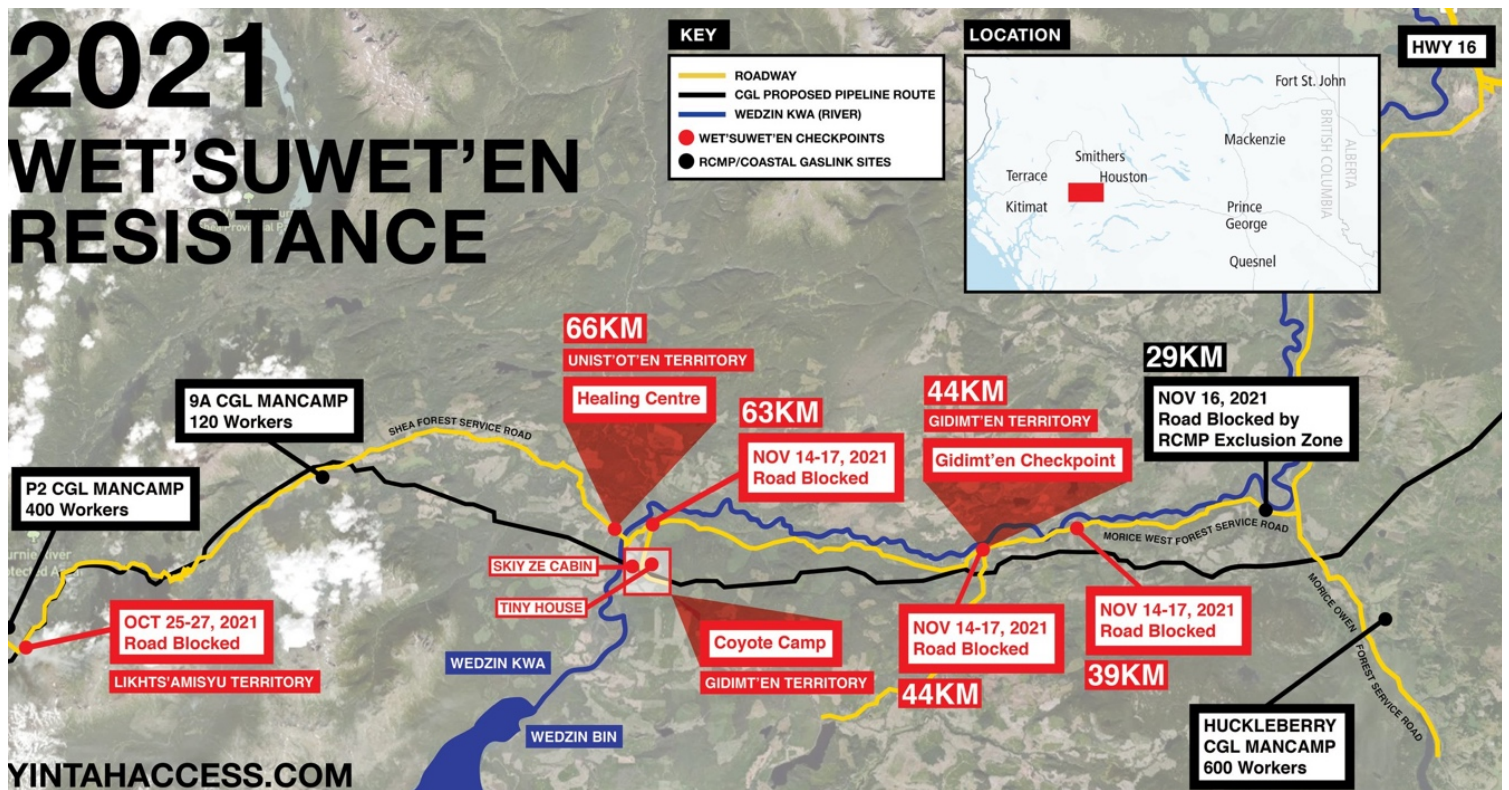


Figure 1.1 Map of Wet'suwet'en resistance camps (Yintah Access, 2021c).

The Unist'ot'en camp, kilometer 66 in Figure 1, originated as a checkpoint in 2009, a barrier to Enbridge's Northern Gateway Oil Pipeline that would trespass through Wet'suwet'en territory (Temper & Bliss 2018). After the Enbridge pipeline project was abandoned, Unist'ot'en camp remained as a barrier to the CGL pipeline (Hume & Walby 2021; MacPhail & Bowles, 2021; McCreary & Turner 2018; Temper & Bliss 2018). Following Unist'ot'en camp, in 2018 Gidimt'en camp, kilometer 44 in Figure 1, and in 2021 Coyote Camp, kilometer 63 in Figure 1, became additional obstructions to the CGL pipeline (Hume & Walby, 2021; Yintah Access, 2021a). In reaction, TC Energy sought injunctions from the state, precipitating a heavily militarized Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) response. This militarized approach was carried out when a division of the BC RCMP, C-IRG (Community-Industry Response Group), (renamed in 2024 as Critical Response Unit-British Columbia (CRU-BC)) invaded Gidimt'en camp in January 2019, and both Gidimt'en and Unist'ot'en in February 2020 (Hume & Walby, 2021). After the second invasion, large demonstrations, actions, and railway and port blockades emerged in solidarity across Canada (Yintah Access, 2021a). Once more, in 2021, the RCMP invaded Wet'suwet'en territory, this time at Coyote Camp, and arrested Indigenous land defenders and two journalists, who were reporting from the camp (Bracken, 2021). There has been significant public support for the land defenders, whose assertion of sovereignty and rights has been a direct impediment to CGL project.

Throughout the Wet'suwet'en resistance to the pipeline project, the RCMP has engaged in surveillance and militarized enforcement of injunctions, comparable to past RCMP actions against Indigenous opposition to critical infrastructure projects (McCreary & Turner, 2018). The RCMP's label of critical infrastructure attaches significance to a project, person, or thing, which creates a mobilization of resources to protect the designated project (Monaghan & Walby, 2017),

revealing the power of this label. Critical infrastructure and critical infrastructure protection (CIP) originate from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) 1984 Act, in which the agency was concerned with external national security threats during the Cold War alongside internal national security threats from environmentalists (Monaghan & Walby, 2017). Concern over critical infrastructure only increased after the events of 9/11/2001; consequently, the federal government, Public Safety Canada, CSIS, and the RCMP all devote significant attention, strategies, policies, and branches for critical infrastructure protection (Monaghan & Walby, 2017).

Once labeled as critical infrastructure by the security apparatus and/or industry, projects are transformed into spaces of surveillance, through a collaboration between the RCMP, CSIS, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and corporate industry (Carroll, 2020; Monaghan & Walby, 2017; Pasternak & Dafnos, 2018). Consequently, the RCMP performs a security role for private corporations to the extent that the BC RCMP (Division E) specifically allocated a branch for Critical Infrastructure Projects (RCMP Critical Infrastructure Intelligence Team) in 2017 (Burdon, 2020; Crosby, 2021; Dafnos, 2020; RCMP, 2020). A significant issue, highlighted by Monaghan and Walby (2017), is that most critical infrastructure projects are privately owned, enacting a collaborative relationship between the state and corporations.

In Canada, CIP is often concerned with abating Indigenous assertion of sovereignty and dissent, as Indigenous dissent often impedes the flow of extractive capital (Pasternak & Dafnos, 2018). Thus, a primary focus of critical infrastructure protection is maintaining the flow of extractive capital through the securitization of critical infrastructure and transportation corridors. The securitization of critical infrastructure necessitates a partnership between different agencies under the umbrella of national security that proactively attempt to mitigate the “risk” posed to

the circuitry of capital by Indigenous sovereignty (Pasternak & Dafnos, 2018). Through critical infrastructure surveillance Indigenous resistance is characterized as a threat, designating Indigenous protesters as extremists or terrorists because of their opposition to settler capitalist projects (Howe & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2017). This contentious relationship between critical infrastructure protection (CIP) and Indigenous sovereignty, rights, and resistance requires further examination, especially examining the role of the RCMP within CIP for fossil fuel projects.

Research has critically mapped out the power of the fossil fuel industry (Carroll, 2020; Carroll et al., 2020a; Carroll & Huijzer, 2021; Carroll et al., 2021), and similarly, critical infrastructure surveillance (Dafnos, 2020; Howe & Monaghan, 2018; Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2016). However, there is a gap in knowledge at which CIP and the fossil fuel industry intersect, particularly the function of C-IRG within CIP, and C-IRG's relationship within the fossil fuel industry, and for this project the relationship with a key member of the fossil fuel industry, TC Energy. Journalists have revealed through ATI (Access to Information) requests that there was communication between TC Energy officials, LNG Canada, and the RCMP surrounding the RCMP enforcement of an injunction on November 19, 2021 (Simmons, 2022c). As well, CSIS, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), and the fossil industry also shared information on Indigenous resistance to CGL (McCormack & Gordon, 2020). Given the concerns for Indigenous sovereignty, the environmental consequences of pipelines and fossil fuel expansion, and the power of fossil capital and critical infrastructure surveillance, it is necessary to examine the under-researched relationship between C-IRG and fossil fuel industry, especially within the context of reconciliation and the climate crisis. This project focuses on the CGL flashpoint, in which the contentious force (C-IRG) became visible within the media,

disrupting the RCMP's crafted "benevolent Mountie" myth. While TC Energy and the CGL pipeline project are the focus of this thesis, the fossil fuel industry is a cohesive bloc, and the CGL project provides a small glimpse into the relationship between C-IRG and the fossil fuel industry.

This project examines internal communication of the RCMP, NRCan, and RCMP communication with TC Energy leading up to, during, and after the injunction enforcements of January 7, 2019, February 5-10, 2020, and November 19, 2021. Internal communication was accessed through federal Access to Information (ATI) and municipal and provincial Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. I submitted 43 original ATI/FOI requests and requested publicly available existing ATI/FOIs relating to my thesis from the Federal Government website. From those FOI/ATI requests, I received 236 pages from my FOI/ATI requests and over 900 pages from already existing ATI requests. For this thesis project, I employ Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine the FOI/ATI documents in order to ask: *1) How is critical infrastructure surveillance organized, and what roles do the RCMP and fossil fuel industry perform within it? 2) How are critical infrastructure surveillance and the regime of obstruction interconnected? 3) What underlying ideological assumptions organize the RCMP ATI documents? 4) How are critical infrastructure surveillance and protection discourses structured within internal RCMP communications, and what do the differences from official public documents reveal about the RCMP as an institution?* Asking these questions revealed problematic interconnections between RCMP and CGL and the relationship of the RCMP to fossil capitalism. This thesis project contributes to existing literature through examining the function of the RCMP, as both a persuasive and repressive force, that works in unison with the state apparatus, to ensure the expansion of fossil capital, and for this project, the CGL pipeline.

This thesis contains eight chapters; the chapters that examine the findings are organized by the themes that emerged from the research questions. As themes emerged within the data, I found it more intuitive to have the chapters reflect the emerging themes in response to the research questions, rather than the research questions themselves. Each chapter is introduced with existing knowledge of the theme, followed with the themes that emerged from the coding process. The second chapter is a literature review that provides further context to this project. Chapter Three outlines this project's methodological approach of critical discourse analysis and FOI/ATI requests. Chapter Four answers both research questions 1 and 2, with a focus on unpacking the function of C-IRG within CIP, and the relationship between C-IRG and the fossil fuel industry. While this project focuses on TC Energy, the fossil fuel industry is an organized, cohesive bloc, and this relationship represents one of many interconnected relationships between the RCMP and the fossil fuel industry. In addition, Chapter Four will unpack the role of CSIS, the RCMP, and C-IRG as policing organizations within CIP, and how the shift towards more surveillance measures allows the surveillance apparatus to operate in a legal grey zone. Extending beyond policing organizations, Chapter Four will also reveal the agency of TC Energy within CIP, recounting the active role of TC Energy played in attempting to persuade C-IRG to enforce the injunction and the activities of TC Energy's private security forces, who routinely surveilled land defenders and shared information with the RCMP. The key finding in Chapter Four reveals that C-IRG performs both a repressive and ideological function while policing the CGL pipeline project.

The theme of Chapter Five emerged from question 3, which questions the underlying RCMP assumptions that organize the ATI documents. While initially under the theme of ideological assumptions, the recurrent and pervasive themes throughout the documents that

characterized Wet'suwet'en dissent warranted a separate analysis. Chapter Five explores the characterization of dissent by organizations within the CIP, with a focus on the RCMP: how the RCMP failed to recognize the rights of the Wet'suwet'en, which provided the foundations for the characterization of the Indigenous land defenders as risks, protestors, and operating outside of the law. Risk assessments are informed through surveillance data, which influence how the RCMP enforce an injunction. Risk assessments informed through racializing surveillance and embedded biases inform RCMP repression. In addition to risk assessments, C-IRG characterized the land defenders as illegal, occupying, and disruptive. The mischaracterizations of the land defenders legitimized the RCMP's actions, and bolstered the RCMP's claims as a neutral, peacekeeping force.

Chapter Six answers research question 3 and unpacks the ideological assumptions that are present within the released ATI documents that guided the RCMP's actions and how the RCMP viewed themselves as a force. While some may be attributed to the Hawthorn effect¹, the data alludes to the RCMP's understanding of themselves as a peacekeeping force, aligning with the "benevolent Mountie" myth. However, the RCMP's discourse of peace and safety implied that the land defenders were not peaceful. Peace and safety were only afforded to the pipeline project, and not the land defenders. The internal view of the RCMP and the stated intentions of the RCMP are then compared to media reports of the RCMP's actions on Wet'suwet'en territory, focusing on the time frame of the injunction enforcements. This comparison unveils a discrepancy between the RCMP's internal discourse and their policing of Indigenous peoples, emphasizing underlying settler-colonial assumptions that are embedded within the RCMP.

¹ Originally employed by behavioural scientists, the Hawthorn effect has been used by FOI (Freedom of Information)/ATI (Access to Information) research to account for the possibility of self-censorship within the FOI/ATI files (Walby & Larsen, 2012).

The last research question is addressed in Chapter Seven; the scope expanded beyond the RMCP to examine the state apparatus's employment of legacy media or traditional media outlets (McLinden, 2021) during the CGL flashpoint. A flashpoint occurs when an established conflict becomes prominent within the media, often with calls for a return to order without accounting for the historical issues that preceded the suggestive media reporting (Shaw, 2021). This chapter examines the RCMP's use of the media and how this compares to their actions, with a critical look at internal edits of a media statement. The RCMP's use of the media's reach during a flashpoint demonstrates the ideological aspect of the force. Within media articles the RCMP frame themselves as a peacekeeping force, reproducing the benevolent Mountie myth from Chapter Six, while also drawing on the assessments of land defenders in Chapter Five to bolster their claims. Chapter Seven additionally looks at draft statements and prompts released by government organizations, such as NRCan, and politicians' statements in the media around the CGL pipeline. Lastly, this chapter examines how the fossil fuel industry, as a cohesive group, employ the reach of opinion pieces during a flashpoint to secure consent for fossil fuel projects and the RCMP's repressive actions during injunction enforcement. Following Chapter Seven is the conclusion with final thoughts and reflections on the limitations of this study and potential for future work.

The key findings from this research demonstrate that there is a duality to C-IRG as they are both an ideological and repressive force. C-IRG's risk assessments of land defenders inform their repressive actions on the territory, which are further bolstered by assessing the land defenders as illegal, occupying, and disruptive, all of which are informed through racializing surveillance. The labeling of land defenders as illegal and occupying bolsters the RCMP's claims of a neutral peacekeeping force, which is a reproduction of the benevolent Mountie myth. The

repressive actions of C-IRG became visible within the media, at which C-IRG attempts to restore their benign image. At the same time, fossil fuel allies, and the fossil fuel bloc employed the reach of the media and favouring of fossil fuel voices by a few media outlets to organize consent for the pipeline project, as well as the RCMP's presence and actions on the territory.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The Coastal Gaslink (CGL) pipeline is part of the expanding fossil fuel industry across Canada. This expansion is a cause of concern as we are past the threshold of the climate crisis, and the fossil fuel industry is a major contributor. The oil and gas industry is Canada's most significant contributor to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. In 2022, the oil and gas industry produced 31 percent of Canada's emissions, which have increased by 83 percent from 1990 to 2022 (Government of Canada, 2024). However, the emissions number fails to capture the emissions burned by Canada's oil and gas exports. Canada exports roughly 50 percent of its natural gas, and almost all of its crude oil, rendering between 70-80 percent of the oil and gas GHG contributions unaccounted for (Bernstien, 2024). The existing literature demonstrates the interwoven relationship between the state and fossil capital and the power held by the small, organized fossil fuel constellation in Canada that contributes to fossil capital hegemony. However, when hegemony fails, it is often buttressed through repression. In Canada, the Royal Mounted Canadian Police (RCMP) plays a key role, as Indigenous dissent to fossil capital projects is heavily surveilled and criminalized, adhering to the historic relationship between the RCMP and Indigenous peoples. The RCMP is an active force in critical infrastructure protection, and in BC, the RCMP unit subtending this is the Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG). There is little public knowledge of this group, even though the group plays a prominent role in critical infrastructure protection (CIP). The widespread attention in the media following C-IRG's injunction enforcements situate the CGL project as what Shaw (2021) describes as a flashpoint. At such a flashpoint, reactions by the government and media can reveal hidden spaces of hegemony, while dissent can offer a space of counterhegemony. It is these themes that will be

taken up in the following literature review to set a foundation for problematizing the role of the RCMP within CIP.

Climate Crisis

An overwhelming concern is the dominant role of the fossil fuel industry with the multifarious avenues in which they contribute to the climate crisis. Historically and contemporarily, Canada's economy relies heavily on resource extraction, effectuating a dependency on fossil fuels for the economic sector (Carroll et al., 2020a); indeed, the province of Alberta can be understood as a petro-state (Adkin, 2016). Carroll (2020, p.2) has flagged Canada as a "climate laggard;" while Canada's discourse is on "clean growth," its actions are antithetical to climate action (Carroll et al., 2020b; Daub et al., 2021). Clean growth, synonymous with climate capitalism, ensures the continuation of fossil fuel power because the shift to climate capitalism comes from the elite (including the fossil fuel industry), who grant concessions to stabilize power (Carroll et al., 2020b). Under the guise of clean growth, there is an investment into green technologies that leave both capitalism and the fossil fuel bloc in place, especially as many members of the fossil fuel industry are involved in clean growth solutions (Carroll et al., 2020b; Carroll et al., 2022). The contradiction has been characterized as new denialism, since climate change is acknowledged yet the necessary action fails to be achieved (Daub et al., 2020). New denialism includes policies and climate actions that entrench the fossil fuel industry within solutions, preventing action at the required scale, while simultaneously appearing to confront climate change (Carroll et al., 2022). The lack of action can also be partly attributed to the fossil fuel industry misrepresenting its environmental impact, removing pressure from the industry. Recent studies have indicated that the extent of greenhouse gas emissions by the fossil fuel

industry has been underestimated, and the fossil fuel industry is contributing greater harm than previously understood because the increase in forest fires in Southwestern Canada and Western US can be linked to the fossil fuel industry (Dahl et al., 2023; MacPhail & Bowles, 2021).

The fossil fuel industry is plagued by environmental concerns around extraction, emissions, and pipeline spills. Studies have revealed the environmental concerns of BC's oil and gas sector, such as an increase in greenhouse gas emissions (especially methane), destruction of wildlife and livestock habitat, pipeline spills, ecological damage from extraction, and water, air, and soil contamination from fracking (Chen, 2020; Chen & Gunster, 2016; Daub et al., 2021; Garvie, Lowe, & Shaw, 2014; MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Fracking forces a slurry of water, chemicals, and sand underground to break up shale formations, allowing the gas to escape the rock formations. This extraction process impacts both the environment and the health of individuals who are exposed to the toxic chemicals and polluted waters (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Moreover, pipelines routinely experience spills and leaks, often met with an inadequate response by both government and corporations in clean-up and mitigation, resulting in both ecological and political concerns (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Kheraj, 2020). The data from Canada's long history of pipeline spills reveal that most leaks or spills are hard to predict, thus making the avoidance of environmental contamination a challenging task (Kheraj, 2020). The pipeline project alone is the reason for environmental concern; however, it is critical to connect the CGL pipeline within the whole fossil fuel assemblage.

A report by Dahl et al. (2023) links the fossil fuel industry's and cement manufacturers' emissions to the increase in devastating wildfires witnessed in recent BC years. Connecting climate change with 88 fossil fuel and cement manufacturers, the report narrows in on the relationship between fossil fuel emissions and vapor pressure deficit, with the latter a driver of

recent forest fires. The findings of the research reveal that emissions from the 88 fossil fuel companies can be linked to a 48% rise in vapor pressure deficit² since 1901, and between 1986-2021, the emissions can be linked to 37% of areas burned by forest fires in Southwestern Canada and the Western US (Dahl et al., 2023). The connection between the fossil fuel industry and forest fires is troubling, especially in BC. As the fossil fuel industry continues to expand, BC forest fires have become a predictable seasonal disaster. Why provincial and federal governments allow the expansion of fossil capital during a climate crisis with such visible consequences will be subsequently answered as the following sections explore the state, its relationship with fossil capital, and the power wielded by fossil capital in Canada.

State Apparatus

The state in this research project occupies a significant position, and to understand this complex apparatus, and properly situate my thesis, I will begin with an overview of the state. Often conflated with the government, the state is hard to define because of its multifaceted components (Jessop, 2016). There is no universal framework for understanding a state; rather, the state is an open, heterogeneous assemblage characterized by contradictions (Jessop, 2016). Similarly, Poulantzas (1980) refutes a general theory of the state but rather highlights how states reflect the mode of production, which in our current epoch is capitalism, and in Canada there is a focus on resource extraction. The capitalist state is an apparatus of domination that entails “bourgeois reproduction into economic and political processes” (Jessop, 1982, p. 129; 2018). Jessop (1982) explains how Poulantzas understood the capitalist state as a unifying apparatus that ensures the continuation of the circuitry of capitalism, namely capital accumulation. Thus,

² The vapor pressure deficit measures the atmosphere’s drying capabilities, which are highly influenced by human-caused climate change (Dahl et al., 2023).

the state organizes hegemony for continuous accumulation (Jessop, 1982). Capitalist states, vulnerable to the crises that define capitalism, often opt to solve these recurring crises through spatial fixes, often through critical infrastructure, with the costs externalized on others and the environment (Ekers & Prudham, 2017; Jessop, 1982). Delimiting how far the state's web goes into various private and civil society spaces is difficult to decide (Jessop, 2016). Gramsci understood the state to be a political apparatus, but also an integral state that involves both political and civil society to reproduce capitalist social relations of production, and garner consent (Maher, 2022). This conception will be discussed in the upcoming sections. With Gramsci's analysis, the state expands to involve those outside the political realm. As such, it can be generally stated that the state includes administration, government, military, police, mass media, and civil society (Jessop, 2016). These components work together and separately within a state project (Jessop, 2016). Therefore, the media and civil society, including industry associations such as the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), all fall within the conceptualization of the state for this project.

The complex assemblages that comprise the state are unified through the same function. This function and the role of the state is to maintain and “defend the interests of the dominant class” (Jessop, 2016, p.25) and the reproduction of social relations, conditions of production, and relations of production (Althusser, 2006; Poulantzas, 1980). As I will discuss later, the state reproduces conditions of production through repressive and ideological apparatuses (Althusser, 2006). The state operates through ideological and repressive apparatuses, while maintaining power through concessions to achieve a moving consensus, i.e., hegemony (Poulantzas, 1980). However, when concessions and ideology fail to achieve consent, the state employs coercive measures to maintain control and dominance. Poulantzas (1980, p.135; emphasis in original)

posits that the state is “a *strategic field and a process* of intersecting power networks, which both articulate and exhibit mutual contradictions and displacements.” Looking at the state as a process, one that is unique, evolving, and adapting, reveals how power shifts, often through the evolving concessions by the state to maintain power. Importantly, state policy is a reflection of the contradictions between classes and thus entails concessions in order to maintain hegemony (Poulantzas, 1980). Policies that appear as progressive, often amount to small concessions granted by the state to maintain hegemony as power structures are not challenged, such as access to higher wages, green capitalist solutions to climate change that do not confront fossil capital, or reconciliation on the state’s terms that does not address the ongoing harms of settler colonialism. Because the Canadian state is a rentier state (McCreary, 2022), in which the state and economy predominately depend on external rent, often achieved through renting out land to resource extraction companies (Beblawi & Luciani, 2016), the state’s role is to defend fossil capital interests. Active in this defence, both ideologically and repressively, is the RCMP. Importantly, both fossil fuel corporations and the state share this same goal; the two are dialectically unified under this function.

Integral State

The theory of the integral state critically addresses the relationship between the state and fossil capital. As an organizing apparatus, the state unifies the capitalist class as a cohesive “historical bloc” (Fonseca, 2024; Maher, 2022). Maher (2022, p.18) describes the integral state as

the institutional networks and relays that mediate and integrate state and corporate power.

[..] These linkages span the coming and going of elected governments, forming durable

networks that are deeply rooted in the administrative structure of the state as well as corporate institutions.

There is an enduring power of the integral state over elected governments, as corporate power has a longevity that exceeds electoral politics and governments. The state is an organizational system that assembles the dominant class, enabling group cohesiveness (Poulantzas, 1980). As such, the state organizes the fossil capital class. Simultaneously, business associations, part of civil society, are an organizing mechanism for the capitalist state (Maher, 2022). The dialectical organizing power of the two results in partnership of fossil capital allies, or power bloc (Jessop, 2016) that combines “political society + civil society” or private (civil society) with the state (Gramsci, 1971, p.263; Maher, 2022, p.14). While seemingly distinct modalities, Gramsci (1971, p.160) argues, “in actual reality civil society and State are one and the same.” The power bloc's influence, present within state projects, is further bolstered by intellectuals, the judicial system, and the economic base that comprise the historical bloc (Jessop, 2016). This cohesive group dialectically acts back upon the state and vice versa; there is a mutual interest and collaboration between the state and corporations (Maher, 2022). As such, the state is not above civil society; rather, the two dialectically engage with each other (Carroll et al., 2020b). This dialectical relationship advantages hegemony, as the integral state expands, absorbing members from the subaltern into the dominant class (Humphrys, 2024). Thus, consensus is achieved without a request from the state (Carroll et al., 2020) and appears natural and common sense.

Poulantzas (1980), similar to Gramsci, recognizes the state to have a decisive hegemonic nucleus, through which administration, organized dominant classes, and bureaucracy ensures the reproduction of division of labour and relations of production. While civil society engages in economic activity, it is dialectically conditioned by the capitalist state, and subsequently reflects

the ideologies of the capitalist state, as the state is not a neutral or passive entity (Gramsci, 1971). It is the laws and morality of the state that, in part, structure the hierarchical regulation of corporations, such as with shareholders and management (Maher, 2022). The integral state is the reproduction (see Althusser, 2006) and expansion of the capitalist class as a whole (Maher, 2022); the fossil fuel industry is one sector in this class.

As previously discussed, Canada's economy is dependent on fossil fuel extraction (Carroll et al., 2020a) and comprises a vast network of corporate allies that work with the state to ensure the reproduction of fossil capital whilst obstructing alternatives (Carroll, 2020). The integral state reveals the dialectical relationship between the state apparatus and civil society and the reproduction of fossil capitalism in Canada. Business associations organize the fossil capital elite, creating a unified and powerful group that strives to maintain consent for the expansion and continuation of fossil fuel projects (Carroll et al., 2020b). Carroll et al. highlight how neoliberal policies have allowed NGOs and business associations to gain more power and occupy a dominant role in shaping governmental regulations and policies. A number of key climate capitalism and clean growth NGOs and foundations are creatures of or heavily supported by the fossil fuel industry. For example, CAPP's board of directors comprises members of fossil fuel corporations (Carroll, 2021a) who actively pursue the expansion of the fossil fuel industry. CAPP advances climate capital logic attempting to entrench LNG in energy solutions as a clean energy source (CAPP, 2023a). Beyond this CAPP has an organizational function as many climate capitalist funds or networks are connected through the organization (CAPP, 2023b). The fossil fuel elite pursue consent for fossil fuel projects themselves, but they also advance climate capitalist projects (particularly LNG) that fit within new denialism, favouring fossil fuel interests instead of pursuing meaningful action towards the climate crisis.

Within the integral state, elected governments perform the critical role of securing consent within civil society on behalf of the capitalist state. Elected governments are the mediator straddling the intersection between civil and political society and performing the key function of bonding the organic intellectuals of dominant groups with those of traditional groups (e.g. bureaucracies, clergy) and, wherever possible, also subaltern groups³ (Fonseca, 2024, p.139).

Elected governments help facilitate the absorption of business leaders into the political apparatus as organic intellectuals (Fonseca, 2024) as the division between the state and civil society becomes blurred. Through the incorporation of business within the political field “corporate power is organized into class power and articulated to a hegemonic apparatus” (Maher, 2022, p.18); the hegemonic power is diffused through both the political and civil modalities (Carroll et al., 2020b). Hegemony is secured within civil society through elected governments who act as a mediator on behalf of the mutual interests of fossil corporations and the capitalist state.

Gramsci’s work demonstrates that when hegemony is well established consent appears to be spontaneous, “however, this is no spontaneous consent, but certainly an organized consent” (Fonseca, 2024, p.146). The state’s power, extending into civil society, is highly organized, multifaceted approach in securing an overall consensus that aligns with the interests of the dominant class. This organized consent is achieved in civil society, within subaltern groups, and thereby appears natural. The integral state presents an instrumental framework to unpack the role

³ The term subaltern was employed by Gramsci (1971) in his prison notebooks that denote “non-hegemonic groups or classes (Hoare & Smith, 1971, xiv). Subaltern comes from a subaltern officer within the military; Gramsci’s unconventional use of the word was a method to conceal the extent of his political ideas while incarcerated.

performed by elected governments and business associations, who secure consent from civil society for the fossil capital historical bloc.

With this in mind, the state as a hierarchical, organizational assemblage maintains capitalist production through strategic institutions that impose decisions upon a territory's population, constructing a “common interest” that expresses the dominant class’s interest, coordinated with the short-term interests of allies, as a hegemonic vision. Most often, the hegemonic vision is achieved through consent instead of contestations (Jessop, 2016). However, when consent is not achieved, the state turns to repression and methods of obstruction.

Fossil Capital and the Regime of Obstruction

The integral state enables an understanding of how Canada's fossil fuel industry employs its considerable power to protect and expand the fossil fuel industry and resulting profits (Carroll et al., 2018). Fossil fuel power is an assemblage of different interlocking networks consisting of fossil capital corporations, industry partners (such as CAPP), think tanks (who are often financially supported by the fossil fuel industry), advocacy, policy-planning, research institutions, investors (such as banks and financial institutions) and universities (Carroll et al., 2018). In Canada, fossil capital power can be understood as what Carroll (2020) describes as a “regime of obstruction,” in which a cohesive bloc of fossil capitalists and their organic intellectuals maintains fossil capital hegemony and obstructs meaningful alternatives to the fossil fuel industry. While there are many different actors within fossil capital, they act as a relatively united group with a shared desired outcome of fossil fuel expansion, creating effective and consolidated power.

The fossil fuel industry has a long history of “shaping legal and political systems, undermining democracy and stopping action on global warming” (Spiegel, 2021, p.2). Notably, the regime of obstruction impedes alternatives to fossil fuels through practices such as extensive lobbying and regulatory capture. Lobbying has a duality; it pushes for policies that support the fossil fuel industry while attempting to block policies that would impede production and expansion (Carroll et al., 2020a). Through extensive political lobbying, the fossil fuel industry is able to further fossil fuel interests and simultaneously bridge a cooperative relationship within different levels of government (Carroll et al., 2020a). The lobbying of governments and the collaborative relationships transcend elected governments, revealing a hidden and enduring power of fossil capital (Carroll et al., 2020a).

Another method of obstruction is regulatory capture, which has officials’ and policymakers’ decisions reflecting the interests of corporations instead of the public (Carroll, 2022). Perhaps unsurprisingly, regulatory capture is often gained through lobbying (Carroll, 2022). An example of regulatory capture is the former National Energy Board (NEB), now Canadian Energy Regulator (CER). There was a strong working relationship between the NEB and the fossil fuel industry, with many fossil fuel industry members sitting on the NEB board (Carroll, 2022). It is at this intersection wherein the outcomes of lobbying and regulatory capture are visible since the CER is now the body that oversees energy projects in Canada while enforcing environmental standards (CER, 2023). Similarly, the BC Energy Regulator (BCER) that oversees energy projects carried out 504 inspections since the CGL project started up to October 2023 with five warnings, four orders, and financial penalties totaling \$2,660 (Simmons, 2023). This assessment starkly contrasts with the BC Environmental Assessment Office (BC EAO), which in the same period carried out less than ten inspections and gave out 59 warnings,

30 orders, and financial penalties that total to a sum of \$802,200 (Simmons, 2023). Not surprisingly, a search of the Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists reveals that fossil capital organizations, including TC Energy and CAPP, are frequent lobbyists of the BC Energy Regulator (ORL, 2023). In an interview with *The Narwhal*, “Shannon McPhail, executive director of Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition, said [...] ‘If you didn’t know anything about the [BC Energy Regulator], it would be natural to assume they have been hired by industry to ensure their projects get completed regardless of how many laws the proponent breaks’” (Simmons, 2023). While lobbying and regulatory capture happen behind closed doors, their impact is made visible in CGL’s ability to act with impunity, especially with the accumulating number of environmental concerns plaguing the pipeline project. This in turn is made possible by the power and hegemonic reach of TC Energy, supported by CAPP. All this reveals aspects of the integral state, as fossil capital collaborates in its own regulation, ensuring the continuation of fossil fuel projects, attending selectively to environmental harms, while garnering a measure of popular consent, as state approval legitimates projects that violate environmental standards.

TC Energy

The focus of this project is TC Energy, one of the major corporations within the regime of obstruction. Established in 1951, TC Energy based in Calgary, Alberta, specializes in natural gas and crude oil pipeline projects across Canada, employing 7300 workers (TC Energy, 2024a). This section will look closer at the modalities of power it holds as a corporation. As part of “an oligopolistic bloc,” TC Energy dominates fossil capital in Canada along with a network of other fossil capitalists (Hussey et al., 2021, p.55). Currently engaged with the CGL pipeline project, TC Energy holds power within three modalities: financial, state, and civil society. First,

discussing the financial power that TC Energy holds within Canada, TC Energy has an established relationship with the financial sector, which supports large fossil projects (Carroll, 2021a). As of 2023, the top ten shareholders in TC Energy are Capital Group Companies (11.54%), Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) (8.97%), Prime Dividend Corp (n.a), Bank of Nova Scotia (4.94%), Vanguard Group (3.58%), Bank of Montreal (BMO) (3.45%), Toronto-Dominion Bank (TD) (3.09%), Wellington Management Group (2.06%), Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (1.97%), and T. Rowe Price Group (1.89%) (Bureau van Dijk, 2023). Banks or institutional investors represent significant shareholders in TC Energy, and Canada's five major banks are all significant shareholders in TC Energy. Given the overlap of interests and cross-ownership of the central banks in Canada, Canadian banks, as a cohesive network owning 22.4% of TC Energy, form a constellation of interests in a position to exercise strategic control of TC Energy, given the recent shareholder percentages. In a constellation of interests, no one shareholding interest controls the company, but a set of aligned shareholders together own a substantial bloc (Carroll & Huijzer, 2021).

This financial support allows TC Energy to access the political sphere through the extensive lobbying of governments. Between 2010 and 2016, TC Energy contacted MLAs, cabinet ministers, and ministries a total of 1,002 times (Daub et al., 2021). In 2021, TC Energy and its consultants communicated with the government on 134 occasions (Bulowski, 2022). In a 12-month period between 2022-2023, TC Energy lobbied the federal government 69 times (LobbyCanada, 2023a). Additionally, between 2008 to 2016, TC Energy donated \$105,400 to the right-wing BC Liberals, recently rebranded as the BC United Party (Daub et al., 2021). Unsurprisingly, both federal and provincial governments are stakeholders in TC Energy (Bureau van Dijk, 2023). As previously highlighted TC Energy is a regular lobbyist of the BC Energy

Regulator; however, the list extends to include the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, the Office of the Premier (ORL, 2023), the Canadian Energy Regulator, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) (LobbyCanada, 2023). The extensive lobbying obstructs alternatives while maintaining resource extraction (Carroll et al., 2021). The state is not passive, but as previously discussed, an integral state, in which the state shares desired outcomes and goals with fossil capitalists, shaped through extensive lobbying and often organized through fossil capital associations. Thus, we can see how this extensive lobbying advances the interest of a fraction of the capitalist class and why the government has supported and ensured the development of the CGL pipeline, despite the project's having been contested since its conception.

The economic modality also enables TC Energy to participate in the construction of fossil capital hegemony within civil society. TC Energy can gain the hearts and minds of communities through strategic philanthropy (Eaton & Enoch, 2021), which is an economic concession by the corporation to secure consent. This strategic philanthropy is used to secure a social license and community identity through financing sports teams, public services, and infrastructure (Carroll, 2021b; Eaton & Enoch, 2021). Engaging in strategic philanthropy, TC Energy has invested in 56 community projects since 2012, which include beautification projects, playgrounds, community services, and COVID-19 relief funds (Coastal Gaslink, 2023). In addition, TC Energy awards scholarships, partners with the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Northern BC, and provides resources to first responders and natural disaster and emergency response (Adkin, 2021; Coastal Gaslink, 2023; TC Energy, 2024b). The hegemonic reach within the education system cannot be overlooked since it is central to ideology that reflects the dominant class's interests. This section briefly touches on some of the ideological

projects that TC Energy has initiated in attempts to secure popular consensus for the CGL project. The financial power granted to TC Energy, through major investors, allows TC Energy to pursue projects that help reinforce a social license within communities. This raises questions as to how TC Energy's social license would hold without the financial backing it currently possesses. However, Indigenous resistance is a barrier to TC Energy's social licence, and thus, state repression and resources through CIP and the RCMP are called upon.

In struggles to maintain hegemony, the dominant bloc gains allies through concessions or persuasion (see Poulantzas 1980), which can act as a divisive tool. For example, as Eaton and Enoch (2021) highlight, the fossil fuel industry sponsors and builds infrastructure in communities close to oil projects, which creates a community identity with the community aligning and defending the interests of fossil capital. This alignment can divide a community, especially if there is resistance to fossil projects within a community. Similarly, TC Energy signed benefit agreements with Wet'suwet'en Band councils with the promise of economic benefits (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). A stipulation in the benefit agreements is that band councils, through the contract, are directed to dissuade and silence dissent (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). This contractual provision creates a division between Wet'suwet'en band councils and Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs, the latter of whom are inclined toward Indigenous resurgence against the pipeline project. Elected band councils were created through the Indian Act, as an extension of the colonial government onto reserves and as a divisive strategy. Implemented by the settler state, the Indian Act outlines the organization of band councils that follow a settler-colonial governance structure (Indian Act, 1985) intended to supplant a pre-existing Indigenous governance system. Elected band councils govern reserves, whose boundaries have been delineated by the state, and who are subordinate to the Minister, who has the power to overrule

the band council's authority (Indian Act, 1985). However, elected band councils' main reach is through by-laws within reserves. The Indian Act ensures that the state holds power over Indigenous land and governance; band councils' governance is limited both by the boundaries of the reserves and the extent of their power. In contrast, hereditary chiefs are pre-colonial and govern territory that pre-dates reserves and colonialism (Hume & Walby, 2021; MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Media hyper-focus on this division has legitimated RCMP actions while undermining Indigenous sovereignty (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). The support from band councils and the portrayal of the Wet'suwet'en as fractured furthers the hegemonic legitimacy of TC Energy and the CGL pipeline.

Overall, the financialization of TC Energy allows for the lobbying of different government organizations to ensure the development of pipeline projects, often with little oversight or regulation, while simultaneously allowing TC Energy to pursue ideological projects to gain the consent of populations close to the pipeline route. This power cannot be overstated, given that it is the power of the finance sector that bolsters TC Energy's hegemonic power.

Ideological and Repressive State Apparatuses

While the state pursues numerous hegemonic strategies, when hegemony is threatened, the state becomes more coercive and less persuasive in its approach to governance. Gramsci (1971) recognized the relationship between hegemony and coercion, in which "hegemony [is] protected by the armour of coercion" (p.263). When hegemony fails to capture the consensus of the general population, coercion, the legal disciplinary power of the state, is called upon to ensure the reproduction of capital (Gramsci, 1971) and in this project, fossil capital. Hegemonic power is never without the shadow of coercion in the background; coercive practices wait in

abeyance, ready to emerge when hegemony is weakened. Althusser's dyadic theory of state apparatuses addresses both the ideological and repressive. Building off Marx, Althusser (2006) divides the superstructure into two state apparatuses: ideological state apparatus (ISA) and repressive state apparatus (RSA). However, the two apparatuses are not mutually exclusive. No state operates entirely an ISA or RSA; rather, states function with elements from both ISA and RSA (Althusser, 2006).

Repressive State Apparatuses and the History of the RCMP

Repressive state apparatuses are the "core of the state," composed of police, legislation, judiciary roles, prisons, and the military (Althusser, 2006; Jessop, 2016, p.24). The blurred lines between repression and ideology are visible within institutions such as the military or police, since their function is repressive, while simultaneously guided by the dominant class's ideology (Althusser, 2006). Importantly, ideology plays a unifying function for repressive institutions, influencing values and morals within institutions. A key concern for this study is how ideology performs a unifying function within the repressive state apparatuses, such as the RCMP and the colonial security assemblage.

Significantly, ideology both influences and unifies the repressive state apparatus, such as the military or police (Althusser, 2006; Poulantzas, 1980). Repressive apparatuses are organized through centralized leadership and operate through violence, administrative repression, censorship, and coercion (Althusser, 2006). Marx recognized the state as a repressive apparatus employed by the ruling class (Althusser, 2006). The ruling class exercises both ideology and repression to hold state power. State power cannot be maintained for long periods without

ideology, and repressive state apparatuses, unified through ideology, are deployed to maintain state power (Althusser, 2006), and the interests of the dominant class.

A prominent repressive force throughout Canada's history is the RCMP. The emergence of the RCMP, historically the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP), is intertwined with the rise of resource extraction in Canada and theft of Indigenous land. Western Canada, one of the later regions to be colonized in Canada, possessed multiple natural resources desired by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and other Canadian corporations (Brown & Brown, 1973). Access to these natural resources was hinged on the NWMP ability to maintain the *peace* (Brown & Brown, 1973). Paradoxically, *peace* was achieved through forcibly removing and relocating Indigenous peoples from their land to reserves, allowing settlers to unfettered access to resource extraction (Brown & Brown, 1973; Smith, 2009). Thus, the NWMP were a force to usher in settler capitalism (Smith, 2009). This dispossession encouraged investors (such as extractive capitalists) and settlers to relocate in areas now free of unrest or rather free of Indigenous resistance (Brown & Brown, 1973; Lajtman, 2020). The expropriation of territory simultaneously expanded the reach of the settler-colonial government, further advancing the settler-colonial project (Wood & Fortier, 2016).

Another function of the NWMP was enforcing the Indian Act, and actively surveilling Indigenous peoples, documenting population numbers, movement, and coordinating with the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) (Smith, 2009). The NWMP surveillance and sorting was a key determinant in the state's political management of reserves (Monaghan, 2013; Smith, 2009). NWMP surveillance focused their gaze on Indigenous peoples and workers during the construction of the CPR railway (Proulx, 2014). The function of the NWMP was to protect the railway from workers and Indigenous peoples (Proulx, 2014). Modeled on the RIC (Royal Irish

Constabulary) military force, the NWMP/RCMP were not intended to be a civilian police force, but rather a temporary Canadian military force (Brown & Brown, 1973). Canada intended to disband the RCMP; however, the RCMP, exemplifying the ideological elements within the RSA, capitalized on the red scare in the Russian revolution era and constructed a fear of communism in Canada, justifying their existence (Brown & Brown, 1973), and the continuation of the force today. The RCMP further rationalized their existence by suppressing workers' strikes in Canada, policing Indigenous resistance, and enforcing injunctions to enable extractive projects (Brown & Brown, 1973; Madsen, 2020; Wood & Fortier, 2016). The RCMP's mobilization of ideology allowed a military force to remain the dominant federal police force in Canada. Contemporarily, with an economy reliant on the oil and gas sector, the RCMP focus more on security for fossil projects, and pre-emptive incapacitation of resistance (Wood & Fortier, 2016). There is an overlapping relationship between the RCMP and resource extraction, both historically and contemporarily on Wet'suwet'en territory.

Community-Industry Response Group

A central focus of this thesis is the Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG) as it is the dominant and heavily militarized force involved in CIP in BC. In BC, C-IRG is the dominant force behind CIP surveillance, enforcing injunctions for critical infrastructure projects, and has been the active, coercive force during the Wet'suwet'en conflict (Forester, 2022a). While C-IRG recently changed its name to CRU-BC, this project will refer to the group as C-IRG, as that was the name of the unit during this project's period of focus. The literature reveals that C-IRG is structured in three hierarchal tiers (gold, silver, and bronze) (Forester, 2022a). The gold commander outlines the objectives; the silver commander plans the operations, such as

injunction enforcements; and the bronze commander carries out the plans and surveillance outlined by the silver commander, reporting back to both commanders (Forester, 2022a). David Attfield was the first gold commander, with John Brewer as the first silver commander, who since 2021 is now the gold commander (Forester, 2022a).

The goals of the C-IRG are to allow critical infrastructure construction without violence or criminal acts (Forester, 2022a). This goal has the RCMP take on an assumed hegemonic function, contrary to its RSA foundations, as its goal is to allow construction through a persuasive prevention of *crime*. However, C-IRG does engage in repressive actions when persuasion fails, with the force accused of violence at multiple injunction enforcements, such as at Fairy Creek and Wet'suwet'en. When police engage in violence while policing protests, there is often public backlash (Wood, 2014). To avoid this, C-IRG members routinely remove badges and cover their faces to avoid accountability (Forester, 2022a). This contentious policing unit is currently under review by the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP (CRCC), which is examining C-IRG's practices, and analyzing if the force adheres to the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the CRCC's recommendations (CRCC, 2023). There is a notable gap in the literature around C-IRG, since there is little information on this unit. The existing knowledge comes from the RCMP, journalists, or those on the frontlines. More knowledge on C-IRG is crucial because of the prominent role it plays in CIP, often acting with impunity. The lack of public knowledge of C-IRG is a concern, especially as C-IRG is a highly militarized force created to protect and ensure private infrastructure development.

Ideological State Apparatuses, the RCMP, and the Media

Dialectally interpenetrating and reinforcing RSAs, are ISAs that operate through institutions such as churches, political parties, families, media, and particularly through

education in schools (Althusser, 2006). Importantly, ISAs reflect and are organized through the dominant class's ideology, and ideology ensures "the reproduction of the material conditions of production" (Althusser, 2006, p.2). Indeed, Althusser highlights that the function of the superstructure is material reproduction, which is intrinsic in understanding the function of ideology within a state apparatus. Ideology involves both ideas *and* material practices, such as reproducing social relations and relations of production (Poulantzas, 1980). As a cohesive, unifying element of the state, ideology is the "internal cement of the state apparatuses" (Poulantzas, 1980, p.155). Institutions that reproduce ideology occupy an important role within the state apparatus; they function to ensure subordination through interpellation, or subject formation, informed through capitalist ideology (Althusser, 2006). Ideology has a duality of obscuring domination, while producing a subject that reproduces the values and morals of the dominant class. Therefore, institutions such as legacy media perform a critical, unifying function within the state, serving as ISA within the Wet'suwet'en conflict. Importantly, not all media outlets are part of the state apparatus. Often, within the media, there are struggles for hegemony, and investigative journalists and news outlets can disrupt hegemonic voices and be counterhegemonic in shifting public opinions within a flashpoint (see Shaw, 2021).

Benevolent Mounties

Since its beginning the RCMP has capitalized on the media as an ideological state apparatus in shaping its image and actions, further advantaging public consent for the RCMP's repression of Indigenous dissent. Historically, when the RCMP engaged in violent dispossession, it was simultaneously represented as a benevolent peacekeeping force (Mackey, 2005). The RCMP's benevolent image was disseminated through many media outlets such as popular

Canadian literature, which created the “benevolent Mountie myth” (Mackey, 1998, p.15); which was then reproduced throughout Canadian legacy media (Rifkind, 2011). The misrepresentation of the RCMP in the media has continued throughout the settler-colonial project, such as the popular televisual Heritage Minutes that represented the RCMP as a force that saved Canada from ornery American gold prospectors (Historica Canada, 2024). The erroneous myth of the Mountie is intertwined with the settler-colonial nation-building project (Mackey, 1998); the benevolent Mountie is connected to a national identity and part of a nation-building project. To this extent, the RCMP’s image is unique, especially as a police force, since it is connected to the image of Canada and Canadians (Brown & Brown, 1973). Indeed, on the RCMP’s website, we find the claim, “our history is Canada's history” (RCMP, 2023, n.p). The RCMP’s claim is a powerful conflation, as critiques against the RCMP can be misinterpreted as critiques against Canadians (Brown & Brown, 1973). The convergence of Canadians’ image with the Mounties contributes to the interpellation of a *Canadian* identity, which is perversely characterized as benevolent. Paradoxically, this benevolent identity relies on the repression of the violent dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their land.

Throughout the settler colonial project, Canadian legacy media neglected to include RCMP violence within their accounts of the RCMP. Canada is a settler-colonial state, which is predicated on the elimination of Indigenous peoples (Wolfe, 2006), in which the RCMP played an active and dominant role (Brown & Brown, 1973). Mainstream media’s omission can be partially attributed to the lack of transparency by the RCMP, who heavily censored any reports of malpractice by the force, and the media’s assumption that RCMP reports are objective (Brown & Brown, 1973). While legacy media played a dominant role in creating the image of the benevolent Mountie, the RCMP were not passive; rather, they actively suppressed media

representations that challenged this myth (Rifkind, 2011). The portrayal of the benevolent Mountie does hegemonic work: it organizes consent for the RCMP, their actions, and their role in the settler-colonial project. The RCMP's use of the media as an ISA allowed themselves to create a hegemonic identity; as a helpful force in the settlement of Canada, positioning themselves as a fundamental part of Canadian identity and a Canadian symbol. In short, mainstream legacy media has been an essential player within the ISA, enabling the RCMP to garner the consent of the Canadian population to suppress Indigenous resistance, from the beginning of the settler-colonial project up to contemporary dissent. At the same time, investigative journalism threatens the RCMP's hegemonic identity, and this threat has the potential to change public opinions about the RCMP during a flashpoint (see Shaw, 2021).

In the contemporary scene, the RCMP actively participate in ideological state apparatuses, using their access to legacy media to legitimize their actions while delegitimizing dissent. Police agencies have a direct line of communication with the media, and the police control what information is released, the story, the RCMP image, and, importantly, the portrayal of dissent, which are all often reported as objective facts (Hume & Walby, 2021). In this way, the RCMP, although a central element in the repressive state apparatus, buttresses the ISA through its strategic use of the media (see Althusser, 2006). The RCMP's use of legacy media prompts Indigenous dissent to be represented as criminal (Hume & Walby, 2021). Caught on videotape in 1995, "the RCMP media spokesperson, Sergeant Peter Montague, claimed that 'smear campaigns are our specialty'" during the conflict at Gustafsen Lake, when the RCMP labeled Indigenous resistance as terrorism (Hill, 2017, n.p). During 2013 the anti-fracking campaign at Elsipogtog First Nation in New Brunswick, the RCMP used the media to their advantage, portraying Elsipogtog resistance as violent (Simpson, 2013a). Control of the media is

a powerful tool and can be used to sway public opinions during conflicts. Within mainstream media, Wet'suwet'en resistance is narrowly framed, reducing the resistance to local environmental concerns about pipelines, which erases the discourse of Indigenous sovereignty and rights (Hume & Walby, 2021). Parochially, legacy media focused on the conflicting Wet'suwet'en opinions of the project, which erroneously constructs Wet'suwet'en resistance as disjointed (Hume & Walby, 2021). The portrayal of the Wet'suwet'en as fragmented discredits the Wet'suwet'en struggle for sovereignty while legitimizing police surveillance and presence on Wet'suwet'en territory (Hume & Walby, 2021). The RCMP's use of the media demonstrates the dual function of the RCMP within the state apparatus, fulfilling both a repressive and ideological role. Further affirming the dual function of the RCMP are the themes found within the RCMP's history, notably the RCMP's active use of ideology to bolster their benevolent Mountie image while engaging in dispossession for settler capitalism. However, the repressive actions of C-IRG reported on by other media outlets, particularly from investigative journalists, threaten the benevolent Mountie myth with alternative narratives which can be counter-hegemonic.

State of Exceptions and Indigenous Dispossession

Agamben (1998) critiques structural Marxists for failing to recognize state of exceptions within their theoretical critiques. Poulantzas (1980) highlights how states can transgress the very laws they enacted, Agamben takes this analysis further. Drawing on Walter Benjamin, Agamben (1998) concentrates on the concept of a state of exception, which is the suspension of laws that has the potential to become the permanent norm. Incorporating colonialism within the theoretical concept, Zureik (2015) substantiates how a state of exception and surveillance are a requisite for the settler-colonial project in occupied Palestine, wherein the law is suspended to allow the

violent disposition of land, often supported through surveillance. Settler-colonial projects are only possible through states of exception and the suspension of the rule of law. The settler-colonial project in Canada began as a state of exception for land accumulation through dispossession; however, it is a permanent, ongoing structure.

Advancing the state of exception is the reduction of populations to bare life, comprising an outside/inside logic (Agamben, 1998). An individual is simultaneously outside of the protection of the law, while vulnerable to state violence and harm (Agamben, 1998). The state will not protect an individual but has the powers to harm or kill them. The state of exception can reduce populations to bare life, banishing them outside of politics and protection (Agamben, 1998). Agamben focuses on *homo sacer*, which represents an individual who can be killed but not sacrificed, exemplifying bare life. Drawing on Arendt, Agamben illustrates the logic of human rights is tied to the nation-state and that human rights are not equally afforded. In an investigative journalist report in *The Guardian*, it was revealed through notes and documents obtained by Dhillon (2019, n.p) that the RCMP's orders of lethal overwatch and were permitted to shoot land defenders during the 2019 invasion of Wet'suwet'en territory, and "the RCMP commanders also instructed officers to 'use as much violence toward the gate as you want.'" The RCMP's orders for lethal overwatch exemplify the disparity of human rights; there is a racialization of human rights or the reduction to bare life. Through Agamben's *homo sacer*/bare life logic, the Indigenous land defenders could have been killed (not sacrificed) without the protection of colonial laws through the suspension of law within a state of exception. Through the state of exception, violence, and repression can be justified through the suspension of law (Agamben, 1998). The suspension of law affords protection and justification to the state as it transgresses laws and human rights, enabling resource extraction.

Reterritorialization

The state of exception continues Canada's long-standing history of dispossession. Canada is a settler-colonial state, predicated on the logic of elimination to remove Indigenous peoples from their territory, allowing settlers to reterritorialize land, often for extraction and settlement (Wolfe, 2006). Territorialization involves reimagining and reorganizing spaces with imposed borders, political units, and populations (Jessop, 2016). In Canada, territorialization is the imposed colonial borders, governance, and transformation of landscapes into settler-colonial topographies such as cities or spaces of resource extraction. Often, borders, especially imposed colonial borders, can be sites of contested sovereignty and are a focus within the security apparatus (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). Extractivist projects are projects of territorialization; they transform land into spaces of economic production while simultaneously ruining the land as habitat for Indigenous peoples and nonhuman nature (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). It is at sites of reterritorialization or attempted reterritorialization that the state security apparatus intervenes to claim land for the settler state while removing Indigenous peoples from the land and weakening their claims to land.

There is a connection between the surveillance of critical infrastructure projects, criminalization of Indigenous resistance, and dispossession (Dafnos, 2020). Surveillance has been a historical tool for colonial authorities (Smith, 2009), and contemporarily, surveillance facilitates the accumulation of land for extraction and dispossession, maintaining settler-colonial power relations (Dafnos, 2020). Settler colonialism is an ongoing project; dispossession is part of the settler-colonial nation-building project, as "invasion is a structure not an event" (Coulthard, 2014; Howe & Monaghan, 2018; Wolfe, 2006, p.388). The ongoing dispossession is a reterritorialization of land, transforming landscapes into spaces for settler colonialism

(Coulthard, 2014; Wolfe, 2006). Pertinent to this thesis project, landscapes are transformed to benefit extractive industries, notably the fossil fuel industry (Dafnos, 2020; Howe & Monaghan, 2018; McCormack & Gordon, 2020; McCreary & Turner, 2018). Natural resources represent a *free* commodity and are a motivating factor for the dispossession of Indigenous people from their territory (Carroll & Sapinski, 2018; McCormack & Gordon, 2020). Practices of extraction, surveillance, and dispossession are connected. The discourse of settlement and nation building has shifted to CIP; however, the outcome is the same. The existing literature demonstrates a strong connection between extractive projects and dispossession, demonstrating a duality of colonialism and capitalism that remains in place. While Canada is attempting to engage in reconciliation, colonial dispossession is still active, such as through the coercive actions of the RCMP on Wet'suwet'en territory. Indigenous resistance confronts the colonial hegemonic project. RCMP force is often deployed to support that hegemony.

Surveillance

An often-hidden practice with the RSA is surveillance, which relies on the hierarchal categorization of individuals according to risk assessments, persistently informed through racial and colonial biases that produce the Other, as a threat to the settler state. Information-gathering measures through surveillance have been and continue to be an integral part of state power and the state apparatus. Surveillance means watching from above, revealing surveillance's hierarchical nature (Browne, 2015). A primary function of surveillance is social sorting, which systematically categorizes and assesses risks by sorting individuals into different categories (Lyon, 2009). Exemplifying this is the categorization of Indigenous dissent as violent or extremist in the Canadian settler-colonial project, which a structuring of power (Lyon, 2009),

and in this case, aids in the structuring of settler-colonial relations through an unequal, white settler gaze that aids in the continued theft of Indigenous land.

Surveillance undertaken by the state is used to assess putative risks for the rationale of security, often for economic or state (“national”) security (Jessop, 2016). Significantly, surveillance and colonial projects are intertwined; many surveillance methods were created in the colonial policing and surveillance of Indigenous and Black populations (Browne, 2015; Zureik, 2015). Indigenous populations are racialized and classified as the Other to the settler state (Zureik, 2015). Zureik (2015) compares the identification practices in occupied Palestine with past colonial projects such as India, Africa, and the British occupation of Palestine. The intended outcome of each project is to monitor populations and their movements, and to conduct risk assessments (Zureik, 2015). Similar to the colonial project in Canada, Israeli surveillance categorizes Palestinians as *dangerous* (Zureik, 2015), and comparisons can be made in labeling Indigenous dissent as violent. There is no colonial project without surveillance (Zureik, 2015); because Indigenous populations present a *risk* to the sovereignty of the settler-colonial government. Thus, the state gathers intelligence to mitigate the risk to settler sovereignty.

The goal of surveillance is to disrupt an event before it happens (Zureik, 2015). However, this predetermination is often realized through the social sorting of bodies into abnormal/normal, or rather “in place” or “out of place,” through racializing surveillance, as race becomes concrete boundaries of who belongs or does not (Browne, 2015). Race is reified through surveillance because individuals are sorted through a racializing gaze (Browne, 2015). These practices prioritize whiteness and reproduce settler-colonial relations (Browne, 2015). Indigenous bodies are assumed to be violent with no supporting evidence; the assumption is informed through racializing surveillance. Often, surveillance leads to discriminatory outcomes for those under

surveillance (Browne, 2015), such as increased police interactions, dispossession, or criminalization as pre-emptive solutions to a putative risk.

Surveillance in the Canadian Settler-Colonial Project

Colonial surveillance of Indigenous peoples is not a new phenomenon but an often-invisible force accompanying settler colonialism. In Canada, colonial surveillance is found within the Indian Act, on reserves, residential schools, status cards, reserve pass systems, and Inuit identification disks (Monaghan, 2013; Proulx, 2014; Smith, 2009). Historically and contemporarily, the RCMP and the colonial surveillance assemblage have surveilled Indigenous dissent, such as with Oka (1990), Ipperwash (1995), Gustafson Lake (1995), Idle No More (2012), and Elsipogtog (2013), categorizing Indigenous peoples as risks to the settler-colonial state (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Proulx, 2014).

Critical infrastructure surveillance targets Indigenous peoples, sorting them as risks to settler capitalism, thus replicating colonial practices. Indigenous peoples are characterized as a risk to both national security and critical infrastructure through RCMP and CSIS surveillance, funneling them into further surveillance (Crosby, 2021; Dafnos, 2020; Howe & Monaghan, 2018). Canada's surveillance increased alongside the “War on Terror” (Crosby, 2021), the US’s global militarized response to 9/11 that focused most efforts on the Middle East and was the underlying rationale for the invasion of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) (Mukbil, 2023). However, Canada’s surveillance has shifted to focus on Indigenous peoples, contrasting with other countries' targets of people from the Middle East (Crosby, 2021). Despite the different approaches, both approaches fall under racializing surveillance (see Browne, 2015). It is here that another state of exception is visible, as Canada’s extensive and intensive surveillance

apparatus was enabled through a state of exception during the war on terror. An important insight from the existing literature demonstrates the continuation and transformation of colonial surveillance of Indigenous peoples. While CIP may be a modern surveillance assemblage justified post 9/11, the surveillance of Indigenous peoples is intertwined with the Canadian settler-colonial project. The colonial surveillance of Indigenous peoples hints at how coercion and consent are interwoven: when surveillance indicates that consent will not be achieved, coercive measures are undertaken.

Lastly, a significant aspect of colonial surveillance is the categorization of Indigenous self-determination as irreconcilable to both the settler state and fossil capitalism. Indigenous sovereignty and resistance are characterized as risks to both, which has been a historical colonial tool in the political management of Indigenous peoples by colonial authorities made possible through surveillance (Crosby, 2021; Howe & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan, 2013). Crosby and Monaghan (2018) connect the categorization of Indigenous peoples, informed through surveillance with claims of sovereignty. Indigenous dissent to extractive projects is often an act of Indigenous sovereignty, which threatens the settler-colonial state. Indigenous resurgence is a refusal of settler colonialism that is instead supplanted with cultural, place-based practices that reclaim Indigenous ways of being rooted in reciprocity and relationships (Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2017). Thus, Indigenous resistance to fossil fuel projects has a duality because it is a threat to both the settler-colonial project and fossil capital expansion (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018), making it a twofold threat to the state.

Critical Infrastructure Protection

A critical juncture of police, state, and corporate industry is the classification of fossil projects as critical infrastructure, a legitimizing discourse for surveillance and suppression. Often, resource projects designated as a consequence by the state or corporations fall under critical infrastructure (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2016). Specifically, critical infrastructure is defined as “physical and information technology facilities, networks, services and assets, which if disrupted or destroyed would have a serious impact on the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Canadians or the effective functioning of governments in Canada” (Monaghan & Walby, 2016, p.55). In Canada, CIP has foundations from the Cold War. CSIS focused on potential sabotage by alleged communists and individuals who were accused of being a threat to the state; suspicions shifted in the 1980s to environmentalists as potential saboteurs (Monaghan & Walby, 2016). Surveillance and threat assessments increased post-9/11, when resources were funneled into protecting national interests and security (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2016; Wood, 2014). However, in 2007, CSIS informed CAPP that they were shifting their focus “from national security to critical infrastructure protection” (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018, p.18). The shift of focus means there was a great mobilization of resources that now directs their attention towards Indigenous dissent and environmentalists. The increase in surveillance for the war on terror can be understood as another state of exception that has become the norm through CIP. As Canada’s economy relies on resource extraction through dispossession, it requires a state of exception through settler colonialism and CIP surveillance to ensure its continuity.

Critical infrastructure protection has led to routine and pre-emptive surveillance of environmentalists and Indigenous peoples that categorizes individuals as risks, labeling some as

extremists, despite most individuals engaging in non-violent, peaceful opposition (Burdon, 2020; Dafnos, 2020; McCormack & Gordon, 2020; Monaghan & Walby, 2016). The scope of police surveillance and the targeting of Indigenous peoples were revealed through declassified FOI/ATI documents that disclosed the details of Project SITKA (Howe & Monaghan, 2018). For instance, during the Elsipogtog crisis,⁴ the RCMP created a report on *Criminal Threats to the Canadian Petroleum Industry*, describing the Mi'kmaq resistance on Elsipogtog territory as “violent aboriginal extremists” who “pose a realistic criminal threat’ to the oil and gas industry” (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018, p.174). Access to the SITKA files revealed the widespread use of surveillance to categorize Indigenous peoples as risks to the oil and gas industry (Howe & Monaghan, 2018). Indigenous resistance is a barrier to gaining consent; thus, surveillance targets threats to hegemonic consensus and focuses repressive actions on specific groups. Resistance is only considered safe if it does not *threaten* critical infrastructure (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). Wood (2014) highlights how protests that target critical infrastructure are considered a greater risk; thus, there is a greater repressive response. Labeling resistance to critical infrastructure as a risk reifies the putative threat and legitimizes measures to impede dissent (Burdon, 2020).

Beyond surveillance, the RCMP engages in repression through the enforcement of injunctions granted by the state for fossil fuel projects. During the first injunction enforcement on Wet’suwet’en territory in 2019, the RCMP were instructed to use lethal force if deemed necessary when removing land defenders (Hume & Walby, 2021; McCormack & Gordon, 2020).

⁴ Elsipogtog (2013) was an Indigenous blockade to Southwestern Energy's proposed fracking project on Elsipogtog territory in New Brunswick (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). Southwestern Energy did not have consent from the Elsipogtog First Nation, whose water was likely to be contaminated by the fracking project (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). The RCMP was the militarized force that attempted to quell the resistance, who had previously been monitoring the nation during Idle No More (2012), which was a peaceful nationwide Indigenous movement that emerged against proposed legislation that would weaken Indigenous rights (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018).

Burdon (2020), Crosby and Monaghan (2018), Wood (2014), and Monaghan and Walby (2016) have demonstrated the intersection between CIP, state enforcement, and surveillance that resort to repressive actions when consent cannot be obtained. While the RCMP and state engage in hegemonic practices, such as through media releases, they routinely engage in repressive actions, often pre-emptively supported through critical infrastructure surveillance. The repressive actions of CIP ensure the reproduction of fossil capital and the continuation of fossil capital hegemony, demonstrating that there is not a rigid distinction between repression and hegemony, but rather they work in unison.

With critical infrastructure, there is a collaboration between the fossil fuel industry and state forces, resulting in communication between police and the fossil fuel industry (Burdon, 2020; Crosby, 2021). Critical infrastructure projects precipitate a collaboration between the state, various police departments, private security, RCMP, CSIS, Natural Resources Canada, CER, and CAPP (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Crosby, 2021; Dafnos, 2020; Monaghan & Walby, 2016). Before the Enbridge Pipeline was terminated in 2016, the RCMP held security meetings with CSIS, industry representatives, and private security that focused on resistance to the pipeline project (Monaghan & Walby, 2016). Briefings such as this occur for critical infrastructure, with RCMP and CSIS advising the industry on security needs (Monaghan & Walby, 2016). This cooperation has been described by O'Reilly as a "state-corporate symbiosis," which has both the state and private industry actively collaborating with an end goal of protecting economic interests (Monaghan & Walby, 2016, p.52). Critical infrastructure, owned primarily by private fossil corporations (90%), draws on state resources to ensure the completion of infrastructure projects (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2016). The interwoven relationship between the state and fossil fuel corporations is a prominent concern, especially "the blurring of

public and private security roles and the integration of corporations as policing partners in the securitization of critical infrastructure in Canada” (Crosby, 2021, p.3; Dafnos, 2020). A similar concern is that the RCMP are often deployed at the command of extractive industry (Howe & Monaghan, 2018). The relationship between policing agencies and the fossil fuel industry raises questions concerning the role of the RCMP and CSIS within the fossil fuel industry and their function as security for private corporations.

The RCMP’s surveillance of Indigenous dissent comes with a hefty price tag. From 2019 to 2021, the RCMP spent nearly \$20 million policing and surveilling Wet’suwet’en resistance (Hosgood, 2021b), and the RCMP spent \$12 million to surveil Elsipogtog resistance (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). Notably, neither of these costs include CSIS or other government actors or agencies that further add to the overall surveillance costs. While there is some public outcry over the costs accrued by RCMP surveillance, the RCMP are able to circumnavigate this since they can legitimize their actions through direct communication with the media.

Flashpoints

When the power of the fossil fuel industry is threatened by resistance, it often culminates in what Shaw (2021) describes as flashpoints. Flashpoints are “sites at which resistance—often long-standing but not widely recognized or understood—becomes visible in ways that have the potential to reshape public understanding and relations of power” (Shaw, 2021, p.400). Often flashpoints occur when all efforts to solve an issue have failed, which in Canada recurs when Indigenous peoples’ sovereignty is disregarded (Russell 2010). A glaring omission within the media is the historical context; rather, there is a sensational story calling for order (Russell 2010). The calls for order put the onus on Indigenous peoples to adhere to the order imposed by

the settler state, while simultaneously ignoring years of resistance that occurred before any direct action or civil disobedience. Indigenous dissent can be counterhegemonic and confront settler capital hegemony, which is why calls for order are present within the media. They are calls for a return to hegemonic order. Flashpoints can be understood dialectically; past actions of the state and fossil capital mediate the response of Indigenous dissent. The Wet'suwet'en response to the CGL pipeline did not begin when the RCMP enforced the injunction. Rather, the foundations start with the Canadian settler-colonial project and the approval of the CGL and Enbridge Northern Gateway pipelines without meaningful consent. The past actions of the RCMP, the state, and the resource extraction industry connect the CGL flashpoint to other Indigenous struggles against settler-colonial theft of land.

Flashpoints as a framework have the potential to reveal the hegemonic function of the media and elected governments within the integral state, making spaces of hegemonic struggle visible. Shaw (2021) highlights how flashpoints can expose the tentacular power of the fossil fuel industry. In the case of Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX), it was the government, and not the fossil fuel industry, who were the vocal advocates for the pipeline project (Shaw, 2021). Moreover, these resistances become visible and are often a spotlight in Canadian media, although frequently misrepresented by mainstream media (Hume & Walby, 2021; Shaw, 2021). Shaw revealed patterns within the media, primarily favouring industry perspectives, the economic benefits of the pipeline, and positioning Indigenous resistance against economic prosperity for Canadians. The media upheld the banal pattern of portraying Indigenous communities as divided narrowing on the differing views between band councils and hereditary chiefs (Shaw 2021). The media's fracturing of the Indigenous community's voices legitimizes the expansion of the pipeline project while failing to interrogate the colonially imposed poverty

in many Indigenous communities that places Indigenous peoples in a difficult position (Atleo, 2021). Another prevalent theme within the media's representation of TMX parochially reduced Indigenous resistance to pipelines and environmental concerns (Shaw 2021), which removes Indigenous sovereignty and rights from the discussion. These themes within the media ensure that "conversations remained siloed" (Shaw, 2021, p.405), maintaining a homogeneous voice within legacy media (Briziarelli & Islam, 2024).

Shaw's (2021) research exposes the function of elected governments within fossil hegemony, as it was the Premier of Alberta, Rachel Notley, and Justin Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister, who both publicly insisted on the construction of the TMX pipeline. Elected governments, as leaders in the integral state, are part of the hegemonic project and can garner consent from civil society for state and corporate projects (Fonseca 2024). Shaw (2021) reveals that support of elected governments allowed Kinder Morgan, who was building the pipeline, to stay out of the debate, apparently on the sidelines. This flashpoint revealed it was the media and elected governments advocating for fossil; thus, we can see how Kinder Morgan was able to be absent from debates. Shaw's (2021) use of flashpoints critically reveals the capture of media and government for fossil capital. It is at flashpoints that the power of the fossil fuel industry can be revealed, through media and other sources. TC Energy holds considerable power as part of the regime of obstruction, and this project examines how that power can be revealed during the CGL flashpoint.

Flashpoints occur when the fossil fuel industry is confronted by resistance, and the repressive arm of the state is deployed. Canadian history has been characterized by coercive actions, such as by the RCMP, to ensure the reproduction of the state and capital. This project examines the duality of persuasion and coercion. While the state engages in many hegemonic

practices to ensure the continuation of fossil capital, when this fails, as on Wet'suwet'en territory, the RCMP assumes the role of the repressive arm of the state. This provides an opportunity to look at the role of the media within the state apparatus, the RCMP's strategic control of press releases, and how they impact potentially counter-hegemonic movements. Moreover, the RCMP's relation with media and press releases is part of the hegemonic project, which ideologically legitimizes or obscures the RCMP's repressive actions.

Gaps in the Literature

The power of fossil capital in Canada has been extensively mapped out; however, the intersections between critical infrastructure surveillance and the regime of obstruction require further exploration. Critical infrastructure projects precipitate a mobilization of state forces, whose collaboration ensures critical infrastructure projects can continue unimpeded. The repressive arm of the state, particularly the RCMP, is deployed to restore order to the infrastructure project, as Indigenous assertion of sovereignty often comes up against industry projects. The state is not passive but rather a capitalist state that shares the same desired outcome for fossil fuel projects, given the power of the fossil fuel industry (fossil capital) within Canada and its highly organized and cohesive methods to organize consent for the fossil fuel industry as a whole. Given the power of both systems, understanding the under-researched relationship between them, especially within the context of reconciliation and the climate crisis is paramount. The active role of the RCMP in both surveillance and enforcement of injunctions requires further scrutiny, especially since they are accused as functioning of a security force for private companies. While the relationship between the RCMP and fossil fuel industry has been researched, the scope of the relationship between the two requires further examination. C-IRG,

the active RCMP group designed for CIP, remains an under-researched area with little information on the division's role, operations, and internal configurations. The function of C-IRG within CIP and the fossil fuel industry, particularly C-IRG's relationship with a key fossil fuel member, TC Energy, is a critical focus for this research paper. During the CGL flashpoint, C-IRG and its repressive actions were made visible, disrupting the benevolent Mountie myth and causing the RCMP to react and restore its hegemonic image. This thesis unpacks C-IRG (now CRU-BC) and the role this group performed during the CGL flashpoint.

Chapter 3: Methods

Purpose and Research Questions

The task at hand for this research project is to elucidate the overlooked intersections between the RCMP, critical infrastructure surveillance, and the regime of obstruction. To fully appreciate this web of cooperation, multiple Freedom of Information (FOI)/Access to Information (ATI) documents were requested involving correspondence between the Royal Mounted Canadian Police (RCMP), Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Canadian Energy Regulator (CER), Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), TC Energy, and local governments around each injunction event. As well, the RCMP were requested to provide briefings, occurrence reports, presentations, advisories, reviews, presentation slides, bulletins, and risk and threat assessments that discuss the Wet'suwet'en blockades between October 1, 2018, and February 1, 2022. The following research questions guided my project; however, the chapters were organized during the coding process, in which emerging themes were grouped together. In support of identifying the nexus points between CGL, critical infrastructure surveillance, the regime of obstruction, and the RCMP, my research questions, supported by sub-questions, are:

- 1) *How is critical infrastructure surveillance organized, and what roles do the RCMP, and fossil fuel industry occupy within it?*
 - a) *What does the communication between RCMP, C-IRG, CSIS, and TC Energy reveal about the structure of critical infrastructure protection?*
 - b) *Does the discourse reveal power relations, especially around injunction enforcements?*

- 2) *How are critical infrastructure surveillance and the regime of obstruction interconnected?*
 - a) *How is the discourse structured between TC Energy and the RCMP?*
 - b) *In the time frame around injunction enforcements, what does text or discourse between the RCMP and CAPP, and/or between TC Energy reveal about the integral state?*

- 3) *What underlying ideological assumptions organize the RCMP ATI documents?*
 - a) *How is the text structured?*
 - b) *What grammar or vocabulary is frequently use?*
 - c) *Does the text reflect power relations?*

- 4) *To explore the strategic use of discourse by the RCMP, I will compare official public documents with internal RCMP communications. With this in mind, I question how critical infrastructure surveillance and protection discourses are structured within internal RCMP communications, and what the differences from official public documents reveal about the RCMP as an institution?*
 - a) *What are the differences in text and tone between official public documents and internal RCMP communication?*
 - b) *What are the differences between media reports and RCMP internal communications?*
 - c) *What are the differences between RCMP media documents and reports from outside mainstream media?*

Methodology

Critical discourse analysis is the guiding methodology for this project, falling under the umbrella of a qualitative, critical paradigm. Critical research involves three main criteria: an *oppositional* stance to oppression, domination, and power structures; a *radical* analysis to reveal and connect previously unconnected problems; and a *subversion* of normative, hegemonic assumptions and identities (Carroll, 2004). In support of achieving the three objectives of critical research, CDA methodology involves an evaluative analysis of structures, discourse, and institutions that maintain unequal power relations. Importantly, through critical research oppression is connected to structures of power with the intention of disrupting unequal power relations.

Sample and Data Collection

For this research project, I draw on FOI/ATI documents through purposeful sampling, which permits a disclosure of information I could not otherwise gain access to, such as internal reports and communication between governments and police (Walby & Luscombe, 2021). By using FOI/ATI documents, I am able to move beyond official documents and press releases and access an internal view of the organization (Walby & Larsen, 2011; Walby & Luscombe, 2015). For example, researching police practices with FOI/ATI requests allows me to analyze “actual police practices in their own operational and everyday language” (Walby & Luscombe, 2015, p.488). FOI/ATI documents, such as intelligence reports, can reveal the underlying assumptions that inform police risk assessments (Monaghan & Walby, 2017; Walby & Luscombe, 2015; Walby & Luscombe, 2017). Adhering to the radical and subversive objectives of critical methodology, FOI/ATI research “can allow scholars to produce data about government activities

and collectively disrupt government discourses, policies, and practices that they find alarming” (Walby & Larsen, 2011, p.32). FOI/ATI research can reverse the gaze back on policing agencies, inverting surveillance from the bottom up (Walby & Larsen, 2011). This reversal can be a subversion of power and surveillance that can produce a unique data set through revealing once concealed intelligence data.

Walby and Luscombe (2019) outline the five steps for FOI/ATI requests. The first is to identify the agency and request. Because I was faced with a high likelihood of receiving heavily redacted FOI/ATI requests, I requested FOI/ATI from the RCMP, CSIS, NRCan, local governments, and CER to aid in the “mosaic effect,” whereby multiple FOI/ATI requests from different agencies can create a clearer understanding than a request from one agency (Walby & Luscombe, 2019, p.158). I requested email correspondence, briefing notes, and updates from the RCMP (Division E, RCMP Head Quarters (HQ), C-IRG), CSIS, and CER. The requests included communication between each organization, and each organizations’ communication with TC Energy concerning the CGL pipeline spanning three months prior and after each injunction enforcement. Each enforcement period was submitted separately to each organization. Therefore, I requested October 1, 2018- April 1, 2019, for the January 7, 2019, injunction enforcement; November 1, 2019-May 1, 2020, for the February 5-10, 2020, injunction enforcements; and August 1, 2021- February 1, 2022, for the November 18 and 19, 2021injunction enforcement. The reasoning behind the broad data request was to ensure a sufficient number of documents were released, as redactions were a very real possibility. Fortunately, for this project, there were very few redactions in the documents received.

The second step in FOI/ATI requests is the submission of the request electronically (Walby & Luscombe, 2019). I have done this through requesting previously requested FOI/ATI

documents from the federal and provincial government's website, which are all publicly available (see British Columbia, n.d; Government of Canada, 2023), and through submitting my own requests. Third, the requested institution's FOI/ATI administrator may reach out for contact and may include a brokering of information between the agency and the researcher. This step is a space of negotiation and should not be overlooked. Here, I engaged in multiple emails with FOI/ATI administrators in attempts to access more files and information. While CSIS, NRCan, and CER did not reach out during this step, the RCMP ATI administrators did contact me for questions and clarification for multiple requests. During this step, the municipality of Houston's FOI administrator, who initially was responsive to my request and promised a release date for the FOI files in November 2023, failed to respond to my multiple follow up emails when this deadline passed. My communication attempts met a dead-end in 2024, and no documents were released from Houston. Fourth, the FOI/ATI information is released with a disclaimer of redactions or omissions. FOI/ATI requests can be challenging to predict regarding redactions and the number of files received (Knox et al., 2019). However, I obtained ample data for analysis for this project, indebted to already existing FOI/ATI submissions.

I submitted 43 original ATI/FOI requests, and I have received eight responses with information, 26 responses without information, and 9 still pending from the RCMP. Some were submitted in May 2023, a year prior to the time of writing this, demonstrating the RCMP's long delays in fulfilling ATI requests. The requests to CER produced no information, and similarly with the municipality of Houston. From my own ATI/FOI requests, I have received 236 pages of documents, and over 900 pages of ATI files from previous requests. While this number of pages is quite high, it should be noted that many pages are repeats and blank. Lastly, while I submitted nine ATI requests to CSIS, they did not release any information and stated that they cannot

confirm or deny the existence of my requests. However, I did receive 247 pages from a previously released CSIS ATI document relevant to my project.

Lastly, if necessary, there is an appeal process, which I did not pursue due to time restraints with a MA thesis. During analysis, I triangulated my data with existing literature from newspapers, official press releases, and academic articles detailing RCMP actions within this time frame. While there is an unpredictable element with FOI/ATI research, for this research project it proved to be a fruitful and effective method to reveal new information.

Critical Discourse Analysis Methods

Language “is an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life” (Fairclough, 2003, p.3). Interconnected, discourse affects social identities, social relations, and knowledge; discourse is part of hegemony, reproducing hegemonic norms (Fairclough, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA), goes beyond the text, dialectically connecting structures of power and oppression with text within specific contexts. In order to go beyond the text, Fairclough's CDA involves a three-dimensional model, which includes an analysis of *the text* (micro-analysis), *discursive practices* (meso-analysis), and *social practices* (macro-analysis) (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Ravn et al., 2016).

Text analysis focuses on grammar, language, underlying assumptions within the text, and the order of discourse (Ravn et al., 2016). The latter, the order of discourse, accounts for how discourse practices are produced, consumed, and reproduced in certain ways within a specific landscape, which connects text analysis to discursive practices (Fairclough, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Within text analysis, it is fundamental to uncover which discourses are privileged

(Janks, 1997). Looking at which discourses are favoured can simultaneously reveal which discourses are made invisible. For that reason, this thesis devotes attention towards the privileging of fossil fuel voices that can obscure dissenting voices to the CGL project. Text analysis is the first step in Fairclough's CDA; the second step of discursive practices cohesively connects the former with the last level, the analysis of social practices (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). *Discursive practice* analysis looks at the production of discourse, within institutions, structures, and situations, with a focus on how the discourse is engaged and consumed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Ravn et al., 2016). Lastly, the *social practice* level analyzes discourse and social practices connecting them within the context and culture that produced the discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Ravn et al., 2016). It is important to situate the discourse within a certain spatiotemporality to understand the context (Janks, 1997). The three-dimensional analysis is a dialectical method to connect text to structures and social practices, connecting discourse to specific power relations and structures of power.

Following Fairclough's model, I undertook three main steps in my CDA to understand how fossil capital ideologies are produced and consumed through RCMP communications as a social relation under settler capitalism. First, the texts were read thoroughly twice to familiarize myself with the documents. This step cannot be understated as the FOI/ATI documents are a melange of disjointed texts. In this step I removed documents that were not relevant and analyzed the retained ones using NVivo software. As NVivo does not include Optical Character Recognition (OCR) capabilities, I first used Adobe Acrobat to convert all the scanned FOI/ATI documents into searchable PDFs. Then, the newly searchable PDFs were uploaded into NVivo. Within this step, the data was coded to identify emerging themes, making sure to include the perspectives where they originate within the FOI/ATI files (see Fairclough, 2003). The coding

process was guided by the research questions; however, the codes were assembled by emerging themes that linked the codes together. This method of organizing the codes was more intuitive and allowed the project to reflect the data. Attention was given to vocabulary, grammar, and the structure of the texts within each specific document, focusing on statements, assumptions, and norms (Ravn et al., 2016). I looked for underlying ideological assumptions, and norms found within RCMP communication and how they are replicated through the text, from what is said and implied concerning critical infrastructure protection (see Fairclough, 2003), such as looking for concealed and reproduced fossil capital ideology within RCMP discourse. The analysis between themes and data was an open, iterative process, that involved an overlapping and simultaneous action of both analysis and critique (Fairclough, 2003; Janks, 1997).

The second step was the *discursive practices* level, which examines how the texts are produced and engaged by the RCMP, looking at how the text guides and organizes RCMP actions. This step looked at how the texts shape social practices, and for this project, how the RCMP produce discourse for internal consumption, for TC Energy, state organizations, as well as for the intended audience reached through legacy media. This step was also involved in the analysis of the fossil fuel industry's use of opinion pieces, as they intended to educate and persuade Canadian readers. Lastly, I connected the discourse to *social practices* and how discourse within the text is produced within social contexts and specific cultures (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002) such as CIP, Wet'suwet'en resistance, and settler capitalism. I analyzed how police intelligence files use specific language, how discourse is reproduced internally, and connected the text within the context of fossil capitalism, settler colonialism, and CIP. Initially, I used the FOI/ATI reports, following up with literature, media, official documents, and press releases to fill in the missing gaps (see Janks, 1997). The FOI/ATI reports were analyzed

alongside media reports and academic articles that situate the internal communication with outside events, such as RCMP enforcement on Wet'suwet'en territory.

For this project, I relied on Fairclough's three-dimensional analysis to link text with institutions, context, and outside culture. Specifically, I focused on the first two steps, focusing on the textual and discursive practices, how underlying assumptions are found with FOI/ATI requests, how those texts are produced and consumed by the RCMP, and how underlying norms organized the RCMP. The employment of CDA was useful in revealing the underlying ideologies of the RCMP, such as the themes of neutrality, impartiality, and cultural sensitivity that all reinforce the benevolent Mountie myth, as well as the prevalent military themes within C-IRG's documents. The focus on language and unpacking who produced the discourse and who was the intended consumer required a close reading of the documents while revealing power relations, such as between the RCMP and TC Energy, and the shifting of language and tone during communication before the 2021 injunction enforcement. For this project, I requested briefing notes from the RCMP, which proved to be useful in understanding aspects of the RCMP's surveillance of land defenders. However, these documents were difficult to analyze with CDA due to the neutral and impassive text. If time permits, a content or thematic analysis of the documents could further provide insight into the neutral texts.

Chapter 4: Critical Infrastructure Protection

The main concern of critical infrastructure protection (CIP) is to deter or predict a *crime* before it occurs, often through routine surveillance (Monaghan & Walby, 2016). This prediction relies on coordinated efforts between different policing organizations including the RCMP and CSIS, unified with the function of allowing critical infrastructure projects to proceed unimpeded. The existing literature has demonstrated the involvement of private industry within the security apparatus and CSIS, a relationship that began in 2007 (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). The fossil fuel industry and allies, such as CAPP, become policing partners, notably bolstered by private ownership of most critical infrastructure (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). Consequently, resistance to critical infrastructure projects is acceptable as long as construction is not obstructed (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018) and does not disrupt the circuitry of capital for critical infrastructure projects (Pasternak & Dafnos, 2018). When Indigenous peoples in Canada and on Wet'suwet'en territory refused to be passive to industry and chose to assert their sovereignty, they became an obstacle in the circuit of capital (Pasternak & Dafnos, 2018). It is at this intersection, at which Indigenous sovereignty and industry collide, that the CIP apparatuses' employment of racializing surveillance (see Browne, 2015), risk assessments, and criminalizing Indigenous dissent becomes transparent.

This chapter focuses on answering research questions one and two, which ask: 1) *How is critical infrastructure surveillance organized, and what roles do the RCMP and fossil fuel industry perform within it?* 2) *How are critical infrastructure surveillance and the regime of obstruction interconnected?* In this chapter I outline how Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG), as the dominant policing force for CIP in BC, performed both a hegemonic and repressive function, how TC Energy engaged in an active and persuasive role, attempting to

convince C-IRG to enforce the injunction. While often invisible and operating in a legal grey zone, the level and scope of C-IRG surveillance towards land defenders were used to support the actions of C-IRG. The invisible transgression of laws through surveillance informed the repressive actions of C-IRG, witnessed in each injunction enforcement. This chapter first explores the CSIS's lack of transparency, the function of C-IRG within CIP, C-IRG's shift away from enforcement to favour more surveillance practices, and how TC Energy's hired private security forcefully attempted to persuade the RCMP to enforce the injunction.

Methods and Analysis

Coding the interconnected web of CIP involved organizing the released data into broad codes to better understand the available information on each organization and then proceeding to narrow the codes, with a strong focus on discourse. During the coding process, documents that involved critical infrastructure protection were coded with a parent code of CIP and further refined with sub-codes. For example, one CIP subcode was a code of C-IRG, which was further divided into subcodes of Gold, Silver, Bronze, and other C-IRG. The codes that concerned the hierarchy of C-IRG are more thematic; however, the analysis moves beyond the organization of C-IRG, with further attention directed towards to the language found within C-IRG's communication. Within the released Freedom of Information (FOI) Access to Information (ATI) documents, C-IRG's use of military language was a recurrent theme throughout the released documents and became another code under C-IRG. The communication between C-IRG and CSIS, the government, and private industry was coded with a focus on the tone of communication, particularly between TC Energy and the RCMP. While some documents were difficult to analyze, specifically briefing notes, as they lacked emotion, the emails between C-

IRG and TC Energy were particularly useful, notably the visible and changing tone between the two organizations. Within the released FOI/ATI documents, the emerging themes of the RCMP's role and function were coded and consolidated into overarching themes. All mentions of surveillance were coded by type (such as daily patrols, briefing notes, year, images), both by policing organizations and private security, and linked to external literature and investigative reports. All the codes were then analyzed and compared against existing literature and news articles to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the web of CIP, as well as the function and role of the RCMP, CSIS, and TC Energy.

As Walby and Larsen (2011) illuminate, the FOI/ATI documents often do not provide a complete picture and should be triangulated with outside data. The incompleteness is noticeable due to the lack of documents released by CSIS and, at times, the RCMP. In order to fill in the missing information, I relied upon existing literature and investigative reports to provide context, which further connected patterns within the FOI/ATI files to structures of power and oppression, particularly settler colonialism and fossil capital. Triangulation with other outside sources connects the text to specific contexts (Janks, 1997; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002), specifically settler-colonial power relations and fossil capital during the CGL flashpoint.

Canadian Security Intelligence Service

The collaboration between CSIS and the RCMP under the umbrella of CIP has been well documented, especially with respect to risk assessments of Indigenous resurgence against extractive projects (Crosby, 2021; Dafnos, 2020; Howe & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2017). This chapter attempted to examine the function of CSIS and its relationship with

the C-IRG within CIP during the CGL pipeline project. Of particular interest is that many high-level CSIS members come from the RCMP or Canadian military (Mukbil, 2023).

My requests for communications between CSIS and the RCMP during each injunction period were phrased as follows:

Copy of all email correspondence between CSIS and the RCMP (both E Division and National HQ) concerning the Wet'suwet'en protests, blockades, construction disruptions, infrastructure disruptions, or injunction enforcements in and around the Morice River Bridge or areas accessed by the Morice West Forest Service Road from October 1, 2018, to April 1, 2019.

Similarly, I requested the RCMP's and CSIS's communications with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) during each injunction enforcement period using the following language:

Copy of all email correspondence between RCMP (both E Division and National HQ) and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) that discuss the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) Pipeline Project and/or Indigenous protests and blockades in response to the CGL pipeline project from August 1, 2021, to February 1, 2022.

Copy of all email correspondence between CSIS and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) that discuss the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) Pipeline Project and/or Indigenous protests and blockades in response to the CGL pipeline project from October 1, 2018, to April 1, 2019.

I received the following standardized response from CSIS and the RCMP of:

Pursuant to subsection 10(2) of the Act, we neither confirm nor deny that the records you requested exist. We are, however, advising you, as required by paragraph 10(1)(b) of the

Act, that such records, if they existed, could reasonably be expected to be exempted under one or more of sections 15(1) (as it relates to the efforts of Canada towards detecting, preventing or suppressing subversive or hostile activities), 16(1)(a) or (c) of the Act.⁵

All my other requests to CSIS that sought communication between CSIS and RCMP received the same response, or the response stating that no records were found.⁶ Policing agencies' refusal to release information is a significant issue with ATI research, especially when the ATI requests involve issues of national security. Particularly because the policing organization controls the ATI process, deciding which requests will be fulfilled or denied (Luscombe & Walby, 2015). For this thesis project, both CSIS and the RCMP flagged my requests as exempt, with little recourse available to the researcher.

While the denial of requests from CSIS does not provide sufficient data for analysis of practices within CIP, it does provide two significant insights. The first signals an evident lack of transparency within CSIS, especially with CSIS's involvement in the surveillance of the Wet'suwet'en resistance. In an autobiographical book about her time at CSIS, Huda Mukbil (2023) identifies CSIS' lack of transparency and systemic racism as significant grievances that plague the organization. While the security organizations failed to disclose the communication, CSIS's (and the RCMP's) response does insinuate that there was communication between CSIS, the RCMP, and CAPP. The partnership between CSIS and CAPP, which is protected by the refusal to release information, underscores the lack of transparency in Canada's security and intelligence organizations and the partisanship of CIP towards the fossil fuel industry. While the responses I received cannot be conclusive, the refusal of the request alludes to partnership between the

⁵ Access request#117-2023-115, p.1

⁶ Access Request # 117-2023-111; Access Request # 117-2023-113; Access Request # 117-2023-114

RCMP and CSIS, and both organizations' collaboration with CAPP, which organizes on behalf of the fossil fuel industry, including TC Energy and the CGL pipeline project.

The second insight comes from the text which states that my ATI request was exempt because it involves “detecting, preventing or suppressing subversive or hostile activities.” While CSIS was reluctant to disclose any information, they did reveal that the Wet’suwet’en resistance was considered as a subversive or hostile activity and a *threat* to national security. In the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act, four definitions outline national security threats, with the third definition likely the rationale for CSIS attention for the CGL project, namely “activities within or relating to Canada directed toward or in support of the threat or use of acts of serious violence against persons or property for the purpose of achieving a political, religious or ideological objective within Canada” (Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act, RSC c. C-23, 1985, p.3). The Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act stipulates that protests are excluded from national security threats unless they involve one of the four definitions. Therefore, *violence* against property with a political agenda, which could be Indigenous peoples asserting their sovereignty, can be considered a threat to Canadian security. Thus, in response to militant environmental or Indigenous resistance to industry (private property) CSIS is entitled to monitor the dissent. While CSIS’s refusal to honour my requests did not provide conclusive data, it does highlight the potential of CSIS surveillance on the Wet’suwet’en resistance, the labeling of Indigenous resistance as “subversive or hostile activities,” and the lack of transparency by CSIS within this specific case.

Despite CSIS’s refusal to release information for this thesis project, existing, previously released ATI requests documents reveal that CSIS considered labeling the Wet’suwet’en solidarity blockades of railway infrastructure as an internal terrorist threat (Forester, 2022b).

Within the ATI document used by Forester (2022b), which I obtained through the federal government's ATI website, CSIS highlights how two people in the United States were charged with terrorism for blocking railways in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en.⁷ However, CSIS admits this would likely be interpreted as vandalism under Canadian law.⁸ Of significance is that the CSIS document includes a detailed RCMP account of the Wet'suwet'en resistance, with a brief introduction of the RCMP's injunction enforcement in 2019, and the events that culminated with the RCMP's injunction enforcement in February 2020.⁹ The document indicates that CSIS was monitoring the Wet'suwet'en resistance, which hints at probable communication between the RCMP and CSIS. While this interpretation is not definitive, it suggests that the solidarity blockades of critical infrastructure were considered by CSIS to be labeled as terrorism and that, at the minimum, Indigenous blockades of infrastructure are considered threats to the security apparatus, warranting further surveillance.

Community-Industry Response Group

Predictably, as the RCMP belatedly returned my ATI requests, many of the responses were comparable to those I received from CSIS, as both high-policing agencies control the ATI process and the records they release (Luscombe & Walby, 2015). Similar responses entailed that the RCMP cannot confirm or deny communication records with CSIS, and in many instances, the RCMP stated that no records were found. While the latter may be plausible, I submitted similar requests, which, instead of an outright denial, received a response that they could not "confirm or deny" the existence of the documents. The RCMP's responses align with a finding by Luscombe and Walby (2015). Within RCMP ATI files, the authors found a PowerPoint presentation titled

⁷ Access Request # CIR-2022-734

⁸ Access Request # CIR-2022-734

⁹ Access Request # CIR-2022-734

“HOW CAN YOU AVOID AN ATIP REQUEST?” (2015, p.494). While the authors were unable to draw concrete conclusions with this title, since the contents of the PowerPoint were not revealed, it does imply internal discussions within the RCMP to avoid disclosing its documents. For this project, it is possible that the requested information was delivered over alternative platforms to email, such as WhatsApp, and consequently excluded from my ATI requests. Alternatively, as Luscombe and Walby (2015) found, sensitive information is shared verbally and protected from ATI requests. While many of the RCMP responses can be described as lacking transparency, this project received many ATI documents from the RCMP, with many documents providing fruitful insight, including some around C-IRG’s policing of the CGL project.

While the existing literature (see Chapter Two) on the Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG) in BC has already provided a foundational understanding of C-IRG, the ATI files have contributed further context to the organization of C-IRG and the function of each subdivision. Significantly, C-IRG was expressly formed in anticipation of the two proposed BC natural gas projects, both TMX and CGL.¹⁰ C-IRG’s foundations are entrenched within the securitization of fossil fuel projects through critical infrastructure protection. Concomitantly, C-IRG’s role demands a focus on policing Indigenous dissent, given that there was already robust Indigenous resistance to both projects (Shaw, 2021; Temper & Bliss, 2018). The function of C-IRG, as a settler-colonial police force, is to remove Indigenous dissent, and within this specific spatiotemporality, it is to protect fossil fuel projects. The intended function of C-IRG highlights the force’s propensity toward private fossil fuel projects since C-IRG is a key force in protecting contentious fossil fuel projects.

¹⁰ Access Request # A202004198

C-IRG operates cohesively as a detached unit from the RCMP, highlighting that the specific function of the group is outside of normative RCMP parameters. The hierarchy of C-IRG is organized with three top commands: Gold Command, Silver Command, and Bronze Command.¹¹ Gold Command's role, as the head of C-IRG, is to "provide a dedicated strategic overview of policing preparations relative to protest-related activities."¹² The Gold Commander engages in planning, communications, and strategies for provincial forces to respond to "protest-related activities."¹³ As C-IRG was created to police Indigenous dissent, the protest-related activities involved Indigenous resistance to critical infrastructure projects (Howe & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2017). Already, within the stated function of C-IRG, Indigenous resurgence, and sovereignty, are undermined by reducing them to "protest-related" activities. The discourse of *protest* precipitates the criminalization of land defenders by framing Indigenous resurgence as a potential threat that requires monitoring. While the Gold commander reports to Division E senior management,¹⁴ C-IRG has autonomy and operates as its own unit. C-IRG does not take direction from the National HQ commissioner; rather, C-IRG provides the commissioner with updates to inform different government organizations.¹⁵

Directly under Gold is Silver Command, who executes the strategic plans guided by Gold Command.¹⁶ Silver command creates and submits tactical plans to Gold and oversees the execution of the plans.¹⁷ A key insight is Silver Command's role of intelligence gathering; Silver gathers intelligence separate from Bronze's surveillance, creating a bilateral approach.¹⁸ The

¹¹ Access Request # A202004198

¹² Access Request # A202004198, p.41

¹³ Access Request # A202004198

¹⁴ Access Request # A202004198

¹⁵ Access Request # A202302655

¹⁶ Access Request # A202004198

¹⁷ Access Request # A202004198

¹⁸ Access Request # A202004198

extent of Silver's surveillance practices are not found within the ATI documents, but the documents do reveal aspects of Silver's role and the manifold of C-IRG surveillance. Overall, Gold and Silver direct, strategize, and organize, while Bronze and the subcommands engage in the physical surveillance and enforcement on Wet'suwet'en territory.

The Bronze Command of C-IRG is the visible command on Wet'suwet'en, that executes Gold and Silver's strategic plans.¹⁹ Different sub-commands are subsumed under Bronze, which include intelligence bronze, which is the intelligence gathering operations of C-IRG.²⁰ Although John Brewer, Gold Command for C-IRG, in an interview with The Narwhal, argues, "We don't spy on people" (Simmons, 2022d, n.p), the ATI documents reveal otherwise. While the data does not reveal the extent of the surveillance of Bronze Command, it is evident that this includes surveillance towers²¹ and constant patrols of areas.²² The briefing notes include details of the patrol's surveillance, including vehicles and people present.²³ The released ATI files demonstrate certain aspects of C-IRG's surveillance, including routine surveillance and recording information on land defenders, which is a repressive function to deter dissent.

At the same time, C-IRG exercises both a repressive and ideological function within the state apparatus. The persuasive role of C-IRG is evident within a subcommand of Bronze, the Bronze Division Liaison Team (DLT). The DLT's function is hegemonic, as the role of this division is to persuade Indigenous resistance to allow industry to continue their operations. Before the tactical division enforced the injunction in January 2019, DLT approached the Wet'suwet'en resistance in an attempt to encourage the land defenders to remove the

¹⁹ Access Request # A202004198

²⁰ Access Request # A202004198

²¹ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506

²² Access Request # A202204721

²³ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506

blockades.²⁴ Although DLT is under the command of Bronze, the operations for DLT are strategically laid out by Gold.²⁵ While DLT is obliged to engage with both Indigenous groups and industry, utilizing their “extensive training in relationship building, establishing trust and nurturing respect,”²⁶ this engagement is one-sided. The released documents revealed that DLT is predisposed to focus on the land defenders²⁷ The burden of compromise was placed solely on the Wet'suwet'en land defenders, as DLT neglected to persuade TC Energy to make similar concessions, such as adjusting the pipeline route or to negotiate with the land defenders. In accordance with their ideological function, the DLT are portrayed as an impartial division of the RCMP that attempts to avoid violence. However, “avoiding violence,” in practice, translates to C-IRG attempting to persuade Indigenous resistance to allow the industry to proceed. When DLT’s persuasive approach failed, it was buttressed by coercion (see Gramsci, 1971), visible with the deployment of the Tactical Troop (TAC) operations.

The overt coercive factions in C-IRG were apparent with both TAC, in paramilitary uniforms with tactical weapons, supported by the LMD ERT (Lower Mainland Emergency Response Team). The militarized appearance and actions of TAC, alongside the history and current actions of the RCMP, all reinforce that C-IRG operates as a militarized police force, with tactical units and weapons. C-IRG’s militarization aligns with an increasing trend of militarization of police forces that is becoming normalized and sets a dangerous precedent for policing Indigenous dissent (Samuels-Wortley, 2024). However, refuting this in an interview with The Narwhal, John Brewer argued:

²⁴ Access Request # A202004198

²⁵ Access Request # A202001400

²⁶ Access Request # A202004198, p.17

²⁷ Access Request # A202001400; Access Request # A202004198; Access Request # A202302700

we're not militarized whatsoever. That green uniform the emergency response team uses, it's been adopted in most tactical units in policing because it blends in: night, day, urban, rural. It's just a uniform, it's not camouflage (Simmons, 2022d, n.p).

While Brewer used the media to deflect the conversation towards the colour of C-IRG's uniform, the colour of the uniform is not the issue. Rather it is C-IRG's tactical weapons, technology, and violence that was witnessed during the injunction enforcements. C-IRG's actions during the injunction enforcements alone commit them as a military group, especially with TAC and LMD ERT. In 2019, it was TAC who climbed the Gidimt'en barrier and arrested land defenders under the lethal overwatch of LMD ERT,²⁸ who had the authorization to shoot to kill if they thought it necessary (Hume & Walby, 2021). When C-IRG raided the Unist'ot'en camp in 2020, the ERT had their rifles drawn on peaceful land defenders, many of them Wet'suwet'en matriarchs, which attracted the attention of many media outlets (Yoshida-Butryn, 2020). The RCMP and C-IRG were conscious of this, and in what appear to be media notes within ATI files, the RCMP defended the actions: "The ERT member deployed during enforcement was tasked with providing overwatch and was using the rifle scope as a magnified observation device in a manner consistent with police training."²⁹

While this may have aligned with police training, it also demonstrated how C-IRG members are prepared to shoot land defenders through lethal overwatch when the land defender's actions cross the threshold of presenting too big of a risk. The RCMP has, within its ranks, embedded biases, including systemic racism (Public Safety Canada, 2021; Simmons, 2023), and a considerable history of violence against Indigenous peoples (Brown & Brown, 1973; Lajtman, 2020). When the RCMP assesses risks, it is likely informed through racializing

²⁸ Access Request # A202004198

²⁹ Access Request # A202001400, p.136

surveillance (see Browne, 2015), as systemic racism is embedded within the institution.

Consequently, Indigenous dissent, through a settler-colonial state of exception, was reduced to bare life and subjected to lethal overwatch. The RCMP/CIRG's assessment of risks "reify boundaries along racial lines, and, in so doing, it reifies race" (Browne, 2015, p.16). Indigenous peoples are constructed as a threat through this surveillance (Howe & Monaghan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2017), and this leads to different outcomes, such as lethal overwatch and criminalization. These outcomes are intensified by C-IRG's militarized approach that relies on rifles and tactical gear to remove peaceful land defenders.

Beyond C-IRG's actions, the language in the ATI documents reveal underlying militarized assumptions within C-IRG. In particular was C-IRG'S use of *theatre* to describe specific locations and operations,³⁰ which is standard military language. In addition, C-IRG referred to detained land defenders as *prisoners*,³¹ implying the guilt of land defenders and drawing on the military concept of a prisoner of war. Similarly, C-IRG referred to the transport van as a "prisoner van,"³² once more assigning culpability with a militarized discourse. Lastly, at the end of C-IRG's CGL injunction enforcement document is image of George S. Patton, a US military figure, with a quote of "If everybody is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking."³³ The use of military language and a militarized figure signals an underlying military morality within C-IRG, only further supported by C-IRG's tactical actions.

Investigative journalists have also revealed a military connection between C-IRG and CGL. C-IRG's invasions of Wet'suwet'en territory were under the command of John Brewer, Gold Commander at the time. During the invasion of Afghanistan, Brewer was the senior policy

³⁰ Access Request # A202004198, p.11, 17; Access Request # A202302673, p.25, 34, 52

³¹ Access Request # A202001400, p.113, 115, 131, 144, 204

³² Access Request # A202001400, p.146, 154

³³ Access Request # A201904658

advisor for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Coles, 2023). Brewer's superior at the time, David Petraeus, was a commander in both Iraq and Afghanistan and worked as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director during the war on terror (Coles, 2023; KKR, 2024). Petraeus, in his later role as head of Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts & Co (KKR), purchased a 65% equity interest in the CGL pipeline in 2019 (Coles, 2023). While this alone does not provide insight into the relationship between KKR and C-IRG, it does reveal that both organizations are led by ex-military men, acquainted with the strategic dynamics of military invasion, with the head of an asset manager that now holds controlling interest in CGL happening to have been a past superior to the head of C-IRG.

This section has demonstrated the repressive role played by C-IRG during the CGL injunction enforcements. While C-IRG, through the DLT, attempted to persuade Indigenous dissent to allow construction to continue, the pervasive shadow of RCMP repression guaranteed the project could resume unimpeded. This repression was evident during C-IRG's militarized injunction enforcement. The militarized approach was further reflected within internal C-IRG discourse, demonstrating an underlying militarized ideology.

C-IRG and Critical Infrastructure Surveillance

The scope of the RCMP surveillance on Wet'suwet'en land defenders was extensive, with the RCMP dedicated to routine, often overt, intelligence gathering on the territory. The existing literature has demonstrated that the RCMP engage in pre-emptive surveillance for critical infrastructure projects (Burdon, 2020; Crosby & Monagan, 2018; Monaghan & Walby, 2016; Wood, 2014). Within the released ATI documents, pre-emptive, overt surveillance is evidenced through overt patrols carried out by C-IRG on Wet'suwet'en territory with daily

briefing notes provided by the Bronze commander to Gold Commander and other RCMP members, extending to the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP).³⁴ The briefing notes detailed patrol observations, including vehicles, specific people present, land defender numbers at camp, and actions of land defenders. On one briefing note, photos of felled trees taken by CGL security were included, indicating shared intelligence between corporate security and the RCMP³⁵ (Coastal Gaslink, 2021). The bifold surveillance conducted on land defenders blurred the lines between private and public, while conjointly effecting an extensive patrol of the land defenders. The overt surveillance from C-IRG and private security functioned as a physical deterrent to dissent, while the intelligence gathered abetted boundaries of acceptable resistance. The surveillance on Wet'suwet'en territory was constant and palpable, with routine patrols,³⁶ drone surveillance, body-worn cameras, and helicopter surveillance.³⁷

In addition to the overt patrols, the RCMP, along with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, used the Real Time Intelligence Centre (RTIC) to monitor “emerging issues” such as threats to critical infrastructure or “protest-related activities.”³⁸ The RTIC is an intelligence center in Surrey, BC that produces risk assessments through 911 calls, social media, and news reports³⁹ (Vasylchuk, 2019). Intelligence is centralized through the RTIC, with information then relayed to RCMP members in the field (Procurier, 2014; Vasylchuk, 2019). The RTIC shares information between the RCMP, Canada Border Services, and Correctional Service Canada (Vasylchuk, 2019). The extent to which organizations made use of RTIC is

³⁴ Access Request # A202302673

³⁵ Access Request # A202302673

³⁶ Access Request # A-2019-09180; A202001400; Access Request # A202302675; Access Request # PSS-2022-21506; Access Request # A202204721; Access Request # A202204718; Access Request # A202204721

³⁷ Access Request # A-2019-09180

³⁸ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506, p.122; Access Request # A202001400; Access Request # A202004198, p.66

³⁹ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506

unknown, but C-IRG and the RCMP utilized the center to monitor resistance to critical infrastructure.

Surveillance informed RCMP actions; indeed, an ATI document revealed that the RCMP shifted their approach to favour increased surveillance instead of overt force in policing dissent to extractive projects. In an RCMP briefing to Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) on CGL, the RCMP stated,

The RCMP's approach in responding to protests has evolved significantly. We are moving away from enforcement-focused policing toward a measured and intelligence-led approach using community conflict management principles.⁴⁰

The new intelligence-led approach has two functions; first, surveillance can evade the rule of law or operate as "lawful illegality" (Austin, 2015, p.297). While the RCMP must observe the rule of law for the injunction process, surveillance assumes a grey area of legality. Consequently, while private and state collaboration is typically regulated, the obfuscation of the law is particularly prevalent with national security concerns, since surveillance operates more as an exception (Austin, 2015). Indeed, surveillance operates under a state of exception (Agamben, 1998), in which, as Poulantzas (1980) highlights, the state can transgress the laws it enacts.

Consequently, the RCMP can circumnavigate laws by pursuing further surveillance, removing the force from the bounds of judiciary processes present with enforcement-focused policing. The RCMP's new focus on surveillance sanctions further risk assessments, criminalization of land defenders, and sharing of intelligence among the security apparatus for critical infrastructure

⁴⁰ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.127

protection. Risk assessments inform the RCMP's actions,⁴¹ and have the potential to result in greater police repression during injunction enforcements. The increase in surveillance continues the historic function of the RCMP, which is to protect resource extraction. While Canada is engaged in *reconciliation*, a preference for surveillance ensures secrecy for RCMP, who can preemptively create risk assessments of *criminal activity* that advantage the pipeline project. Surveillance allows the RCMP to covertly transgress laws, allowing the force to appear less repressive and more persuasive in managing pipeline conflicts.

At the same time, the increased surveillance was overt to land defenders and people on the territory. The new focus of surveillance aligns with a repressive function of using surveillance as an overt deterrence, which can produce the "chilling effect," which suppresses political and social activities because fear of criminalization or punishment (Robertson et al., 2020). The chilling effect is a persuasive and repressive function of surveillance, because it persuades potential opponents to desist from resistance activities, enabling the pipeline project to continue without direct repression. While social and political activities are legal, surveillance provides data to authorities to criminalizes marginalized and racialized groups, such as Indigenous land defenders (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Dafnos, 2020). The increase in surveillance by C-IRG could be used to further criminalize and intimidate the Wet'suwet'en. Surveillance is never neutral, and the new focus entrenches a new precedent for land defense. The shift of RCMP/C-IRG practices is highly concerning in view of of the proposed pipeline, Prince Rupert Transmission Project, recently sold by TC Energy to Nisga'a Nation and Western LNG (TC Energy, 2024c), that trespasses through Gitxsan territory in Northern BC. In addition

⁴¹ Access Request # A-2022-00092

to the Prince Rupert Transmission Project, another new pipeline project is the Ksi Lisims LNG, is slated for Nisga'a territory (Ksi Lisims LNG, n.d), similarly in Northern BC. The new TC Energy project is opposed by many Gitksan (Patterson, 2014). The opposition to the project will likely experience similar RCMP actions witnessed during the policing of the Wet'suwet'en resistance, such as increased surveillance on the territory and criminalization of land defenders.

Private Security for the Fossil Fuel Industry?

An already highlighted concern within the existing literature is that the RCMP functions as security for private industry (Monaghan & Walby, 2016). Within the released ATI document, *After Action Review* of the January 2019 invasion of Gidimt'en camp, the RCMP stipulates that “the RCMP will not act, or be seen to act, as a dedicated security contingent for industry during lawful and peaceful demonstrations.”⁴² Nonetheless, land defenders witnessed CGL workers providing directions to C-IRG, “the RCMP [...] take direction from Coastal GasLink workers [...] Their relationship is so close and intertwined that it's hard to distinguish roles” (Simmons, 2022a, n.p).

Despite C-IRG discountenance to appear in collaboration with private industry, the RCMP are permitted to disclose information with industry and security they consider a risk to safety. The assumed risk permits a blurring of the private and public boundaries.

Communications with industry to share information on construction activity or security and safety concerns is appropriate to ensuring operational awareness and planning in support of public safety. Similar communications with other stakeholders is [*sic*] also appropriate for this purpose.⁴³

⁴² Access Request # A202004198, p.58

⁴³ Access Request # A202004198, p.44

Public safety discourse obfuscates the boundaries between state and industry boundaries, as threats to the pipeline were a collective mobilization for infrastructure protection. An assumed risk effectuates a suspension of laws and regulations sanctioning an open channel for communication, further augmented by surveillance's legal grey zone, enabling the security apparatus to share information that would otherwise be impermissible. The discourse of risk and safety is one pathway whereby industry can become absorbed into the security apparatus, as an active participant within critical infrastructure protection.

The overt presence of C-IRG members on Wet'suwet'en territory, for public safety, operates with the same function as security, to prevent any damage to private property and to dissuade any resistance. In February 2022, after an unknown group damaged CGL equipment (Simmons, 2022f), C-IRG accompanied CGL work trucks to prevent any other damage while recognizing that C-IRG was indeed acting as security for CGL.⁴⁴ While this could be attributed to the action on February 17, 2022, C-IRG similarly escorted CGL trucks on February 6, 2022, before the damage to the equipment had transpired.⁴⁵ Beyond escorting CGL vehicles were the routine patrols and overt presence carried out by C-IRG in 2019,⁴⁶ 2020,⁴⁷ 2021,⁴⁸ and throughout February 2022.⁴⁹ The overt preference to protect private property over the environment or Wet'suwet'en land is especially discernable when considering the numerous environmental regulations that the CGL pipeline has transgressed (Simmons, 2023). While an integral function of C-IRG's surveillance practices, routine, and targeted patrols secure C-IRG within a security role for fossil capital that deters damage to private property.

⁴⁴ Access Request # A202204718

⁴⁵ Access Request # A202302700

⁴⁶ Access Request # A-2019-09180

⁴⁷ Access Request # A202001400; Access Request # A202302675

⁴⁸ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506; Access Request # A202204721

⁴⁹ Access Request # A202204718; Access Request # A202204721

Beyond their overt patrols, the C-IRG further entrenched themselves as private security, with the direct line of communication between C-IRG and industry. In February 2020, in an email, TC Energy sought information from C-IRG's patrols concerning any dissent, as private security had vacated the territory during the government's talks with the hereditary chiefs.⁵⁰ In the exchange between C-IRG and TC Energy, the tone is casual, connoting a congruent relationship. Within the email exchange, C-IRG assured TC Energy they would be notified if they observed anything.⁵¹ While C-IRG objected to acting as security, their actions revealed otherwise. The relaxed sharing of information with TC Energy and routine patrols of Wet'suwet'en land defenders speaks volumes about the relationship between the RCMP and TC Energy, while exposing C-IRG's capacity to engage as security within CIP.

TC Energy

Indeed, TC Energy performed an active role within critical infrastructure protection, highlighting the concealed and tentacular power of the fossil fuel industry. While the general tone of communications between TC Energy and C-IRG was relaxed and casual, this changed in the lead up to the injunction enforcement of November 2021. TC Energy assumed an assertive role, emailing the RCMP multiple times, and following up with a forceful letter sent to both the RCMP on November 2, 2021, and the Minister of Public Safety on October 25, 2021, before the November 2021 invasion of Coyote Camp. The letter tries to appeal to the legal obligations of the RCMP:

The RCMP's obligation to uphold the law and the orders of the court [...] the oaths and obligations on the RCMP has been recently commented on by the Chief Justice in Prince

⁵⁰ Access Request # A202302675

⁵¹ Access Request # A202302675

George (City) v. Stewart, 2021 BCSC 2089, in which he emphasized the oaths and obligations on the RCMP to ‘faithfully, diligently and impartially execute and perform the duties required of you as a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and will well and truly obey and perform all lawful orders and instructions that you receive, without fear, favor or affection of or towards any person.’⁵²

TC Energy attempted to persuade the RCMP to enforce the injunction by contending the RCMP has a legal duty to do so. Through this letter, TC Energy framed the land defenders' actions as illegal and criminal, and “in direct, flagrant and intentional contravention of the injunction.”⁵³ Forcefully, TC Energy argued, “You have indicated that arrests will be made if the blockaders escalating illegality reaches the point of threatening public safety, however, Coastal Gaslink is not willing to wait for such escalation to see enforcement of the injunction - the risk to the public and our employees is just too great.”⁵⁴ Here, TC Energy employed an active and assertive role in risk assessments, delineating the boundaries of acceptable risks to the RCMP. Within the letter, TC Energy went to great lengths outlining how the land defenders presented a threat to public safety, with the intent of compelling the RCMP to remove Indigenous land defenders because the risks associated were too great. While TC Energy could have avoided this confrontation by seeking meaningful consent with the Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs and recognizing Indigenous sovereignty, they instead criminalized land defence, as a barrier to their pipeline project, actively calling for police repression.

Beyond TC Energy’s formal letters are further emails and phone calls to C-IRG, with one phone call described in an email as follows:

⁵² Access Request # A202302655, p.8

⁵³ Access Request # A202302655, p.8

⁵⁴ Access Request # A202302655, p.8

it was a direct call as [TC Energy] are asking (“very forcefully”) that we enforce the injunction [...] [TC Energy] was adamant that she wanted to discuss this with the ‘RCMP person who could order enforcement.’ [...] [TC Energy] was not pleased with this response and then asked to meet with the Commissioner to discuss this directly.⁵⁵

Here, TC Energy actively pursued other methods of communication to ensure that the RCMP enforced the injunction and attempted to go beyond C-IRG to the RCMP commissioner, demonstrating the open lines of communication between the RCMP and TC Energy. TC Energy made the forceful call on October 25, 2021, the same day they sent a forceful email to the provincial government. While it is the RCMP’s decision on how and when they enforce an injunction, TC Energy was using every tool in their toolbox to have C-IRG remove the land defenders.

TC Energy’s letter to the Provincial Minister of Safety employed a slightly different approach compared to the letter that they sent to the RCMP; however, the intended outcome was the same. The letter from TC Energy urged the Provincial Minister of Safety to ensure the RCMP enforced the injunction, while simultaneously representing the pipeline as a desirable benefit to Indigenous peoples. Within this letter, TC Energy further advances the discourse of risks and safety:

the absence of enforcement and the failure to deal with illegal behavior is clearly emboldening protesters and increasing the risk of someone being hurt.

This is not an acceptable situation and we would ask for immediate actions to address both the short-and longer-term challenges at play before the safety of our workforce is further jeopardized.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Access Request # A202204721, p.15

⁵⁶ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.10; bold within original

The letter emphasized the putative criminality of the land defenders while highlighting how TC Energy perceives the response of the RCMP as inadequate. Here, TC Energy is influencing or informing RCMP risk assessments, labeling land defenders as criminal, because they impede a fossil capital project (see Dafnos, 2020). This letter was sent after the forceful phone call to the RCMP, which received an insufficient response in the eyes of TC Energy. Subsequently, TC Energy attempts yet another route to influence the RCMP to enforce the injunction. TC Energy hints at the longer-term challenges, emphasizing the role of the RCMP (and TC Energy) within future fossil fuel projects in BC, such as the Prince Rupert Transmission Project and Ksi Lisims.

Lastly, in the email from TC Energy to the provincial government, TC Energy employed a different angle with the government, portraying the land defenders as an outlier group and appealing to the provincial government's support for the project. TC Energy argued that

There is unprecedented support for this project. [...] Through years of relationship-building, Coastal Gaslink has agreements with all 20 of the elected Indigenous councils across the corridor, and strong relationships with the majority of Wet'suwet'en members in the area - many of whom are actively working on and benefiting from this project [...] Indigenous and local communities in Northern B.C., the Province, and the country have much at stake economically if this project is impacted further.⁵⁷

Aided and abetted by their consultation process with band councils, TC Energy attempted to capitalize on the division as a method to justify the pipeline project to the provincial government in hopes that the government would persuade the RCMP to enforce the injunction. TC Energy focused on the economic impacts, capitalizing on Wet'suwet'en members' involvement in the pipeline project. This focus obscures the impacts on Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous rights,

⁵⁷ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.11

reconciliation, the environment, or future generations that are robbed with every new pipeline, including future forests that will burn in wildfires connected with the oil and gas industry. TC Energy, enabled through the Crown's neoliberal delegation of the consultation process has capitalized on the structural disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples through settler capitalism to manufacture Indigenous consent by consulting only with band councils while simultaneously requiring band councils, within their contracts, to dissuade dissent (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). This strategic consultation process by TC Energy ensures consent from band councils while appearing to have engaged in consultation with the Wet'suwet'en, which was then used in an effort to convince the RCMP to enforce the injunction in 2021.

TC Energy devoted a great capacity in ensuring the RCMP enforced the injunction, which involved connecting with other state organizations. The former Director of Operations for Economic and Regional Development Policy described a call with TC Energy in an email to NRCan.⁵⁸ In the call, which was set up by Blue Sky Strategy group, TC Energy pushed that there was a "serious escalation," with "no major violence (yet)," with a concern over the "lack of law enforcement capacity on the ground."⁵⁹ The Director of Operations appeared sympathetic to TC Energy's concerns, which is not surprising given that the Economic and Regional Development Policy role is involved with natural resources and critical infrastructure. Nevertheless, this conversation noted that "TCE is preparing letters to Ministers of PS, NRCan and engaging with MINOs and DMs this week to ensure issue awareness as Cabinet gets sworn in."⁶⁰ From this, it is evident how TC Energy proactively engages with MINOs (Minister Offices) and DMs (Deputy Ministers), especially during a cabinet shuffle. TC Energy is an active and forceful

⁵⁸ Access Request # A-2022-00092

⁵⁹ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.49

⁶⁰ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.49

organization within CIP, as it connects with various organizations within the provincial and federal government, with the goal of compelling the RCMP to enforce the injunction.

The research highlights how there are internal tensions in the policing of Indigenous resistance, with TC Energy preferring coercion while the RCMP and government favour more hegemonic solutions. This tension demonstrates that a cohesive state apparatus, comprised of heterogeneous organizations, can encounter internal contestations. These internal fractures should be capitalized on by opposing forces, as they can be a site to weaken hegemony. The persuasive function of the RCMP situates them antagonistically, at times, with the heterogeneous fossil bloc; however, industry and the RCMP remain unified by the goal of ensuring the continuation of fossil capital infrastructure. Consequently, the RCMP enforced the injunction soon after the onslaught of TC Energy emails and phone calls, alluding to the power of TC Energy and the internal power relations within the state apparatus, with repressive actions ultimately deployed because persuasive measures.

TC Energy's reach is extended through a cohesive network of fossil fuel allies that further promote the CGL pipeline and fossil fuel interests. This reach includes Blue Sky Strategy Group,⁶¹ who advocated on behalf of TC Energy and the CGL pipeline project. Blue Sky Strategy Group lobbied the government 12 times in 2023, 13 times in 2022, 41 times in 2021, 18 times in 2020, and 6 times in 2019 (LobbyCanada, 2024). By hiring a strategy group, TC Energy can broaden its influence within the state and government, as indicated by the call set up by BlueSky between TC Energy and the Director of Operations for Economic and Regional Development Policy.⁶²

⁶¹ Access Request # A-2022-00092

⁶² Access Request # A-2022-00092

Within this constellation of fossil fuel allies is LNG Canada, the conglomerate of five major fossil fuel corporations, including Shell and Petronas, which owns the terminal to which the CGL pipeline leads. The CEO of LNG Canada wrote to C-IRG on November 10, 2021, outlining the economic benefits of the CGL pipeline, the government's investment in the pipeline, how LNG Canada is a "joint venture between five global energy companies that are each leaders in the global LNG market."⁶³ The email concluded with "we respectfully request your assistance to enable CGL to continue to advance construction and deliver the jobs, contracting and economic benefits committed to for Indigenous and Northern communities."⁶⁴ While broaching the matter with a different approach and tone, the request is the same. TC Energy made a forceful request, demanding the RCMP enforce the injunction, while LNG Canada outlined what was at stake (the economic benefits), the big players who were involved (five global energy companies and the government), and more cordially pressured the RCMP to enforce the injunction. While it cannot be determined which was the more successful approach, it can be assumed that this unified effort of TC Energy, Blue Sky Strategy Group, and LNG Canada functioned cohesively together to ensure the continuation of pipeline construction, as the injunction was enforced in the following weeks. The fossil fuel industry occupies a powerful role within CIP and within the settler-colonial project, as a cohesive and dominant force, working proactively to gain allies within the government for their fossil fuel interests.

Private Security

The existing literature has demonstrated a strong connection between private industry and critical infrastructure protection (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Crosby, 2021; Dafnos, 2020;

⁶³ Access Request # A202109917, p.2

⁶⁴ Access Request # A202109917, p.3

Monaghan & Walby, 2016). Monaghan and Walby (2016) have employed the term *threat entrepreneurs* to capture the role of private security within the web of critical infrastructure, whereby security actively participates alongside the RCMP in assessing threats. Threat entrepreneurs participate in creating boundaries of who belongs and who does not. Industry belongs, and Indigenous resurgence does not; hence the latter is assessed as a risk (Monaghan & Walby, 2016). Threat assessments are comparable with Lyon's (2009) social sorting and Browne's (2015) racializing surveillance, as Indigenous peoples are socially sorted as high risk, often through the lens of racializing surveillance, which sorts them as not belonging. The sorting of Indigenous peoples as not belonging is visible through the RCMP notes describing the Wet'suwet'en as "occupying Crown land," even though that it is unceded Wet'suwet'en territory. An active participant in this boundary-making is private security.

Within the security apparatus, private security is an active participant engaging in surveillance and disclosing the intelligence with C-IRG. The two private security forces who engaged in surveillance of the Wet'suwet'en land defenders were Forsythe Security and DOMCOR Security.⁶⁵ Forsythe Security specializes in providing security for the oil and gas industry, including risk assessments and electronic surveillance (Forsythe Security, n.d). It is known that ex-military and ex-RCMP are employed by one of these security forces (Simmons, 2022d). For the CGL pipeline, TC Energy has designated two levels of security, with a chief of security who manages the two security levels and a head of security who co-ordinates the two security companies and is the contact for the RCMP.⁶⁶ The documents show that if land defenders enter a construction zone, it is both the RCMP and private security that approach to

⁶⁵ Access Request # A202302675

⁶⁶ Access Request # A202004198

determine the defenders' intentions.⁶⁷ Private security is directed to record and collect data for the RCMP if any person becomes "violent or destructive."⁶⁸ Security companies document people's movements and in the process, create profiles and boundaries of belonging or out of place.⁶⁹ Here, security engages in risk assessments and determining who belongs and who does not. Movements of land defenders, or suspected land defenders, are shared amongst the critical infrastructure protection apparatus. While private security participates in creating ideological boundaries of belonging, they also physically created boundaries by monitoring the gate and cables on the Marten Forest Service Road (FSR).⁷⁰ Forsythe Security refused access to the site to hereditary Chief Na'moks, threatening arrest, and refused access to journalists, which was beyond the scope of the injunction (Simmons, 2022g). Beyond boots-on-the-ground surveillance, CGL security installed security cameras and fences, delimiting boundaries to land defenders and workers.⁷¹ Movements through the territory in close proximity to the project were recorded, assessed, and provided to both TC Energy and the RCMP. After CGL equipment was destroyed in February 2022, security was present throughout the day and night, recording movement along the FSR (Simmons, 2022a). The presence of private security was combined alongside routine patrols carried out by C-IRG (Simmons, 2022a).⁷² The scope of surveillance on land defenders and the Wet'suwet'en, in general, was immense, as the surveillance of private security was coupled with C-IRG's surveillance, with both organizations using the gathered intelligence as a bulwark against the land defenders.

⁶⁷ Access Request # A202004198

⁶⁸ Access Request # A202004198, p.72

⁶⁹ Access Request # A202302675

⁷⁰ Access Request # A202204721

⁷¹ Access Request # A202204721

⁷² Access Request # A202204718; Access Request # A202204721

The information that private security provided TC Energy was the information used to persuade the RCMP to enforce the injunction in TC Energy's emails to the RCMP and BC Minister of Public Safety before the 2021 injunction enforcement. Within the emails are details of risks and threats of land defenders, including intelligence gathered from social media.⁷³ This intelligence was communicated to the RCMP in attempts to enforce an injunction and criminalize land defenders. Private security, whom TC Energy employs, are threat entrepreneurs, assessing risks, creating boundaries, and providing the RCMP with the assessments that potentially could inform injunction enforcement. At this intersection, the role of the fossil fuel industry, through its private security, becomes visible. Private security engaged in their own threat assessments through surveillance and gathering intelligence on land defenders. Again, surveillance operates in a grey area of legality, allowing private security to transgress laws and collect information that would otherwise be inaccessible. The information gained through surveillance was then provided to the RCMP and state security apparatus through conversations with C-IRG members and emails by TC Energy. Here, private security plays a surveillance role separate from and complementary to the RCMP, allowing the former to operate at a distance from obligations that guide the RCMP. Private security cannot be scrutinized to the same effect as the RCMP, such as ATI requests. Because of the lack of transparency, private security can operate further within the grey zone. Moreover, TC Energy introduced private security into the security apparatus, which is, therefore, directly beholden to TC Energy and the CGL project. While similar observations can be made about the function of C-IRG, it is TC Energy that employs and guides the scope of the private security contractors. Through private security TC

⁷³ Access Request # A202302655

Energy inserts itself within the security apparatus, who played an active role in criminalizing and surveilling land defenders.

Concluding Thoughts

Within the CGL pipeline project, the surveillance and sharing of information between the security apparatus demonstrates how private and public security divisions become blurred and intertwined. While CSIS avoided providing any documents that involved communication between themselves and the RCMP or CAPP, there is an indication that there was communication and that CSIS had engaged in some capacity of risk assessments, as they classified the Wet'suwet'en resistance as subversive and hostile. Additionally, CSIS was debating whether the solidarity blockades could be interpreted as an internal terrorist threat. The RCMP and C-IRG engaged in surveillance of land defenders while coordinating with private security and, at times, TC Energy. C-IRG, a group of the RCMP specific to BC, has its very foundations in protecting fossil fuel infrastructure, and its function is ensuring the completion of pipeline projects. As a hierarchal group, C-IRG engages in surveillance under the silver and bronze command, with the RCMP shifting to more surveillance-oriented practices instead of overt repression. The shift towards more surveillance allows C-IRG to transgress laws, as surveillance can operate within a grey zone, allowing the RCMP to gather more information to pre-emptively assess land defenders according to risk, especially criminality, which can result in a greater show of repression during police actions. Simultaneously, an increase in surveillance can produce the chilling effect, whereby overt surveillance suppresses political and social actions that are essential aspects of a democratic society.

The role of private industry was visible both in communication between C-IRG and TC Energy and in the active role that private security performed in the surveillance of land defenders, creating and restricting movement within certain areas of the territory. Private security both shared information with C-IRG and provided details that TC Energy used in attempts to persuade C-IRG to enforce the injunction. The active and forceful role of TC Energy highlights the power of the fossil fuel bloc. LNG Canada supported TC Energy by similarly attempting to persuade the RCMP to enforce the injunction. While the RCMP straddled the line between repression and hegemony, often preferring the ideological side, there is pressure from the fossil fuel bloc to engage in repressive actions. Although there may be internal divisions within CIP, hegemony is always bolstered by repression (including the threat thereof), and if the risks are assessed as too great, coercion is deployed. Whether motivated by the risk assessments by TC Energy (provided by private security), their forceful emails, or C-IRG's risk assessments, C-IRG was deployed in 2021 to enforce the injunction. On the territory, land defenders have experienced multiple levels of surveillance by both private industry and the RCMP, with the unified goal of ensuring a pipeline is completed, whether through persuasive or coercive means.

Chapter 5: Portrayal of Dissent

Surveillance is an integral element in settler-colonial projects; however, it is often invisible because it remains hidden in the background, unproblematized. Within settler-colonial projects, Indigenous peoples, through surveillance, are sorted according to risks and classified as threats, or as an Other (Zureik, 2015). Such sorting of Indigenous peoples supports settler-colonial governance, its unequal power relations, and dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their land (Zureik, 2015). This racializing surveillance is embedded within settler-colonial risk assessments (Browne, 2015). If a putative risk transgresses an acceptable threshold or is labelled as not belonging within a space, coercive actions are deployed to return the colonial project to an acceptable risk level. The acceptable risk level then allows the colonial project to continue unimpeded, such as with Palestine, and in Canada. Within settler-colonial surveillance, there is an imbalance of power, since the settler-colonial state, through surveillance activities, can impose labels of *risks* and *threats* on Indigenous peoples who mobilize repressive actions, and the gaze cannot be reversed with the same power. Indeed, “Ann Laura Stoler (2010b, 8) remarks that ‘the power of categories rests in their capacity to impose the realities they ostensibly only describe. Classification here is not a benign cultural act but a potent political one’” (see Said, 1978; Stoler quoted in Zureik, 2015, p.101). When Indigenous populations in Canada are classified as a threat, risk, or extremist group (Hume & Walby, 2021), the classification is imposed, and becomes reified through the colonial surveillance apparatus. Indigenous resurgence is labelled as a threat as it directly impedes the expansion and reproduction of fossil capital in Canada. The heightened level of surveillance is only possible through a state of exception, wherein the suspension of the rule of law is normalized for expanded resource extraction, guided

by the logic of capitalism, visible with Elsipogtog (2013), the TMX flashpoint (2021-2023), and the CGL flashpoint.

Within the security apparatus, the assessment of land defenders as threats undermines Indigenous resistance and sovereignty while simultaneously legitimizing the response of Community Industry Response Group (C-IRG). The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), TC Energy, LNG Canada, and the provincial government produce and reproduce risk assessments as a unified group. This multi-pronged approach to risk assessments unites both the state and industry with the same function of ensuring the construction of the pipeline, which is concretely secured through the RCMP's repressive actions. The security apparatus' characterization of Indigenous dissent as a risk can organize general consent to legitimize the RCMP's repression. The previous chapter examined the roles of both C-IRG and private security as active participants in risk assessments within critical infrastructure protection. This chapter will explore how C-IRG uses surveillance to classify Indigenous dissent as a risk and position protestors as counter to the law by examining the function of risk assessments within fossil capital hegemony.

Methods and Analysis

During analysis, the Freedom of Information (FOI)/ Access to Information (ATI) documents were coded for emerging themes that included descriptions, assessments, and characterizations of land defenders. Since there are hints of risk assessments throughout the documents, this process required a detailed examination of the documents, and coding to capture the various levels of risk assessments, following the methods of Fairclough (2003, 2010). The documents do not reveal what risk assessments entail, so the themes were triangulated with news

articles from the CGL flashpoint and existing academic literature found in the literature review. Beyond overt risk assessments, the released documents were coded for emergent discursive themes, such as safety, the rule of law, keeping the peace, and occupying protestors. While the documents were read through inductively for themes, the themes aligned with many of the existing themes found in the literature.

A question that arose during this process was how the RCMP was able to produce the themes of Indigenous land defenders as outside the rule of law, as non-peaceful, and as protestors. However, shedding light on this, was an RCMP public statement that denied Indigenous rights and title to land. The next step was to connect the RCMP's discourse that dismissed Indigenous rights to structures of power and how the RCMP's refusal of recognition facilitates settler-colonial dispossession, often through racializing surveillance.

In addition to requesting RCMP ATI documents, I had requested previously released ATI documents from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) with the intention of the mosaic effect, in which multiple requests to different organizations provides a more nuanced understanding (Walby & Luscombe, 2019). My initial intent was to access more correspondence between NRCan and the RCMP, which was included within the documents. However, the ATI files provided information on the role performed by NRCan, so I opted to involve NRCan and their assessments of the land defenders in this chapter. NRCan⁷⁴ and the RCMP's⁷⁵ ATI documents both shared a similar theme that focused on the division between band councils and hereditary chiefs. Each document was coded with a label of *divide and conquer* with a subtheme indicating whether the text originated from the RCMP or NRCan. Also present in NRCan's released

⁷⁴ Access Request # A-2022-00092

⁷⁵ Access Request # A202201983

document was the theme of threats to the economy.⁷⁶ This theme is connected to the current setting of settler capitalism and the Canadian state's pursuit of fossil fuel projects with Indigenous land defense as a barrier to Canada's expansion of fossil fuel extraction.

Risky Behaviour

From the ATI data, readers can infer that the security apparatus considered land defenders a high risk, culminating in injunction enforcement in 2021. In November 2021, C-IRG assessed the Wet'suwet'en land defense as high risk in an email to TC Energy: "C-IRG has assessed the risk level as high and would require a significant influx of RCMP resources to both safely dismantle the blockade and manage the protesters."⁷⁷ Precisely what a high-risk assessment means within the RCMP is missing from the ATIs. However, from a national security standpoint, CSIS defines to a high-risk situation as one in which "ITAC [Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre] assess that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY."⁷⁸ The RCMP may use a similar risk assessment because the two organizations often work together under the umbrella of national security.

In the case of RCMP threat assessments, Howe and Monaghan (2018, p. 338) found that the RCMP created a Public Order Profile Scale (POPS) to assess risks, with "fueling factors" that are assessed from one (low risk) to five (high risk). The scale has 20 factors, including the history of protests, the potential to link other groups and issues together, public support, popularity, and whether groups or individuals are dedicated to a cause (Howe & Monaghan, 2018). Using POPS as a measure of risk, it appears that the Wet'suwet'en meet many of the

⁷⁶ Access Request # A201900702, p.12, 29, 44

⁷⁷ Access Request # A202302655, p.9-10

⁷⁸ Access Request # CIR-2022-734, p.14

benchmark risk criteria. Howe and Monaghan (2018) highlight, Indigenous land defense is often a concern to the RCMP because of its connection with environmental issues and other Indigenous groups. Beyond the scope of the CGL pipeline project, it is reasonable that the RCMP would also consider most Indigenous struggles to fulfill the POPS criteria, highlighting an embedded bias within C-IRG's risk assessments of land defenders. After the 2020 injunction enforcement, C-IRG was concerned both with the media coverage and the solidarity actions by "radical persons" with the intent of engaging in violence.⁷⁹ The threat of solidarity actions emerged from a pre-emptive assessment, which failed to materialize, given that the solidarity actions and Wet'suwet'en land defense were peaceful.

In addition to the RCMP's assessment of risks were the loud voices of the fossil fuel industry that emphatically characterized land defenders as risks and threats to the CGL pipeline project. Here, the fossil fuel industry actively participated in threat assessments. Under the umbrella of threat entrepreneurs, are members of TC Energy, who corresponded with the RCMP, detailing the risks of the land defenders to the pipeline project before the November 2021 injunction enforcement.⁸⁰ TC Energy portrayed the land defenders as *unlawful, illegal*, and "risks to public safety and the environment," and argued that the lack of RCMP enforcement is antithetical to the "Rule of Law."⁸¹ The assessment by TC Energy condemned Indigenous land defenders as unlawful and as a risk to the environment, a bold claim from an environmentally disastrous pipeline project. Land defenders were impeding the flow of fossil capital and were thus a risk to fossil capital expansion (Pasternak & Dafnos, 2018). However, TC Energy was able to discredit Indigenous resurgence by condemning it as unlawful and a risk to safety,

⁷⁹ Access Request # A202001400, p.103

⁸⁰ Access Request # A202302655

⁸¹ Access Request # A202302655, p.7, 8

producing the desired outcome of RCMP enforcement and a restoration of order for fossil fuel production.

While the courts issued the injunction, the RCMP had the discretion of when and how to enforce it or if they even enforce it at all (Simmons, 2022d). Risk assessments occupy a significant role in RCMP enforcement; the RCMP posit that “The level of police intervention will be applied in the context of a careful risk assessment that accounts for the likelihood and extent of potential injury and damage to property.”⁸² In this context, the emails sent by TC Energy (as described in chapter four) that outlined the risks associated with the land defenders could have contributed to the RCMP's risk assessments, given that many of TC Energy's listed risks concern property.⁸³ TC Energy's emails focused on the putative transgressions of the rule of law, law and order, and safety. Here, TC Energy appealed to the stated function of the RCMP, which is to maintain/restore order and peace, which the RCMP fulfilled in the following weeks after the forceful emails. However, as Hume and Walby (2021) attest, the restoration of order and peace was one-sided. The RCMP opted to enforce the injunction as a heavily militarized group in each injunction enforcement, feasibly influenced by private industry's risk assessments. The removal of land defenders restored peace for TC Energy and CGL project but had the opposite effect for Indigenous land defenders who were violently removed from their territory to enable fossil capital expansion.

Reconciliation, Recognition, and Refusal

The RCMP's refusal to recognize Indigenous rights and title to land reinforced their risk assessments of the land defenders. The refusal of recognition bolstered settler colonialism as an

⁸² Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.126

⁸³ Access Request # A202302655

ongoing structure achieved through dispossession, all the while upholding the supremacy of the settler-colonial state. The refusal to honour Indigenous territorial rights, supported by the BC Supreme Court, permits the RCMP to label land defenders as unlawful protestors, instead of Indigenous peoples asserting their sovereignty, which would require the RCMP to enforce the peace. The 1997 *Delgamuukw* decision acknowledged Indigenous title exists but failed to recognize the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en claims of title to land through the refutation of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en's oral history (*Delgamuukw vs. British Columbia 1997*). The judge recommended negotiations to occur outside of the courts to avoid another expensive trial. Coulthard (2014) demonstrates how the power of recognition is granted by the state and is a process that demands Indigenous peoples time and money. Instead, Coulthard recommends refusal to recognize the settler state: the assertion of Indigenous sovereignty. Nevertheless, C-IRG released a statement referencing the *Delgamuukw vs. British Columbia (1997)* decision, demonstrating how court rulings, as part of the repressive state apparatus can be used hegemonically to secure consent:

For the land in question, where the Unist'ot'en camp is currently located near Houston, BC, it is our understanding that there has been no declaration of Aboriginal title in the Courts of Canada. In 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada issued an important decision, *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*, that considered Aboriginal title to Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en traditional territories. The Supreme Court of Canada decided that a new trial was required to determine whether Aboriginal title had been established for these lands, and to hear from other Indigenous nations which have a stake in the territory claimed. The new trial has never been held, meaning that Aboriginal title to this land, and

which Indigenous nation holds it, has not been determined. Regardless of the outcome of any such trial in the future, the RCMP is the police agency with jurisdiction.⁸⁴

The RCMP, supported by the Canadian courts, whose ruling ideologically bolsters the RCMP's presence on the territory, refused to recognize Indigenous title to land gives the RCMP full authority to impose settler laws and to categorize Indigenous peoples as criminal or as *risks* on their unceded territory. The RCMP's statement was released one day before the injunction enforcement in 2019. The statement attempted to legitimize the RCMP's invasion on January 7 while delegitimizing the Wet'suwet'en's authority and resistance on their territory. The RCMP's refusal to recognize Indigenous title highlights the limitations of the politics of recognition (Coulthard, 2014), since the state can transgress the laws or recognition it once bestowed. Coulthard reveals that, while the state may recognize Indigenous sovereignty, it is subordinated to Canadian sovereignty to ensure that the state does not surrender any power. Hegemonically, the small concession of recognition, in the abstract, by the state, with the onus on Indigenous peoples to negotiate for their sovereignty, ensures the continuation of uncontested Canadian sovereignty while appearing to engage in reconciliation. Indigenous peoples can govern themselves and their communities; however, self-governance is rescinded when Indigenous sovereignty impedes the state.

While the RCMP appears to engage in reconciliation, their actions demonstrate otherwise, which is a common thread in reconciliation efforts across Canada. After listening to Indigenous testimonies of the violence and harm of residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada produced a document outlining *Calls to Action* for the government to address different sectors such as education, healthcare, and justice (2015a;

⁸⁴ Access Request # A-2019-09180, p.5

2015b). However, Canada's response to the *Calls to Action* has been shamefully slow and has failed to address the calls and engage meaningfully in reconciliation (Jewell & Mosby, 2023). While British Columbia has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the engagement falls short of anything that disrupts the current social relations between the state and Indigenous peoples (McCreary & Turner, 2018), which was demonstrated by the RCMP's repressive actions on Wet'suwet'en territory. The government's transgression of adopted laws sets the foundation for the RCMP to dispute Indigenous claims and title to land through the same logic; ideology is the cement of state apparatuses (Poulantzas, 1980). The refusal of recognition enabled both the RCMP and government to situate Indigenous sovereignty as unlawful while legitimizing the RCMP's enforcement of the court injunction granted to TC Energy.

The RCMP and the BC Supreme Court, both within the umbrella of RSA, have a unified partnership that diminished Indigenous resurgence and reproduced colonial boundaries by deciding what constitutes Indigenous laws and sovereignty. Drawing on the BC Supreme Court decision *Coastal GasLink Pipeline Ltd. v. Huson*, BCSC 2264 (2019), the RCMP included the court decision within their statement "The judgment rejected the defendants [*sic*] claim that the blockade was an assertion of traditional laws and found that it was, in fact, an unlawful 'self-help remedy'."⁸⁵ The governing body of the courts portrayed the Wet'suwet'en resistance as a *self-help remedy* [emphasis mine]. Here, the constellation of allies, empowered by the Canadian courts and the RCMP, ensured "accumulation by dispossession" (see Harvey, 2016, p.208). The BC Supreme Court judges decided what constituted "an assertion of traditional laws."⁸⁶ Here, the court and, by proxy, the settler state, decided what Indigenous self-determination includes and

⁸⁵ Access Request # A202001400, p.100

⁸⁶ Access Request # A202001400, p.100

excludes, which upheld settler-colonial power relations while guiding the RCMP's actions. The RCMP,⁸⁷ Natural Resources Canada,⁸⁸ and TC Energy⁸⁹ all reproduced the depiction of Indigenous resurgence as unlawful. When the state delegitimizes Indigenous resistance, it organizes the RCMP ideologically, while mobilizing the RCMP to remove Indigenous dissent. The dispossession is further supported by undermining Indigenous resistance through the refusal of the state, and heterogeneous organizations to recognize Indigenous sovereignty, rights, and title to land.

Occupying Protesters

Within the existing literature, Shaw (2021) reveals the parochial reduction of Indigenous resistance to protesters within the media during the TMX flashpoint. Internally, the RCMP replicated the same theme, minimizing Indigenous resurgence as enacted by protesters. Before the January 2019 injunction enforcement, the RCMP reduced Indigenous resistance to “anti-LNG protests” in communication with local municipalities.⁹⁰ Shaw (2021) and Hume and Walby (2021) argue that the discursive framing of “protestors” removes Indigenous sovereignty, resurgence, and rights from the discussion and instead presents dissent as outside of the law. The RCMP's framing of land defenders as *anti-LNG protests* reduced the contestations to concern pipelines, which obscured the issue of Indigenous sovereignty. The RCMP's email was sent to municipalities close to Wet'suwet'en territory, where there is some support for natural gas projects. The RCMP framing of Indigenous resurgence as anti-LNG protests could be a strategic

⁸⁷ Access Request # A202204721; Access Request # A202302673

⁸⁸ Access Request # A-2022-00092

⁸⁹ Access Request # A202204682

⁹⁰ Access Request # A201900393, p.8

move to gain consent from local governments for RCMP actions while discrediting Indigenous resurgence.

Likewise, the RCMP mischaracterized land defenders during the February 2020 injunction enforcement, when the RCMP cast Indigenous land defenders as “occupying crown land.”⁹¹ Land defenders are sorted as not belonging, even trespassing, on their unceded territory. The RCMP’s framing upheld settler-colonial power relations, which positioned Indigenous peoples as illegally occupying their unceded territory, refusing to recognize claims granted by settler courts. Moreover, the occupying force, TC Energy, was absent from the conversation. The RCMP’s refusal of recognition allowed the RCMP to justify their actions and remove land defenders from their territory for TC Energy.

Further supporting the RCMP mischaracterization of land defenders as out of place is racializing surveillance, which creates boundaries of who belongs and who does not (Browne, 2015). Through racializing surveillance, Indigenous peoples were sorted as not belonging within or occupying their ancestral territory. Moreover, classifying unceded Indigenous territory as *Crown land* imposes settler sovereignty above Indigenous rights, which diminishes and extinguishes Indigenous land. Crown land requires the imposition of borders on Indigenous land. This imposed territorialization is a contestation of sovereignty (Coulthard, 2014; Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Wolfe, 2006), and a refusal of recognition by the settler state that enables the expansion of fossil capitalism through the reterritorialization of the land that does not support the life of humans, nature, and non-humans, and thus becomes part of the settler-colonial land grab.

⁹¹ Access Request # A202001400, p.100

Unlawful Versus Rule of Law

Further supporting the portrayal of land defenders as unlawful is the characterization of Indigenous land defenders as disruptive. During the Elispogtog flashpoint, the RCMP's labeling of land defenders as disorderly in Canadian media paved the way for RCMP action to restore order (Simpson, 2013b, as cited in Hume & Walby, 2021). Similarly, the same discourse of disorder/order was used to justify the RCMP injunction enforcement in 2021. In late November 2021, while B.C dealt with the aftermath of massive flooding, the RCMP were authorized by the Minister of Public Safety to be redeployed on Wet'suwet'en territory to "maintain law and order, keep the peace and protect the safety of persons, property or communities."⁹² Labelling Indigenous land defenders as *unlawful* evokes an RCMP response: "The role of the RCMP when unlawful acts occur is to optimize public safety, preserve the peace, and enforce the law."⁹³ Through the discourse of unlawful or illegal activities, the RCMP receive license to restore order and safety for the pipeline project.

However, public safety does not include land defenders, especially those who had RCMP rifles trained on them during injunction enforcement and those who continue to experience RCMP violence and criminalization within their territory. During the 2019 injunction enforcement, the RCMP had orders to shoot to kill if necessary (Hume & Walby, 2021); however, one day before the injunction enforcement, the RCMP rationalized their presence as "maintaining the peace."⁹⁴ It would appear that public safety is one-sided, reserved for CGL workers and the pipeline project, not for Indigenous resisters. Within C-IRG's injunction order manual, the approach outlined is "proactive engagement, communication, mitigation, and

⁹² Access Request # PSS-2022-21506, p.93

⁹³ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.126

⁹⁴ Access Request # A-2019-09180, p.8

facilitation measures by police to maintain the peace, or to facilitate resolution of public disorder and restoration of the peace.”⁹⁵ However, it is only Indigenous dissent that disrupts the *peace* and is disorderly, whereas a contentious pipeline that trespasses through unceded Indigenous territory is normalized and within order. *Maintaining the peace* means removing dissent and allowing the pipeline project to continue unimpeded. The misconstrual of Indigenous resistance as unlawful protest threatening the peace reveals the function of C-IRG, which is to ensure peace for resource extraction. At the same time, the RCMP’s categorization of land defenders as unlawful protesters allowed the RCMP to frame themselves as a peacekeeping force, upholding law and order and obtaining consent for their actions to restore order.

Widening the Division

During the *consultation* process, TC Energy opted to engage with band councils instead of hereditary chiefs, implementing the historic colonial tool of divide-and-conquer enabled by the Crown’s delegation of the duty to consult to private corporations (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). TC Energy and others within the state apparatus capitalized on the division, replicating the divide-and-conquer approach within internal discussions that included Natural Resources Canada,⁹⁶ the RCMP,⁹⁷ and TC Energy, which obscured the hereditary chiefs’ opposition to the project. This framing amplifies the pre-existing division between hereditary and elected chiefs; it situates hereditary chiefs as a barrier to economic benefits for the Wet’suwet’en (and other Canadians). Band councils’ jurisdiction encompasses reserves, whose borders have been defined by the state (Indian Act, 1985), hereditary chiefs’ authority extends over the territory that pre-

⁹⁵ Access Request # A201904658, p.6

⁹⁶ Access Request # A-2022-00092

⁹⁷ Access Request # A202201983

dates colonial borders. Moreover, band councils' power on reserves is limited to administrative by-law functions (Indian Act, 1985). Section 81 (1) in the Indian Act outlines the power of band councils, which focuses on maintaining law and order on reserves, preventing the spread of illness and diseases, preventing the spread of noxious weeds, construction activities on reserves, and the management of fish and game. While TC Energy, LNG Canada, NRCan, and the RCMP focus on securing consent from band councils, the latter only have jurisdiction over the boundary of their reserves. In contrast, hereditary chiefs have authority over the entire territory that pre-dates colonial borders. The focus by the fossil fuel group amplifies the pre-existing division between the band councils and hereditary chiefs that serves to delegitimize the hereditary chiefs and Indigenous resurgence.

TC Energy's decision to consult with band councils over hereditary chiefs by employing the divide-and-rule approach, demonstrates the grave inadequacies of private corporations supplanting the state's responsibility to consult (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Both TC Energy⁹⁸ and LNG Canada⁹⁹ insisted that each project had gained consent by signing agreements with elected band councils. However, while TC Energy (and LNG Canada) consulted with band councils, they included a stipulation in the contracts to dissuade dissent (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). This stipulation afforded TC Energy the appearance of engaging in consultation with the Wet'suwet'en while dividing Indigenous communities. TC Energy capitalized on the division between hereditary chiefs and band councils, which obscured the failure to obtain consent from the hereditary chiefs and the ongoing theft of land.

⁹⁸ Access Request # A202302655

⁹⁹ Access Request # A202109917

NRCan joined the fray, emphasizing in a meeting that “The Wet’suwet’en Nation is divided over CGL” with band councils aligning with the economic benefits ¹⁰⁰ and the hereditary chiefs are opposed to the pipeline, which was creating a “sharp divide.”¹⁰¹ In addition, NRCan failed to acknowledge the rights of hereditary chiefs or the sovereignty of the Wet’suwet’en nations, and instead conflated traditional territories and First Nation reserves by stating, “CGL crosses the traditional territories of 20 First Nations, all of whose elected band councils have signed benefits agreements with the proponent.”¹⁰² By using economic leverage to persuade band councils that are under-resourced because of settler colonialism to sign on to the pipeline agreement, while only recognizing the governance of band councils, the fossil fuel bloc created a division that served the interests of the fossil fuel projects. NRCan reproduced the same ideology and divisive tactics as both TC Energy and LNG Canada, since they all desired the same outcome. Through the neoliberal blurring of private and public boundaries, the government has enabled the fossil fuel industry to take on the responsibility of consulting with Indigenous nations (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). However, this shift in responsibility benefits both the state and corporations since they both have a shared goal and function.

Similarly, the RCMP replicated the same division as a part of the unified state apparatus. Within a released ATI of an RCMP press release, they stated the following:

As part of its engagement with impacted Indigenous groups, CGL concluded 20 benefit agreements with Indigenous groups along the pipeline route, including with four of the five Wet’suwet’en Indian Act bands. Although all the Wet’suwet’en band councils are in agreement with the project, as it would bring financial benefits to their communities, the

¹⁰⁰ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.3

¹⁰¹ Access Request # A202201983, p.11

¹⁰² Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.70

Hereditary Chiefs, represented by the Office of the Wet'suwet'en (OW), are in opposition, since the proposed route goes through their traditional territory, to which they assert Aboriginal title. This created a sharp divide in the Wet'suwet'en community and led to protests and blockades.¹⁰³

The RCMP's focus on the division between hereditary chiefs and band councils undermined the hereditary chiefs' authority by claiming that "all the Wet'suwet'en band councils are in agreement," while implying that the hereditary chiefs are a barrier to realizing the financial benefits of the pipeline. The RCMP employed similar discourse to legitimize their presence on the territory, here evidenced in RCMP communication to local municipalities "While this project is approved by the Provincial Government and is supported by the elected First Nation governments along the pipeline route, there is opposition from some First Nations leaders and groups as well as some environmental advocacy organizations."¹⁰⁴ The email was sent before the 2019 injunction enforcement, which diminished the Indigenous resistance and supporters as a small outlier group with the language of *some*. The discourse contributed to the divide-and-conquer approach while also attempting to garner the consent of local municipalities. Overall, the fossil fuel bloc and allies actively pursued a divide-and-conquer approach by recognizing the governance of band councils while refusing to recognize the governance of the hereditary chiefs. Through this refusal, the sovereignty of the hereditary chiefs is obscured, while the agreements with the band councils are centred.

¹⁰³ Access Request # A202201983, p.11

¹⁰⁴ Access Request # A201900393, p.8

Threats to the Economy

This last section unpacks how the economy was used as a hegemonic tool in garnering consent for the CGL pipeline and for the RCMP repression that ensured the implementation of the pipeline. The constellation of fossil fuel allies used the economic benefits of the pipeline to justify the project. The state, fossil fuel companies, and the RCMP all refused to recognize Indigenous sovereignty and rights because

Indigenous peoples interrupt commodity flows by asserting jurisdiction and sovereignty over their lands and resources in places that form choke points to the circulation of capital. Thus, the securitization of ‘critical infrastructure’—essentially supply chains of capital, such as private pipelines and public transport routes—has become a priority in mitigating the potential threat of Indigenous jurisdiction (Pasternak& Dafnos, 2018, p.741).

In 2020, solidarity blockades were constructed across Canada, blocking infrastructure (such as railway lines) in reaction to the RCMP’s invasion of Wet’suwet’en territory. The Department of Finance was “concerned about the real economic impacts of the blockades”¹⁰⁵ and voiced concerns that the “negative impacts will continue to grow the longer the blockades lasts” adding that “It is unclear how long it will take to recover from the blockades once they are lifted.”¹⁰⁶ The federal government flagged the blockades as a major concern with lasting impacts. The statement demonstrates how the assertion of Indigenous sovereignty by the Wet’suwet’en and the solidarity blockades, erected by Indigenous nations of Tyendinaga (in Ontario) (Tunney, 2020) and Gitksan (in Northern B.C) (Simmons, 2021), became a threat to the Canadian economy and the state.

¹⁰⁵ Access Request # A201900702, p.12

¹⁰⁶ Access Request # A201900702, p.12, 29

Similarly, NRCan voiced concerns about the railway blockades, citing economic impacts, illegality, and safety issues.¹⁰⁷ These concerns were juxtaposed with NRCan's enthusiastic support for the economic benefits of CGL and LNG Canada, with a strong focus on the economic benefits to Indigenous communities. Accordingly, NRCan argued that "LNG Canada and its contractors and subcontractors have awarded \$3.5 billion in contracts and procurement to business [*sic*] in British Columbia. Of this amount, over \$2.7 billion has been awarded to First Nations-owned businesses and local area businesses," moreover NRCan maintained "[s]ince 2012, TC Energy has invested approximately \$6.5 million in Indigenous communities."¹⁰⁸ NRCan's statements framed Indigenous land defenders as an impediment to the economy and band councils, which furthered the attempt of the fossil fuel bloc to divide-and-conquer. Significantly, NRCan's statement positioned TC Energy and LNG Canada as providing a form of economic reconciliation to Indigenous communities rather than to fossil fuel corporations creating a hegemonic community identity along the pipeline route. A hegemonic community identity awards a company a social license (consent) from local communities through the concessions of economic benefits or business opportunities (Eaton & Enoch, 2021). While fossil fuel companies actively attempted to achieve a social license, through NRCan, the government employed the same rhetoric to once again create a unified front. Combined with (and contributing to) the divide-and-conquer approach, the economic benefits touted by the government and TC Energy attempted to secure consent for the pipeline as a form of economic reconciliation, the discourse of which obscures dispossession for fossil fuel extraction.

¹⁰⁷ Access Request # A-2022-00092

¹⁰⁸ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.44

Concluding Thoughts

The security apparatus on Wet'suwet'en territory socially sorted Indigenous resistance into categories of risks, threats, and as unlawful. The sorting of Indigenous resistance ensured a structuring of settler-colonial power relations, whereby Indigenous peoples are labeled as threats to the expansion of settler capitalism and the state projects of fossil capital. The putative threats were Indigenous peoples asserting their sovereignty; thus, the RCMP and government often pitted Indigenous sovereignty against the Crown. The mischaracterization of Indigenous land defense as illegal and risky hegemonically reinforced the pipeline project, the RCMP's repressive actions, and the RCMP's continued surveillance of land defenders.

The characterization of Indigenous land defense as unlawful was and continues to be reproduced by TC Energy, the RCMP, the government, and the courts. It is the settler state that decides what constitutes Indigenous resurgence instead of Indigenous peoples, and thus who is trespassing. The power of the RCMP to categorize Indigenous resistance allowed the RCMP to reduce land defenders to an occupying group on Crown land. The mischaracterization of Indigenous resurgence allowed fossil capital corporations to reterritorialize Indigenous land for fossil fuel extraction and transport while rendering inferior Indigenous peoples as protesters without sovereign rights. These mischaracterizations contributed the RCMP's portrayal of the Wet'suwet'en as divided—a division on which the government, TC Energy, and LNG Canada capitalized. While delegitimizing the Indigenous resurgence as outliers, the fossil fuel companies and NRCan focused on the economic benefits for Indigenous communities and Canadians, positioning Indigenous sovereignty as a barrier to the economic prosperity of the First Nations who signed on to the pipeline agreement. This portrayal secured consent for the RCMP's removal of land defenders and positioned Indigenous resurgence as against the prosperity of First

Nations by conflating the economic benefits that may result from capital accumulation with a good life and prosperity. Overall, the characterizations of the land defenders permitted the RCMP to situate themselves as a peacekeeping force, akin to their benevolent Mountie myth, which attempted to obscure the repressive function of C-IRG.

Chapter 6: Benevolent Peacekeeping Force

A prevalent theme within the released Access to Information (ATI) documents is the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) claims of impartiality, and, at times, the force appeared neutral within the discourse. The benevolent Mountie myth (Mackey, 2005) was a discernable recurring theme found with the RCMP's claims of *cultural sensitivity*, as an impartial peacekeeping force. However, this claim of cultural sensitivity is challenged when juxtaposed with RCMP actions on Wet'suwet'en territory, as external accounts demonstrated an incongruity between the Community Industry Response Group's (C-IRG's) peacekeeping discourse and C-IRG actions. External accounts can be coupled with the previous discussion in Chapter Four, which examined how the RCMP had an underlying militarized morality within their internal discourse. The external narratives contribute to the growing literature that contests the benevolent Mountie myth and instead demonstrates how the C-IRG used the benevolent Mountie myth to legitimize their repressive actions during injunction enforcements. Rather than a peacekeeping force guided by impartiality, C-IRG are organized through settler-colonial assumptions that culminated in a militarized policing of Indigenous resurgence. This chapter will first consider the possibility of the Hawthorn Effect within the data (Walby & Larsen, 2012), and then unpack the RCMP's insistence on their neutrality and the benevolent Mountie myth as a present internal ideology (Mackey, 2005).

Methods and Analysis

During the coding process, the themes of impartiality, neutrality, and cultural sensitivity were some of the first visible themes, particularly the repetitive claims of cultural sensitivity within many of the released documents. Accordingly, attention was devoted to recurrent words,

such as *impartial*, and with a focus on how the words were presented within the documents. The text surrounding significant words and phrases was coded amongst the underlying assumption to provide context for each code. Throughout the analysis, the original texts were frequently revisited to ensure the context was fully appreciated, with particular scrutiny applied to how the RCMP engaged with these themes internally. The repeated words were initially separate codes, then grouped under a parent code, of the RCMP's underlying ideology. The themes in this chapter are informed by the codes, all of which reinforced the benevolent Mountie myth, which was revealed during analysis. Following Fairclough's second step, which examines the producer and intended consumers of the text. The RCMP's text was reproduced internally throughout the force, with RCMP as the intended consumers. The RCMP's internal claims produced within the ATI documents with RCMP actions were then compared with external reports. The discrepancies were then compared with the existing literature on the RCMP, specifically the benevolent Mountie myth and its historical and contemporary function within the settler-colonial project. The RCMP's internal discourse reproduces the benevolent Mountie myth, while its actions demonstrate otherwise. This discourse reveals how the RCMP view themselves as a peacekeeping force; however, peace is singularly afforded to the CGL project.

Initially, the section of internal ideology was focused solely on the RCMP's documents. However, the focus shifted during the coding process and expanded to include the underlying assumptions of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), given that many themes of underlying settler-colonial ideologies were present within internal NRCan communication. Similar to the analysis of the RCMP's internal ideology, the themes from NRCan's internal communication were then analyzed alongside NRCan's reconciliation goals and statements by the Canadian state, examining how the text of NRCan can reveal the underlying ideologies and the function of

government organizations within the settler-colonial project, made visible during the CGL project.

Hawthorn Effect

FOI/ATI requests produce a unique data set by providing insight into an organization's internal views and discourse; however, there is the possibility of internally censored documents, resulting in a guarded approach concerning written communication. Walby and Larsen (2012) advise of the possibility of the Hawthorn Effect when using FOI/ATI documents. While initially developed by behavioural sciences, the Hawthorn Effect recognizes if a person is aware that they are being watched they may modify their behaviour. The effect has been applied to qualitative research, including FOI/ATI research (Walby & Larsen, 2012), and extends to methods an organization may employ to avoid requests or even the elimination of records that may be subject to a FOI/ATI request (Walby & Larsen, 2012). For example, through an ATI request, Walby and Larsen "obtained a copy of an internal training document that includes the heading 'How you can avoid an ATIP request'" (2012, p.37), alluding to methods that the RCMP may use to remove records or refuse to disclose requested files. The RCMP receives a multitude ATI requests and has overwhelmingly failed to fulfill the requests within a reasonable time frame (Information Commissioner of Canada, 2020). This is one method to avoid public scrutiny, and this thesis project experienced the RCMP failing to fulfill the ATI requests within a reasonable period. The RCMP are aware that many of their internal conversations, documents, and notes are requested by academics and investigative journalists. Accordingly, it can be assumed that there is the possibility of self-censorship within C-IRG's communication, especially since they are a contentious group of the RCMP under public scrutiny. While the repeated themes across the

documents allude to underlying assumptions and not self-censorship, the two are not mutually exclusive. That being said, the RCMP can still understand itself as a benevolent force while recognizing that its actions demonstrate otherwise, and avoiding disclosing documents that dispute its external and internal image. This chapter will focus on the underlying themes within the data with the RCMP's external actions, assuming that these repetitive and consistent themes are an underlying assumption of the force. However, regardless of whether the themes are self-censorship or not, the present themes still attempt to position the force as an impartial, benevolent, peacekeeping force.

Benevolent Mountie

This section will now turn to look at the benevolent Mountie theme found within the released FOI/ATI documents. Within the settler-colonial project, the RCMP has employed ideological state apparatuses to reproduce the benevolent Mountie myth, especially within the media (Mackey, 2005). The RCMP actively reproduces the myth that they are a benevolent *peacekeeping* force, historically and contemporarily, while their actions contradict these sentiments. The benevolent Mountie myth was visible during the Wet'suwet'en flashpoint with the RCMP's news releases, and the internal ideology found within the ATI documents. I will first touch on the idea of the RCMP as a benevolent peacekeeping force, the RCMP as an impartial force, and lastly, unpack the RCMP's internal discourse of cultural sensitivity.

As discussed in the last chapter, the RCMP's putative function is to "keep the peace," especially during injunction enforcements.¹⁰⁹ This discourse of keeping the peace replicates the myth on which the NWMP was founded; however, the peace is for settler capitalism and not for

¹⁰⁹ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506, p.66

Indigenous peoples, who are a barrier to the expansion of resource extraction. Moreover, this discourse implies that land defenders are not peaceful (Walby & Hume, 2021). The RCMP's assessments of land defenders (as discussed in Chapter Five) as illegal and disruptive bolster the RCMP's peacekeeping claims. Keeping the peace is a theme found within C-IRG's document that outlines their approach to the 2019 injunction enforcement;¹¹⁰ this theme is similarly replicated in the 2020 injunction enforcement, with C-IRG's internally stated objective to "keep the peace."¹¹¹ In a briefing note, C-IRG mentioned the reallocation of members from Fairy Creek¹¹² to Wet'suwet'en to "keep the peace" in late October 2021¹¹³ before the November 2021 injunction enforcement. All injunction enforcements contained the same discourse of maintaining the peace; however, the militarized raid of Wet'suwet'en territory during each injunction enforcement is incommensurable with the internal discourse of C-IRG.

While it appears as if there is a dissonance between keeping the peace and what materially happens during RCMP injunction enforcements, it rather demonstrates that the RCMP's understanding of keeping the peace applies purely to the fossil fuel project and its unimpeded construction/operation. Here, the RCMP's ideological assumptions are informed through fossil capital and settler colonialism. Through settler capital logic, violently removing land defenders from their unceded territory while contributing to the ongoing theft of land for the settler-colonial project and the climate catastrophe all appear under the umbrella of keeping the peace. The underlying assumption of the RCMP is to ensure the reproduction of settler capital.

¹¹⁰ Access Request # A201904658, p.4, 6, 9, 13

¹¹¹ Access Request # A202001400, p.199

¹¹² Fairy Creek was a large mobilization against old-growth logging in B.C., centralized on Pacheedaht territory in the Fairy Creek Watershed (Cox, 2021). The logging company, Teal Jones, sought an injunction against the blockades that prevented old-growth logging (Cox, 2021), and C-IRG was active in surveilling and policing the dissent (Forester, 2022).

¹¹³ Access Request # A202302673, p.45

The RCMP, as a repressive state apparatus, is guided and organized by ideologies of the state apparatus, including fossil capitalism and settler colonialism.

The RCMP operates as the coercive arm of the state, while also having a hegemonic function itself. The CGL flashpoint illuminated C-IRG's repressive actions that threatened the longstanding benevolent Mountie myth. However, through the discourse of keeping the peace, the RCMP can secure consent for their repressive actions within the RCMP, the government, and civil society. The discourse of keeping the peace contributes to the benevolent Mountie myth, while land defenders are a threat to the peace, garnering consent for RCMP violence. Historically, the RCMP used the same discourse while violently removing Indigenous peoples from their territories for settler capitalism (Mackey, 2005); contemporarily, the same discourse is followed by the same actions. The historic hegemonic project of the RCMP has established the force as an amiable organization, allowing the RCMP to continue its function of ushering in extractive settler capital projects by removing Indigenous peoples from their land.

Impartial RCMP

The previous section examined the benevolent Mountie myth, which is further supported by the RCMP's claims as a neutral force. The RCMP used the claim of impartiality to position itself as a force removed from economic and political interests. The claims of impartiality obscure the active role of the RCMP in advancing hegemonic interests. The RCMP stated, "The RCMP always remains impartial during civil disobedience. However, the RCMP's neutrality ends when police enforcement action begins."¹¹⁴ The RCMP also stated that "The police are not 'neutral,' where neutral means staying out of a conflict, taking no action, or doing nothing at all;

¹¹⁴ Access Request # A-2016-09240, p.7

but they remain impartial.”¹¹⁵ However, this RCMP claim has been disproven by RCMP actions historically and on Wet’suwet’en territory. The RCMP failed to remain impartial or neutral, given that they sided and actively collaborated with industry for the CGL pipeline project, as already demonstrated within this thesis. However, the RCMP’s claim of neutrality discursively positioned the RCMP as the force to maintain the peace from the outside; the conflict is framed as between industry and the Wet’suwet’en rather than the land defenders against industry, the RCMP, and the state.

Following the theme of neutrality, the RCMP claimed that they operate at a distance from the political while simultaneously beholden to it. For example:

Police are not partisan. They are servants of the Law. They operate independently of government, Cabinet Ministers, political parties, private businesses and individuals when exercising operational policing duties, including enforcement of injunctions. The agendas and priorities of these parties do not restrict or bind the police when officers make discretionary decisions in law enforcement. Police will take these agendas and priorities into account to ensure that law enforcement actions have the minimum possible adverse effects on public and private interests; however, police enjoy considerable independence in their enforcement of the law.¹¹⁶

There are a few key points to unpack here. First, if the RCMP operates outside of the political and economic spheres and has independence in enforcing the law, then their highly militarized approach to injunction enforcement is their own decision. The RCMP’s approach hardly qualifies as neutral or impartial, especially during each injunction enforcement on Wet’suwet’en territory, in which the RCMP/C-IRG were deployed as a military force in surveilling, policing,

¹¹⁵ Access Request # A202004198, p.9

¹¹⁶ Access Request # A202004198, p.9

and criminalizing land defenders. Moreover, the RCMP's creation of C-IRG highlights the contradiction of impartiality since this force was tasked specifically to police fossil fuel projects that trespass through Indigenous territory. However, while the RCMP argue that they operate independently, C-IRG sought permission from the Minister of Public Safety to redeploy members to Wet'suwet'en in November 2021.¹¹⁷ While the RCMP claimed to operate at an arm's length from the government, they also sought consent from the government for certain actions. While the RCMP contended that they consider all parties' priorities, they sided with "the rule of law" of the settler state and industry, who used the courts to ensure pipeline expansion.

Despite their predisposition to favour the settler state, thereby siding with fossil capital expansion, the RCMP claimed the role of a mediator between industry and Indigenous resistance. The RCMP removed themselves from the issue by stating,

The conflict between the oil and gas industries, Indigenous communities, and governments all across the province has been ongoing for several years. This has never been a police issue. In fact, the BC RCMP is impartial, and we respect the rights of individuals to peaceful, lawful, and safe protest.¹¹⁸

The RCMP's denial of their role as police throughout the Wet'suwet'en conflict removes the violence, surveillance, and repressive actions, allowing the RCMP to claim themselves as an impartial and benevolent force. While their actions demonstrated otherwise, the internal discourse can be perceived as understanding themselves as neutral peacekeepers, or it could be a consequence of the Hawthorn effect, whereby the RCMP align their practices with an anticipation of potentially embarrassing ATI requests. Nevertheless, with this statement, the RCMP remove themselves from culpability and instead position themselves as an intermediary

¹¹⁷ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506

¹¹⁸ Access Request # A-2019-09180, p.3

between Indigenous peoples and the fossil fuel industry. The RCMP's claim that the CGL pipeline project is not a police issue is weakened with contradictory factors. Particularly, C-IRG was specifically created to police the CGL pipeline project, and the accusations of violence from C-IRG's actions on Wet'suwet'en territory demonstrate that it is indeed a police issue. However, the claims of impartiality allow the RCMP to act with impunity.

Cultural Insensitivity

Another significant theme is how C-IRG reproduced the discourse of cultural sensitivity, giving the impression that C-IRG were in some capacity engaging in reconciliation, while they criminalized Indigenous resistance. While the ability of the RCMP to engage with reconciliation can be highly contested (and rightly so), this section will focus on the discourse of cultural sensitivity and the actions of the RCMP. Before the 2019 injunction enforcement, RCMP members received “cultural sensitivity training” provided by “local First Nations Policing RCMP members.”¹¹⁹ Cultural sensitivity is included in C-IRG’s injunction enforcement document¹²⁰ and in the *After-Action Review*, whereby it was deemed that

Cultural sensitivity is a core component of the policing style determined by the Gold Commander, and the Silver Commander mandated that all RCMP personnel deployed to the operation would receive training in local Indigenous culture and traditions¹²¹ and that ‘Upholding the cultural integrity of an Indigenous community affected by an injunction must be an essential goal of any like operation going forward.’¹²²

¹¹⁹ Access Request # A-2019-09180, p.24

¹²⁰ Access Request # A201904658

¹²¹ Access Request # A202004198, p.16

¹²² Access Request # A202004198, p.17

The RCMP understood the execution of their operations to be culturally sensitive and successful. However, there is a difference between a cursory understanding of Indigenous culture, presented through a colonial policing lens, and meaningfully engaging in appropriate cultural sensitivity.

Cultural sensitivity, or awareness of Indigenous cultures and traditions, merely scrapes at the surface of the obligations of settlers and fails to address the root issue of colonialism and harms that continue, especially through the RCMP. The claims of cultural sensitivity ensure the continuity of the RCMP as they made small concessions, which appeared to accommodate reconciliation while failing to engage in larger concessions that would address the settler-colonial harms of the force. With a focus on cultural sensitivity, the RCMP can learn about Indigenous governance and culture, but this fails to go beyond and engage in recognition of Indigenous leadership or governance. While the state has recognized Indigenous rights and title to land, it fails to materially follow through with the recognition. As the arm of the state, the RCMP can offer cultural sensitivity while demanding that the Wet'suwet'en recognize the supremacy of settler laws. As such, RCMP leadership can issue orders to shoot to kill Indigenous land defenders while claiming to be culturally sensitive. However, the two are mutually exclusive; the RCMP cannot reduce Indigenous peoples to bare life (see Agamben, 1998) through racializing surveillance (see Browne, 2015) while claiming to be sensitive to Indigenous culture.

In addition, claiming to understand cultural sensitivity while dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their land is self-contradictory. Coulthard (2014, p.61) posits that

it is a profound misunderstanding to think of land or place as simply some material object of profound importance to Indigenous cultures (although it is this too); instead, it ought to

be understood as a field of ‘relationships of things to each other.’ Place is a way of knowing, of experiencing and relating to the world and with others.

A cursory understanding of Indigenous culture would, at the minimum, appreciate the centrality and importance of land. However, the RCMP has been tasked with dispossession and reterritorialization of land for the circuitry of fossil capitalism, which works to sever human and non-human relationships. Land is a network of relationships, epistemologies, and pedagogies (Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2017). Dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their land is a dispossession of knowledge, ways of being, culture, and sovereignty. The state and the RCMP cannot fully recognize Indigenous culture beyond a surface level. Indigenous culture is inherently entwined with Indigenous sovereignty (Coulthard, 2014), which confronts the settler state and fossil fuel expansion. While the RCMP claims cultural sensitivity, they can never fully recognize Indigenous culture because it is a barrier to the settler-colonial hegemonic project in Canada.

The inability of the RCMP, or any organization within the state apparatus, to wholly recognize Indigenous culture is further revealed by the actions of the RCMP on Wet’suwet’en territory. In an internal email, C-IRG discussed how, in October 2021, “It shows us (C-IRG) walking up a road forcefully pushing protestors out of the way. There is also a segment that shows members laughing about a genocide comment and a few other remarks that could be taken out of context.”¹²³ The issue for C-IRG was that these comments confronted their benevolent image and displayed how the RCMP operated antithetically to cultural sensitivity. The RCMP was concerned more about the recording than the violence committed by C-IRG members.¹²⁴

¹²³ Access Request # A202204718, p.98

¹²⁴ Access Request # A202204718

The cultural sensitivity that C-IRG discussed was absent from the actions on the ground and the conversation that followed; rather, there was a visible cultural insensitivity.

A month following the 2021 email, the RCMP's November 2021 injunction enforcement on Coyote Camp revealed the vast inadequacy of their cultural sensitivity training. It was revealed later in court that C-IRG members laughed about RCMP violence, after an Indigenous land defender was beaten, and referred to the land defenders, who had red handprints on their faces symbolizing Missing Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit peoples (MMIWG2S), as orcs (Hosgood, 2024a; Simmons, 2022e). Appallingly, in the very region where C-IRG mocked Indigenous land defenders there has been an epidemic of MMIWG2S, reflecting the RCMP's continuing failed response to MMIWG2S (McDiarmid, 2019; Hosgood, 2021a). The RCMP are not a benevolent, impartial peace-keeping force. The RCMP replicate settler-colonial violence while appearing to be impartial peacekeepers; settler-colonial assumptions are an organizing ideology of the RCMP that ensure the expansion of fossil capital. Internally and externally, the RCMP reproduced a discourse of benevolence. However, peace is only afforded for industry, while Indigenous peoples were violently removed from their territory. The violence enacted on land defenders during 2021 revealed the falsities of the RCMP; however, the continued claims of a peace-keeping force granted the RCMP a license to continue policing land defenders for the CGL pipeline project.

The State Apparatus and Reconciliation

Parallel to the RCMP's claims of cultural sensitivity, within the federal government, NRCan initiatives in reconciliation serve the expansion of fossil fuel projects, specifically the

CGL pipeline project. As part of the state apparatus, NRCan attempted to ensure the flow of fossil capital would not be interrupted by reconciliation:

We need to find a way to advance of [*sic*] Canada's Reconciliation objectives without undermining the value to the proponent, Indigenous communities and Canadians across the country of our regulatory approvals. These must be respected and projects must be allowed to proceed unimpeded.¹²⁵

Reconciliation parameters are defined by the state and omit the assertion of Indigenous sovereignty if it impedes fossil capital expansion. Similarly, NRCan argued that “the Government of Canada has made all reasonable efforts to have a meaningful dialogue with hereditary chiefs. We strongly believe that true reconciliation requires all sides to be at the table.”¹²⁶ Again, the onus was placed on Indigenous peoples to engage in reconciliation and recognize the authority of the settler state, laws, and economy, while the Canadian government refused to acknowledge the authority of the hereditary chiefs.

While reconciliation is intended to be a renewed relationship, the manipulation by NRCan was one-sided and reinforced the same colonial violence of dispossession for resource extraction. NRCan further argued, “We need to decouple broader discussions aimed at achieving reconciliation from individual projects, and engage as governments on cumulative impacts.”¹²⁷ This statement demonstrates how NRCan attempted to remove the culpability of fossil fuel projects and their direct impact on reconciliation from public discourse. NRCan argued for omission of individual projects from reconciliation discussions; however, as the existing literature demonstrates the fossil fuel industry is a cohesive, interconnected hegemonic bloc

¹²⁵ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.72

¹²⁶ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.124

¹²⁷ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.72

(Carroll et al., 2018; Carroll, 2020). There are no individual projects; rather they are all connected and supported by this bloc. Removing specific projects from reconciliation discussions ensures resource projects can continue, while the fossil fuel industry, as a whole, can make small concessions for reconciliation that does not impede expansion of the industry.

Consequently, Natural Resources Canada has an action plan guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which includes informed consent by Indigenous peoples and involving Indigenous peoples within decision-making processes (NRCan, 2023). However, the internal discourse demonstrates that NRCan's intentions and actions are antithetical to their action plan. The efforts to circumnavigate reconciliation efforts undermine Indigenous sovereignty and any actions to address the climate catastrophe; the efforts by NRCan are not specific to the CGL pipeline but to all fossil fuel projects in Canada. However, NRCan's statements demonstrate how different organizations of the state apparatus, such as NRCan and the RCMP, as heterogeneous institutions, actively work as a unified bloc for the fossil fuel industry, which undermines reconciliation.

Concluding Thoughts

The internal ideology that was replicated within C-IRG's documents was refuted by the actions of C-IRG members; instead, what was revealed is a force that portrays itself to be benevolent while continuing colonial dispossession. The RCMP's claims of cultural sensitivity were refuted by the RCMP actions on Wet'suwet'en territory. Instead, cultural insensitivity is baked right into the function of the RCMP since they are guided by the logic of settler colonialism. The RCMP failed to engage in any fundamental level of cultural sensitivity, since the force is ideologically incapable of recognizing Indigenous governance and the role of land

within Indigenous governance. As a settler-colonial policing force, is incompatible with being an impartial force that engages in cultural sensitivity. Unified within the state apparatus, the RCMP and NRCan uphold settler-capitalist values and morality, with the same function of ensuring the continuation of fossil capital in Canada. The RCMP appear benevolent, both externally and internally, as they endeavor to achieve consent for their repression actions.

Chapter 7: The CGL Flashpoint

A dominant function of the media, as an ideological state apparatus (ISA), is securing hegemony. The media garners consent and interpellates subjects in ways that harness human agency for reproducing fossil capital hegemony (Althusser, 2006; Jessop, 2016). The function of the media is often invisible and left unproblematized. Within the CGL flashpoint, the media aided in manufacturing consent for the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) project, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) repression, while delegitimizing dissent to the pipeline. The unified bloc of fossil fuel allies' use of the media bolstered support for the RCMP actions on Wet'suwet'en territory by framing the Indigenous resistance as illegal and divisive. Comparatively, fossil fuel allies used opinion pieces to organize consent for the CGL project and attempted to further entrench fossil fuels within reconciliation efforts and addressing global emissions. This chapter will examine how different institutions within the state, such as elected governments, the RCMP, and the constellation of fossil fuel allies, make strategic use of the media during a flashpoint.

Drawing on the TMX Flashpoint

Flashpoints offer an opportunity to examine the hegemonic function of the media. Shaw's (2021) analysis of during the Trans Mountain Expansion pipeline (TMX) flashpoint revealed uncontested spaces of hegemony by focusing on how legacy media reflected fossil capital interests. By using flashpoints as a framework, Shaw revealed patterns within the media that primarily favoured industry perspectives, dominant themes of economic benefits of the pipeline were juxtaposed with Indigenous resistance framed as a barrier to Canadian economic prosperity. The media's favouring of fossil fuel narration ensures that "conversations remained siloed"

(Shaw, 2021, p.405), maintaining a dominant hegemonic narrative within legacy media outlets (Briziarelli & Islam, 2024). The favouring of certain narratives ensures the visibility of certain voices, while other remain hidden (Janks, 1997). While dissenting voices are included within legacy media outlets, the reproduction of pro-fossil fuel voices in the media limit the scope conversations and public opinions.

Drawing on Shaw (2021), this chapter examines how the media reflected fossil capital interests, first looking at the RCMP's employment of the media through media statements, press releases, and interviews to examine the RCMP's role within flashpoints while comparing the RCMP's actions with their media statements. Second, I examine the media statements and drafts from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), government organizations, and elected governments, who while differing components of the government are unified within their media statements and support of the CGL project. The third section of this chapter examines opinion pieces submitted by fossil fuel allies wherein the active and cohesive role of the fossil fuel industry is visible and contributes to the dominant themes found within legacy media and government media releases. This cacophony of fossil fuel voices, while pushing at different angles, is united under the same function to ensure the completion of the CGL pipeline project, which requires RCMP repression as the pipeline has failed to secure consent from the Wet'suwet'en.

Methods and Analysis

Since Chapter 7 explores the use of media during a flashpoint, some sections employ different methods and analyses employed in the previous chapters. While the sections on "Bad Journalists" and the Government and Media in this chapter employed the same coding methods and analyses as the previous chapters, the following sections' methods differ slightly.

As such, for section on the Control of the Narrative, the analysis slightly differs, while still utilizing the Freedom of Information (FOI)/Access to Information (ATI) documents. For this section, the RCMP's media statements within the FOI/ATI documents were highlighted under a broad code of media statements. I then separated the codes according to dates around the three injunctions enforcement periods. During the coding process, some text sections were highlighted under multiple codes. For example, the theme of *war* was initially outside of the 2021 injunction enforcement code. However, moving the theme into the 2021 enforcement code was logical when I returned to re-examine the codes. During coding, there was a focus on language and tone, with both compared with external media reports and existing literature, which assisted in unpacking the function of the RCMP's media statements. The themes here, similar to previous chapters, were then compared alongside media reports and existing literature.

For the section with the heading Elected Politicians, the analysis was expanded to examine public statements from politicians. I explored elected governments' statements in the media, both through statements in existing literature and five media articles. This analysis is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to demonstrate the supplementary function of elected governments during a flashpoint. There was a focus on the specific discourse employed by elected government officials, the tone used, and how these discourses could be used persuasively, drawing heavily on Shaw's (2021) analysis of elected governments during flashpoints.

Similarly, the section on Fossil Fuel Voices, examined the fossil fuel industry's use of opinion pieces during a flashpoint. For this section, I drew on The Globe and Mail, The National Post, The Province, and The Vancouver Sun, using keywords of *Coastal GasLink* and *Wet'suwet'en* to locate pro-fossil fuel and LNG articles. Articles were eliminated if the authors

had no evident ties to the fossil fuel industry. A search of published articles through think-tank websites provided additional opinion pieces. This search is not exhaustive, nor does it include voices that disrupt the chorus of pro-fossil voices, but rather, the intent is to expose the fossil fuels industry's use of opinion pieces during a flashpoint and the media's privileging of pro-natural gas and LNG opinion pieces. The search of opinion pieces elicited twenty-five articles supporting the overall fossil fuel industry, the CGL pipeline, and the LNG Canada facility where the CGL pipeline project terminates by the fossil fuel bloc.

The opinion piece articles were read multiple times and then coded with the prominent themes. Many articles voiced similar opinions, while others approached their arguments from differing angles, demonstrating a heterogeneous bloc. Attention was placed on certain language, text, tone, and function of the opinion pieces, especially connecting articles to the CGL project, as they were written during the flashpoint. The dominant themes and underlying ideologies are then taken up alongside existing literature and compared with similar themes found within this project to demonstrate a cohesive approach by the fossil fuel industry and allies.

The RCMP's use of Media

The RCMP are well versed in the power of media releases and know that they can control the narrative. Police reports are often taken as objective truths, and consequently police are a powerful voice in the media. The released ATI files included internal RCMP documents that stressed the importance of media releases and how to portray events to the public.¹²⁸ The RCMP, highly conscious of the media's ability to shift opinions into "desired behaviour," use the media to build trust and protect the RCMP's image.¹²⁹ One purpose of a RCMP news release is

¹²⁸ Access Request# AI-2023-09668

¹²⁹ Access Request# AI-2023-09668, p.838

to “control the initial message in a timely fashion,”¹³⁰ demonstrating a key function of legacy media for the RCMP that can support the benevolent image of the RCMP. Legacy media and the RCMP have cooperative working relationship, through which “The RCMP and the media are intricately interwoven. It's a relationship that can be challenging for both parties, but it can also be very rewarding.”¹³¹ The RCMP media engagement is primarily reserved for legacy media outlets, such as the Postmedia group (Global News, Vancouver Sun, Vancouver Province), Blackpress community newspapers, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).¹³² As in other domains, the RCMP employs hegemonic tactics in its media relations, to garner consent for the RCMP’s repressive actions, while bolstering its benign image.

Bad “journalists”

During an injunction enforcement, the RCMP wields power as an organization considered to be an objective and credible source. Simultaneously, the RCMP creates boundaries delineating where journalists can report that can limit a journalist's view of events and RCMP actions. Throughout the injunction enforcements in 2019 and 2020 on Wet’suwet’en territory, the RCMP constructed temporary exclusion zones that limited journalists' access.¹³³ While the RCMP invited news agencies to the exclusion zones, they preferred legacy media outlets, like the CBC, Global News, and CTV.¹³⁴ C-IRG created boundaries as to which media organizations or journalists belong and do not belong, and was one avenue through which the RCMP could control the media narrative.

¹³⁰ Access Request# AI-2023-09668, p.691

¹³¹ Access Request# AI-2023-09668, p.718

¹³² Access Request# AI-2023-09668

¹³³ Access Request # A-2019-09180; Access Request # A202001400

¹³⁴ Access Request # A202001400

When journalists' reports contradict RCMP statements and the dominant themes found within legacy media, they are delegitimized internally by the policing organization. Within the RCMP's released ATI files after the injunction enforcement in November 2021, there is a clear indication of the RCMP's negative opinion of investigative journalists on Wet'suwet'en territory. The RCMP are conscious of the power of the media, especially with the media's ability to organize consent for certain actions or shift opinions. Shaw (2021) highlights how alternative media such as The Tyee, The Narwhal, and The National Observer, and investigative journalists can disrupt the homogenous voice in the media and can shift public perceptions. During the November 2021 injunction enforcement, when the RCMP arrested land defenders and two journalists (Bracken, 2021), the released ATI documents reveal that the RCMP repeatedly described the arrested journalists as "journalists," sandwiched between two inverted commas.¹³⁵ C-IRG members disparagingly refused to recognize that the two journalists arrested by C-IRG were indeed journalists.

The ATI documents reveal that the RCMP assessed the legitimacy of journalists according to the 2019 Brake decision during the 2021 Wet'suwet'en injunction enforcement, and as well at the Fairy Creek injunction enforcement.¹³⁶ The Brake decision originated from the Muskrat Falls dam site when a journalist, Justin Brake, was arrested and charged because he was reporting within an injunction zone and accused of going beyond the boundaries of journalism (Bracken, 2021). The RCMP used the Brake Decision to assess the legitimacy of a journalist with the following criteria:

He or she is not actively assisting, participating with or advocating for the protesters about whom the reports are being made [...] does no act that could reasonably be

¹³⁵ Access Request # A202204718, p.23; Access Request # PSS-2022-21506, p.79, 81

¹³⁶ Access Request # A202204721

*considered as aiding or abetting the protestors in their protest actions [...]not otherwise obstructing or interfering with those seeking to enforce the law.*¹³⁷

However, the charges against Brake were never upheld in court, which preserved the rights of journalists to report within injunction zones (Bracken, 2021). Nevertheless, it was used to detain journalists at Fairy Creek (2021), and to arrest journalists on Wet'suwet'en territory¹³⁸ (Bracken, 2021). The Canadian courts and the RCMP collaborate to determine who is and who is not a proper journalist. This is a precarious collusion because organizations within the state determine what events and perspectives can be reported, while voices that contradict the RCMP's press releases or question RCMP actions on the territory can be hampered. The RCMP's arrest of the two journalists in 2021 limits the profession of journalism and attempts to suppress voices that confront the RCMP's narrative within legacy media.

In the absence of journalists during the November 2021 injunction enforcement, it may not have been revealed how C-IRG described land defenders as orcs or laughed about violence inflicted on a land defender (Hosgood, 2024). Investigative journalists who report outside of the RCMP's boundaries have the power to fracture hegemonic narratives, especially concerning C-IRG actions, or the RCMP's longstanding amiable image. Because investigative journalists can produce counter-hegemonic narratives that problematize the RCMP's presence on Wet'suwet'en territory and expose C-IRG's violence, the RCMP described them as "journalists," in attempts to discredit the journalists and their incriminating reports.

¹³⁷ Access Request # A202204721, p-12; italics in document

¹³⁸ Access Request # A202204721

Control of the Narrative

Another significant aspect that maintains the RCMP's control of the narrative and its image is the RCMP's use of legacy media during flashpoints. This section examines the RCMP's media press releases and statements to media agencies and contrasts them with the actions of the RCMP. There is an incongruity between RCMP discourse and their actions, highlighting how the RCMP use legacy media outlets as an ideological state apparatus that both reinforces the benevolent Mountie myth and rationalizes RCMP repression on Wet'suwet'en territory. C-IRG's actions during each flashpoint became visible, disrupting the RCMP's image. Thus, during each flashpoint the RCMP employ the media to underpin their image and actions on the territory. While the RCMP actively uses legacy media, this section also examines legacy media's partiality toward the RCMP's narrative.

2019 Injunction Enforcement

Public safety is a recurring theme throughout this project, which is further continued with the RCMP's use of public safety discourses within the media as a method to secure consent during the 2019 injunction enforcement. Media releases by the RCMP replicate the myth that C-IRG is a peacekeeping force.¹³⁹ The RCMP used the reach of the media, as an ideological state apparatus, to reproduce the benign image of C-IRG and the RCMP. Within a RCMP draft statement for the media, the RCMP wrote "The primary concerns of the police are public safety, police officer safety, and preservation of the right to peaceful, lawful and safe protest, within the terms set by the Supreme Court in the injunction."¹⁴⁰ The RCMP statement infers that there had been previous infractions of safety and peace, while simultaneously implying that the RCMP

¹³⁹ Access Request # A201900393; Access Request # A-2019-09180

¹⁴⁰ Access Request # A201900393, p.2

presence is peaceful (Hume & Walby, 2021). However, the RCMP presence was far from peaceful; C-IRG disrupted the peace and inflicted violence on Indigenous land. The theme of peace and safety is found within other RCMP media statements: “police [...] will be ensuring that enough police officers will be present in the area to keep the peace and ensure everyone's safety”¹⁴¹ and “We are very hopeful that there will not be violence or disorder as we enforce the court order; however, the safety of the public and our officers is paramount when policing demonstrations, particularly due to the remote area in which the bridge is located.”¹⁴² The RCMP’s discourse implied that the violence would be coming from the land defenders, as opposed to the RCMP, obscuring that the RCMP were the violent group. Moreover, the RCMP’s statements place the onus on Indigenous peoples to be peaceful when the demands for peace are one-sided. If the land defenders resist, it is violent; however, when the RCMP invades a sovereign territory, they are ensuring peace. Within the RCMP statement, it is implied that land defenders’ safety is not part of public safety, and their safety is not prioritized, which was witnessed at each injunction enforcement.

While the RCMP called for non-violence and peaceful outcomes, the RCMP were permitted to use lethal force if they deemed it necessary (Hume & Walby, 2021) and employed lethal overwatch during the 2019 invasion.¹⁴³ In the media, the RCMP employed the discourse of peace and safety; however, they have the discretion of how they enforce the injunction. “As with previous injunction orders and police enforcement clauses, the Court issues the Injunction Order, and then the police are given discretion to determine how and when to implement the Order.”¹⁴⁴ Contrary to their discourse in the media, the RCMP opted for a heavily militarized approach to

¹⁴¹ Access Request # A201900393, p.3

¹⁴² Access Request # A201900393, p.4

¹⁴³ Access Request # A202004198

¹⁴⁴ Access Request # A-2019-09180, p.5

confront unarmed, peaceful land defenders. Both the RCMP propaganda and legacy media portrayed the force as benevolent Mounties, downplaying that force's militarized repression of Indigenous land defenders. While discourses have changed, the material outcome has been the same since the inception of Canada. The RCMP dispossesses Indigenous peoples from their land for resource extraction and capital accumulation. In our current setting, the RCMP ensures that pipeline construction can continue unimpeded, *peacefully* free from Indigenous dissent.

2020 Injunction Enforcement

Around the time of the 2020 injunction enforcement, the RCMP similarly participated in portraying themselves as a benevolent force within the media, employing the ideological apparatus to organize consent for state repression. In a media statement following the injunction enforcement, the RCMP wrote, “While optically, due to the number of police officers deployed, our presence may appear imposing. In reality, a minimal amount of force was required to support the arrests or removal of individuals from within the exclusion zone.”¹⁴⁵ The RCMP's accounts beneficially frame the RCMP's actions as requiring less force than they anticipated. This narrative does not mean the force applied to individuals was minimal, nor does it negate that the RCMP was prepared to use greater force on the land defenders.

While both the RCMP and others insist that it is the RCMP's decision on how and when to enforce an injunction (see Simmons, 2022d), there are conflicting accounts of the RCMP's discretion during injunction enforcements. In a media statement after the 2020 injunction enforcements, the RCMP argued, “given that the stakeholders were not able to come to an agreement during the ‘Wiggus’, and the RCMP has maximized the discretionary time frame

¹⁴⁵ Access Request # A-2020-01059, p.9

given by the Court, we will be enforcing the injunction today.”¹⁴⁶ However, the injunction issued by the Supreme Court of Canada did not include any specificities as to when the injunction had to be enforced or if arrests must be made (*Coastal GasLink Pipeline Ltd. v Huson*, 2264 BCSC, 2019). Rather, an enforcement clause provided the legal basis for the RCMP to enforce the injunction (Mazur, 2019). This RCMP framing attempted to absolve themselves of responsibility for their actions, as it transfers the decision beyond the control of the RCMP. Significantly, the militarized approach was not conditioned by the court order. However, through the media statement, the RCMP absolved themselves of their active role in dispossession. Despite this, both the courts and the RCMP are unified under the same function as repressive state apparatuses. When repression is contested, the RCMP attempts a hegemonic approach to organize consent for repressive state actions.

The RCMP’s use of media statements discursively framed the RCMP as a peacekeeping force rather than a militarized police force. The RCMP was highly attentive to the media’s preference for RCMP statements, which allowed the RCMP to control the narrative. One of the released ATI documents includes the tracked changes and edits made by the RCMP for a media release. The documents provide insight into information that the RCMP obscured from public conversation, which include the removal statements that alluded to a relationship between the RCMP and CGL and the active role of TC Energy in the injunction enforcement process. The RCMP originally wrote, “at the request of Coastal Gaslink Pipeline Ltd, the RCMP attended the Morice River Bridge in Houston, BC to enforce the injunction granted by the Supreme Court of British Columbia.”¹⁴⁷ This statement was edited to “On February 6, 2020, the RCMP access control checkpoint at the 27 km mark of the Morice West Forest Service Road became the start-

¹⁴⁶ Access Request # A202001400, p.42

¹⁴⁷ Access Request # A-2020-01059, p.14

point for an RCMP exclusion zone to conduct enforcement action of the BC Supreme Court injunction.”¹⁴⁸ There are a few key insights to unpack within this edited RCMP statement.

The first is that CGL Ltd. and by proxy TC Energy, requested the RCMP to enforce the injunction. The active role of TC Energy is substantiated by the land defenders' accounts from the territory, who revealed that at times CGL workers were directing the RCMP (Simmons, 2022a). As was mentioned earlier, the active role of TC Energy in CIP was highly visible in the 2021 injunction enforcement through the numerous emails and phone calls to the RCMP and government; the active role was similarly conveyed during the 2020 injunction enforcement. Through their insistent appeals to the RCMP to enforce an injunction, TC Energy occupied an active role within critical infrastructure protection and the state apparatus during the CGL flashpoint. TC Energy reaped its rewards when the RCMP enforced the injunction, both in 2020 and 2021, indicating that the RCMP is, in some respects, obliged to TC Energy.

The second revelation is that the RCMP edit obscured the active role of TC Energy, and instead diverted the responsibility on to the court-ordered injunction. The removal of TC Energy from the discussion and simultaneous portrayal of the RCMP as upholding the law permitted TC Energy and the RCMP to divorce themselves from the responsibility of injunction enforcement and instead reallocate it to the courts. While the courts, as part of RSA, occupy a significant role in the injunction enforcement process, the RCMP and TC Energy both occupy key roles once the injunction has been granted. These edits alluded to the RCMP's function within the fossil fuel bloc, since they were requested to enforce the injunction on behalf of the CGL pipeline project. However, the RCMP recognized that the relationship should be omitted from the media statement and instead suppressed TC Energy's and the RCMP's role within fossil capital.

¹⁴⁸ Access Request # A-2020-01059, p.7

2021 Injunction Enforcement

At war

Amid the 2021 injunction enforcement period and its aftermath, the RCMP used its reach through the media to reframe the land defenders, legitimizing RCMP actions. The RCMP framed the land defenders as violent and the movement infiltrated by outsiders, which delegitimized the land defenders' actions within the media. Informed through C-IRG surveillance on the ground and surveillance of social media, the force produced a new threat of *Mohawks* who had come to Wet'suwet'en territory, with reports of land defenders declaring that it "is war," and reports of hearing "war calls."¹⁴⁹ In October 2021, an update detailed: "This morning, our members were conducting regular patrols and were confronted by 40 to 50 people dressed in camouflage. They stated they were Mohawks and ready for war. [...] This is a significant escalation."¹⁵⁰ Howe and Monaghan (2018, p.338) revealed that the RCMP's risk assessment Public Order Profile Scale (POPS) considers the potential of "connectivity between Aboriginal issues and allied groups," as a concern because it becomes harder to police. The POPS assessment and the RCMP's focus on the new attendees to camp were informed through racializing surveillance. The descriptor of *Mohawk* is a signifier alluding to an increase of risk in the RCMP reports. The significant escalation did not include weapons or violence; the escalation was additional bodies on Wet'suwet'en territory from Mohawk territory. When additional Indigenous peoples joined the blockades, racializing surveillance informed the risk assessments by the RCMP, the government, and TC Energy.

¹⁴⁹ Access Request # A202201983, p.11; Access Request # A202302673, p.55

¹⁵⁰ Access Request # PSS-2022-21506, p.20

The concern over Mohawks on Wet'suwet'en territory went beyond the RCMP and involved others within the state apparatus. Before the 2021 injunction enforcement, TC Energy (TCE) advised the provincial government of the putative threat of *Mohawks*.

No major violence (yet) but scuffles are happening with workers, machinery being damaged, etc. There is a new twist with out of province protesters joining the fray (Mohawk). TCE's main worry is lack of law enforcement capacity in the ground. We undertook to ensure issue awareness (and provided advice on engagement) but trust you will be hearing same soon. TCE is preparing letters to Ministers of PS, NRCan and engaging with MINOs and DMs this week to ensure issue awareness as Cabinet gets sworn in.¹⁵¹

Here, TC Energy, and likely their security, actively participated in constructing threat assessments, which could have been used as a rationale for the enforcement of injunctions. When Public Safety Canada (2022, n.p) released their parliamentary issue notes, similar concerns were listed, including recent calls for war due from “The recent arrival of several known individuals from other major Canadian Indigenous protests.” The Public Safety Canada statement was a report drafted by the RCMP;¹⁵² however, the difference between the RCMP internal communication and the public report was that the public report omitted the concern regarding Mohawks. Instead, the concern was framed as “several known individuals.” The reframing could be because the RCMP was aware that they were engaging in a typification and would likely come under scrutiny, especially since this was used to justify further RCMP presence on the territory. The omission similarly ensured the RCMP appeared impartial, while the internal discourse demonstrated otherwise.

¹⁵¹ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.49

¹⁵² Access Request # A202201983, p.11

The RCMP's actions provoked public backlash after the 2021 injunction enforcement, in which the RCMP then took advantage of the media to defend their substantial and violent presence at Coyote Camp. In a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) news article that favoured the RCMP's perspective, the RCMP stated that "Our threat assessment ... had been heightened by publicly available rhetoric on social media by the protesters calling for 'war,' which was a change from previous protests in the area" (Barrera, 2021, n.p). Racializing surveillance informed the RCMP's overt show of force and violence. The RCMP used the putative threat of war within the media to defend the heavily armed C-IRG member's actions and approach, which included tactical troops and assault rifles (Bracken, 2021). Within the article, the RCMP did not mention Mohawks; instead, they focused on the calls for war, and discursively framed the Wet'suwet'en resistance as dangerous, unlawful, and violent. Significantly, the media reproduced the RCMP narrative, demonstrating the interwoven relationship the RCMP described earlier. However, countering the RCMP claims of war, in 2019 Gidimt'en camp stated that the RCMP injunction enforcement would be an act of war, given that they would be invading sovereign Wet'suwet'en territory (Martens, 2019). The RCMP used legacy media to frame the resistance on Wet'suwet'en territory as an escalation, which obscured the RCMP's role as the invading force. The conjectural threat of war, constructed through racializing surveillance, culminated in large RCMP numbers and violence toward land defenders (Hosgood, 2024a). The RCMP used the media, who faithfully reproduced the RCMP's narrative, to justify the police response and to allow CGL workers to return to work on the pipeline project to ensure its completion.

Anarchists

In addition to the threats of war, the RCMP employed the media to reproduce a threat narrative of anarchists spanning the same time frame. Before the November 2021 injunction enforcement, RCMP were apprehensive of anarchists presumed to be on Wet'suwet'en territory; it is not known who the group of anarchists were or if they were indeed anarchists. However, the threat of anarchists stems from protests against free trade and neoliberal policies in the 1990s, such as in Seattle with the protests that disrupted the World Trade Organization (WTO) summit (Wood, 2014). Drawing on the Seattle protests, "the US and Canadian governments promoted or established training programs in more militarized tactics and the strategic incapacitation approach" (Wood, 2014, p.47). Policing agencies viewed the Seattle and other anti-globalization protests of the 1990s as a threat to national security, which included a robust anarchist presence. Comparably, on November 18, 2021, the RCMP reported a concern: "There has been a call to 'shut down Canada' by anarchist supporters of the Gitim't'en Checkpoint group."¹⁵³ On the same day, November 18, 2021, similar concerns were voiced within the provincial government: "Protesters have also called for others, including anarchists, to join the blockades. They have also called for blockades of critical infrastructure across Canada."¹⁵⁴ Within a released ATI document, CSIS, cautions that "anarchist activity can fuel [ideologically motivated violent] extremists."¹⁵⁵ With this in mind, the RCMP constructed of a threat of *anarchists*, which was then reproduced in the media to delegitimize Indigenous resurgence and sanction the RCMP's actions.

¹⁵³ Access Request # A202302673, p.76

¹⁵⁴ Access Request # PSS-2021-15298, p.26

¹⁵⁵ Access Request # CIR-2022-734, p.12

The RCMP and high-policing agencies have a monopoly on threat assessments and access to the media. In a featured online report on the CBC, the RCMP's narrative and the putative threat of *anarchists* is taken as an objective report and reproduced within the article emphasizing that outside anarchist agitators hijacked the Wet'suwet'en resistance (Brown et al., 2023). The CBC article prioritized RCMP voices and narrative, reflecting the media's function during a flashpoint. However, as pointed out in the article, as a dissenting voice, Sleydo, from Wet'suwet'en territory, argued that the RCMP's discourse framed Indigenous land defenders as violent and criminal (Brown et al., 2023). The RCMP's narrative further undermined Indigenous resurgence with the statement, "[Brewer] said 'these anarchists either volunteered or were invited to join the protest, but that once they were in northern B.C., they hijacked the local movement' (Brown et al., 2023), which implied that it was no longer an Indigenous resistance. In addition, when framed in this manner, Brewer's statements could be a divisive tool to push a wedge within the Wet'suwet'en while obscuring the violent role of the RCMP, who were never invited to police the land defenders. While damage was done in February 2022 to work equipment, and no persons were harmed, the article, through the quote from Brewer, frames the resistance as violent and extremist because of the association with *anarchists*. The narrative of outside anarchists further legitimized the RCMP's ongoing presence on the territory.

Because the RCMP are given a platform through media, their narrative was centered as objective and neutral. The overt preference and reproduction of the RCMP's viewpoint reveals a function of the media within a state apparatus, demonstrating how ideology can legitimate repression and bolster the RCMP's image. While the news article included some perfunctory comments from land defenders, the principal focus on the RCMP's narrative, and engaged with C-IRG's account as if it were objective. However, regardless of putative threats of anarchists,

during each injunction enforcement land defenders were framed as illegal, potentially violent, and all experienced C-IRG's violence. The discourse of anarchists (or Mohawks) was used to discursively frame RCMP actions and, within reason, garner consent from the population through the media, which is an integral part of the state ideological apparatus in securing consent.

Government and Media

This section will now shift to elucidate how government organizations and politicians work as a heterogeneous yet unified front, which was visible within media statements and releases. Shaw (2021) revealed during the TMX flashpoint that politicians were the vocal supporters of the project, enabling industry to retreat from public discussion. Guided by Shaw's analysis, this section will first examine the role of different organizations within the state apparatus by looking at the crafted media statements for the CGL pipeline project and then unpack the role of politicians during the CGL flashpoint. Both function to organize consent for fossil fuel projects and resulting RCMP coercion that transcends electoral politics.

The government and state apparatus employed full advantage of the media as a hegemonic tool to procure consent, especially for fossil fuel projects. NRCan and the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation are both involved with LNG in Canada, and are lobbied by TC Energy (LobbyCanada, 2023; ORL, 2023). Both government organizations had drafted advantageous media responses ready in anticipation of media questions concerning the CGL pipeline. For example, one of NRCan's media prompts reads "If pressed on the impact on Indigenous communities," with a drafted response of "The provincially regulated Coastal Gaslink pipeline and LNG Canada touch the traditional territories of 22 First Nations, all of

which have signed agreements with the proponents.”¹⁵⁶ The pre-written responses demonstrate how NRCan understood the reach of the media and the importance of framing the pipeline favourably for the fossil fuel industry. The previous sections demonstrated how NRCan attempted to manipulate reconciliation by putting the onus on Indigenous peoples while attempting to ensure the unimpeded continuation of resource extraction projects. It is perhaps predictable that NRCan would adhere to similar approaches that Shaw (2021) found with media reports on TMX.

The approach by NRCan was similar to that of the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation, which produced a media response line of “Coastal Gaslink has support from all 20 elected First Nation councils along the pipeline route, including the Wet’suwet’en.”¹⁵⁷ This statement appears to imply that all Indigenous communities have signed on to their project. While different from NRCan’s approach, it had the same persuasive effect, which positioned the Wet’suwet’en resistance as outliers and contributed to the already present legitimizing discourse for the RCMP enforcement of the injunction. Both government organizations focused on TC Energy and LNG Canada signed agreements with First Nations, contributing to the constructed division between band councils and hereditary chiefs.

Returning briefly to the last point found within NRCan’s media line is the statement that the pipeline routes “touch the traditional territories.” The argument by NRCan implied that the pipeline projects are non-intrusive, and that they merely graze the territory, while gaining support from all Indigenous communities that the pipeline *touches*. However, the prompt was from November 23, 2021, which followed the recent violent removal of land defenders from their territory for the pipeline. Further challenging NRCan’s claim is that the CGL pipeline has

¹⁵⁶ Access Request # A-2022-00092, p.93

¹⁵⁷ Access Request # MOE-2020-02366, p.2

earned multiple orders and warnings from BC Environmental Assessment for the pipeline's numerous environmental violations (Simmons, 2023). The dispossession and environmental violations demonstrate that the pipeline does not touch upon territories but rather is a vast reterritorialization project characterized by devastation. Coupled with other efforts that claim the pipeline project has Indigenous support, NRCan's discursive framing of the CGL pipeline as one that merely touches the territory renders it an entirely different project.

Another common theme that connects the different government apparatuses was their emphasis of the economic importance of the CGL pipeline, with a particular focus on the economic benefits to Indigenous communities. For example, another NRCan's media prompt stated "If pressed on liquefied natural gas and LNG Canada" which included a response of "The \$40-billion LNG Canada project will create 10,000 jobs. It will also create millions of dollars in construction contracts for local and Indigenous businesses."¹⁵⁸ Much the same, in a draft media statement, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation argued that

The results so far: more than \$1.25 billion has been invested in British Columbia to date; over 4000 individuals are currently working on the project; and almost \$900 million of the total investment has been awarded to Indigenous owned businesses or joint venture partnerships. In addition, the company has project agreements with all 20 elected chiefs and councils of the First Nations along the pipeline route.¹⁵⁹

Here, both NRCan and the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation focused on economic benefits as a form of economic reconciliation, which implied that Indigenous communities are benefiting; however, it is only certain Indigenous businesses that benefit, along with the fossil fuel industry. Moreover, in practice, many Indigenous communities will see the

¹⁵⁸ Access Request # A-2022-00092

¹⁵⁹ Access Request # PSS-2021-15273, p.2

opposite with the transformation of waters and land into spaces of fossil fuel transportation, both of which comprise a high likelihood of pipeline spills (Kheraj, 2020). Throughout the settler-colonial project, the settler-colonial state's laws and actions have ensured that Indigenous peoples have been structurally underfunded and experienced a manufactured poverty. The answers provided by NRCan, and the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation capitalized on Indigenous communities' historical and contemporary disenfranchisement caused in part, by themselves. Media statements that focused on the benefits to Indigenous business contributed to the divide-and-conquer approach; Indigenous resistance is positioned opposite to Indigenous economic prosperity. This focus distracted attention from the major fossil fuel companies, who profited from the reterritorialization and dispossession, which was in part due to their social license achieved by appearing to engage in an economic reconciliation.

Another divide-and-rule tactic employed by the government was through the discourse of job creation and economic prosperity, which can drive a wedge between oil and gas communities, land defenders, and environmental groups. The divide-and-rule approach fractures class solidarity and hegemonically repositions fossil fuel workers' interests to align with the fossil fuel industry's interests. In a statement, the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation put forth, "For over three years now the Coastal Gaslink project has been under construction and providing economic opportunities for thousands of people across northern British Columbia."¹⁶⁰ The Minister of Public Safety released an almost identical statement: "Over the last three years the Coastal Gaslink project has been under construction and providing jobs and economic opportunities for thousands of people across northern British Columbia, including First Nations communities."¹⁶¹ As a highly unified front, the statements positioned

¹⁶⁰ Access Request #PSS-2021-15273, p.2

¹⁶¹ Access Request # PSS-2021-15298, p.18

Indigenous resurgence against economic prosperity in the oil and gas sector, aligning the interests of workers with fossil capital.

Similarly, in a drafted response, the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon stated We must work to find this common ground because Indigenous and nonIndigenous communities across the north support the Coastal Gaslink project [..]Finding common ground will benefit everyone. This is a pipeline that represents a new future for hundreds of families in our province.¹⁶²

Common ground refers to the unimpeded implementation of the pipeline project, aligning with NRCan’s reconciliation goals. While Canada's economic prosperity and a proposed new future for families were hegemonically used to secure consent, the promise of a new future is threatened as fossil fuel projects “expropriate our planetary future” (Huber, 2022, p.8). The promise of a new mode of living, often through an increase in wages, is a hegemonic strategy to gain consent from workers (Brand & Wissen, 2024). Here, fossil fuel workers and families are hegemonically used to garner consent for fossil fuel projects. Within fossil fuel communities, this appears alongside the strategic philanthropy employed by fossil fuel companies, further ensuring interests align with the fossil fuel industry (see Eaton & Enoch, 2021). As a united front the fossil fuel industry employed both methods to secure consent, while the government employed these strategies persuasively within its discourse. Together, they functioned as a cohesive bloc, using concessions to workers to gain consent for a pipeline.

Another significant approach in the media was the government’s attempts to address the environmental concerns connected to the pipeline project, with a released statement from the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation of:

¹⁶² Access Request #MOE-2020-02366, p.2

Our government has worked diligently to ensure resources are in place to review and oversee the project. Provincial regulators, including the BC Environmental Assessment Office and the BC Oil and Gas Commission, have dedicated significant time and effort to the project since it was submitted for provincial review.¹⁶³

The BC Oil and Gas Commission, now known as the BC Energy Regulator (BCER), carried out a significant number of inspections for the CGL pipeline project, albeit with minimal penalties, especially when compared to the BC Environmental Assessment Office (BC EAO) (Simmons, 2023). Of particular concern here is the active lobbying of BCER by the fossil fuel industry (ORL, 2023). The statement from the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation implies that both BCER and BC EAO are equal regulators monitoring environmental damage and issuing permits. However, in email correspondence with journalists, the Ministry of Environment stated, “For the natural gas industry, permitting responsibilities primarily reside with the BC Oil and Gas Commission. Permits are not issued by the EAO.”¹⁶⁴ Here, the permitting body for the fossil industry is BCER, which is lobbied by the fossil fuel industry, and issues far fewer penalties than BC EAO. By highlighting both environmental regulatory bodies, it appears as though the pipeline rigorously adhered to environmental concerns. However, the regulatory capture of BCER allowed CGL to commit multiple environmental infractions with minimal recourse. The governing organizations within the state apparatus actively engaged with the media to establish consensus for the continuation of fossil fuel interests. While TC Energy remained relatively detached from public conversations, government organizations, many of which are lobbied by TC Energy, were publicly active ensuring the pipeline project is completed.

¹⁶³ Access Request # PSS-2021-15273, p.2

¹⁶⁴ Access Request #MOE-2020-02366, p.68

Elected Politicians

This section will now consider how elected governments perform a critical role in which they mediate between civil and political society, connecting organic intellectuals with subaltern groups and other traditional associations (Fonseca, 2024). Here, elected politicians have the potential of securing and organizing consent of civil society for political society, occupying a significant function within the hegemonic bloc. The reach of politicians can be further extended through the media, which has a proclivity for politicians' statements. Both the BC Office of the Premier and the Office of the Prime Minister were actively lobbied by TC Energy (LobbyCanada, 2023; ORL, 2023), which demonstrates a connection between TC Energy and political society. Comparable to the TMX flashpoint, elected politicians actively argued for the pipeline, while TC Energy remained relatively silent within the media. Within a search of Global News, The Vancouver Sun, and the National Post articles that discussed the CGL pipeline, TC Energy remained visibly out of the conversation, except to voice disappointment that the RCMP repression was necessary to allow the pipeline project to continue (Healing, 2020). At the same time, the government was the highest quoted source within legacy media on the Wet'suwet'en resistances (McLinden, 2021). Within this section, I will briefly demonstrate the complicity of the BC premier (at the time) John Horgan and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau within the fossil fuel constellation, as both actively voiced support and attempted to garner consent for the CGL pipeline within the media.

Canadian Sovereignty vs Indigenous Sovereignty

Indigenous dissent to extractive projects often comprises contestations of sovereignty (Pasternak & Dafnos, 2018). The media, as an ideological apparatus, favours the discourse of elected governments who uphold the sovereignty of the state while refusing to recognize Indigenous rights and governance. Through this privileging of discourse, Indigenous resurgence is portrayed as disruptive to Canadians, discursively aligning Canadian interests with fossil fuel interests, and legitimizing RCMP repression in the defence of the common good.

Within the media, there was a favouring of elected governments' statements that designated the Wet'suwet'en resistance as unacceptable and beyond the boundaries of reconciliation. The limits of the government's commitment to reconciliation became visible within the media, especially when critical infrastructure projects are disrupted. When discussing the Wet'suwet'en solidarity blockades, Horgan argued that the BC government was committed to reconciliation, citing the BC government's adoption of UNDRIP (MacLeod, 2020). However, at the same time, Horgan declared that the pipeline would be built, overruling the authority of Wet'suwet'en's hereditary chiefs (Hyslop, 2020; Zussman, 2020). Similarly, Trudeau (2020, n.p) stated that "there is no relationship more important to Canada than the one with Indigenous people [...] we only ask that you be willing to work with the federal government as a partner." Days later, Trudeau argued, "Canadians have been patient. Our government has been patient[...] the barricades need to come down now" (Lindeman, 2020, n.p). Coulthard highlights how Trudeau's statement put the onus on Indigenous peoples to engage in reconciliation (Lindeman, 2020). Reconciliation's parameters are conditioned by the state, and Indigenous self-determination is refused when it threatens settler capitalism. Indigenous peoples are persuaded to make concessions and allow the pipeline to continue. At the same time the politicians attempted

to convince Canadians that the actions of Indigenous resistance are unacceptable, which can validate state repression. If the government fails to be persuasive, coercion is then deployed, highlighting the same violent relationship between the state and Indigenous peoples that has been present since the beginning of Canada's settler-colonial project. The state's employment of reconciliation is ideological. Reconciliation must be on the state's terms, as a small concession that ensures the continuation of the same material dispossession for fossil fuel projects.

Contributing to the claims of unacceptable resistance, elected governments framed the blockades as disruptive, pitting Indigenous resistance against Canadians (Perzyna & Bauder, 2023). This framing is a divide-and-rule approach that separates Canadian interests from Indigenous sovereignty and engenders an interpellation of the reader as Canadian interests are conflated with a critical infrastructure project. Hegemonically, this had the function of aligning Canadian citizens' interests with fossil fuel interests. These privileged statements organize consent for the RCMP invasion of Wet'suwet'en territory and the CGL pipeline. The state sets the parameters, and Indigenous sovereignty is only acceptable when it does not disrupt critical infrastructure. When there is a disruption to the state's hegemonic project, repressive forces are hegemonically rationalized within the media and deployed to return order for the settler state.

Economy Over Sovereignty

Within the media, another noticeable privileged discourse was elected government statements on the economic benefits of CGL. The focus on the economic benefits has the same function as the previous media statements, effectuating a division, as Indigenous sovereignty was framed as a barrier to the economy. Horgan argued that the CGL pipeline could bring "an end to systemic poverty as a result of a \$40-billion private sector investment" (Korte, 2020, n.p). This

claim was another divide-and-conquer approach that positioned Indigenous sovereignty against Canadian prosperity, while simultaneously aligning Canadians and fossil fuel workers interests with fossil fuel interests. The alignment with fossil fuel interests benefits the fossil fuel industry at the expense of the working class. The CGL pipeline is justified by creating new employment opportunities (Simmons, 2022b). The discourse of employment opportunities recruits support from workers and communities close to the pipeline project, while contributing to the social license afforded to some fossil fuel companies in tandem with their philanthropic work in Northern communities (see Eaton and Enoch, 2021). Fossil fuel companies are celebrated for providing resource extraction jobs; however, these employment opportunities come at a cost, which is externalized on Indigenous sovereignty and the environment. Legacy media reproduced elected governments' discourse on economic prosperity ensuring popular consensus to the pipeline project while hegemonically aligning oil and gas workers' and Canadians' interests with the fossil fuel industry. Both the media and elected governments undermined Indigenous resurgence, as it was positioned as a barrier to Canadian prosperity and rationalized the RCMP's role in dispossessing Indigenous peoples from their land.

New Denialism

Another significant theme within the media was politicians' new denialism discourse that obscured the impact of the pipeline on the climate to secure consent and ensure that the fossil fuel industry remains intact. New denialism acknowledges that climate change is real but does not take meaningful action to address the root cause, leaving capitalism in place (Carroll et al., 2022). As such, new denialism involves policies that appear to address the climate crisis while ensuring fossil capital remains intact, rendering insufficient policies (Carroll et al., 2022). By

recognizing the climate crisis and proposing climate policies that leave capitalism in place, new denialism can pacify environmental movements because it appears as if climate action is happening. During the CGL flashpoint, Horgan engaged in new denialism, inheriting the rhetoric employed by the previous premier of BC, Christy Clark, who endorsed “natural gas and LNG as a ‘clean’ energy source capable of being a ‘transition fuel’ out of climate change” (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021, p.502). In a similar argument, Horgan asserted that LNG would aid in creating a “cleaner economy” (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021, p.502). The inclusion of natural gas within climate solutions does not challenge fossil capital expansion in a climate crisis; instead, it legitimizes the pipeline and entrenches fossil fuels within climate solutions with *clean growth*. Horgan publicly voiced concerns that the opposition to the pipeline project did not “[understand] the project’s full impact on Indigenous people and the climate” (Blagden, 2022, n.p). These sentiments tread closely to traditional denialism, as they cast doubt on the environmental issues raised about the pipeline during a climate catastrophe (see Chen, 2020; Chen & Gunster, 2016; MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Within the media, it became visible that elected governments’ interests aligned with fossil fuel interests through their attempts to ensure its continuation with new denialism.

Active lobbying plays a vital role in aligning government interests with fossil fuel interests. Both BC premiers, with both offices lobbied by TC Energy (ORL, 2023), acted as mediators between civil and political society, actively attempting to garner consent for a pipeline. The media privileged elected governments’ voices, allowing doubt to be cast on the environmental harms of the pipeline, while flanked with the discourse of prosperity for British Columbians, securing consent for the pipeline. Overall, the elected governments of BC and Canada, while from different political parties, at different scales, functioned as a heterogeneous

yet unified bloc to secure consent for the CGL pipeline. Here, the organizing power of the fossil fuel bloc is visible, as it unifies a diverse political society (see Maher, 2022; Jessop, 2016). The integral state transcends elected governments and political parties (Maher, 2022); however, elected governments play a critical role in securing consent. The views shared by politicians in the media promoted the pipeline project as one that will provide economic prosperity, positioning Canadians against Indigenous resurgence and simultaneously aligning Canadian interests with fossil fuel interests and entrenching fossil fuels within the future as part of cleaner energy. Within the media, politicians can be persuasive in garnering consent for the pipeline; however, if consent cannot be achieved, repressive forces are deployed and rationalized as necessary to restore order.

Fossil Fuel Voices

Having discussed how elected governments, government organizations, and the RCMP, all used the media to organize consent, the final section of this chapter will address fossil fuel allies' use of opinion pieces during the CGL flashpoint. Shaw's (2021) work found that TMX remained outside of the conversation during the TMX flashpoint, and interestingly, the same was found for TC Energy during the CGL flashpoint. However, by looking at opinion pieces in legacy media outlets, such as The Vancouver Sun and The National Post, the fossil fuel industry, as a unified bloc, vocally advocated for the CGL pipeline project. This section will look at the themes and vocal allies of the CGL pipeline, as part of the integral state, who actively used opinion pieces to garner consent for the CGL pipeline project.

While TC Energy and CGL remained, for the most part, detached from the conversations in the media, the fossil fuel industry, right-wing think tanks, politicians, and other allies were

active in publishing opinion pieces. Opinion pieces occupy a unique place in securing hegemony, as they are often read as factual, objective news articles (McLinden, 2021). Many of the opinion pieces were found within the National Post, which “[i]n 2013, then publisher Douglas Kelley described [the National Post] as ‘one of the country’s leading voices on the importance of energy to Canada’s business,’ promising to ‘leverage all means editorially, technically and creatively to further this critical conversation’ and to “work with CAPP to amplify (our) energy mandate”” (Hackett & Araza, 2021, n.p).

Unsurprisingly, many fossil fuel allies opted to pursue opinion pieces within the National Post, which, as a media outlet, outwardly supports promoting the fossil fuel industry, demonstrating a unified collaborative relationship. This section will briefly unpack how fossil fuel allies, notably business associations such as the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) and right-wing think tanks such as the C.D. Howe Institute, Macdonald-Laurier Institute, and Fraser Institute use opinion pieces as a cohesive bloc to garner consent for the CGL pipeline project. Fossil fuel associations are active within the regime of obstruction as legitimators (Corporate Mapping Project, n.d) and as mediators of consent they can connect fossil fuel interests with the interest of civil societies. While deriving from differing organizations, the opinion piece authors are united under the same function, demonstrating the tentacular web of fossil fuel allies.

Clean Natural Gas for Global Emissions

The opinion pieces attempted to entrench natural gas projects in the future by contending that natural gas projects are necessary to reduce global emissions, rendering the fossil fuel industry a key player in addressing climate change globally. Fossil fuel allies focused on natural

gas and LNG's reduction of emissions, which then implied that Wet'suwet'en resistance was focused on pipelines and climate change, instead of Indigenous resurgence rooted in Indigenous sovereignty that confronts settler colonialism (Hume & Walby, 2021; see Shaw, 2021). The main argument found in the opinion pieces focused on China's reliance on coal. LNG is a less intensive source of energy and would help reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) globally (Cochrane, 2018; Cross & Poilievre, 2020; Kenter, 2018; Kenter, 2019c). BC LNG was praised as an environmentally conscious resource: "among the cleanest in the world" (Cochrane, 2018, n.p), with the CGL pipeline similarly described as a "transformative, environmentally sustainable project" (Ross, 2021, n.p). Further entrenching fossil fuels within future solutions, BC LNG was argued to be part of renewable energy solutions, as an alternative backup when renewable energy is insufficient (Cox, 2019).

The theme across the opinion pieces created a unified voice from the fossil fuel bloc advocating for fossil fuels to be embedded in the future as part of climate change solutions. The opinion pieces exemplified new denialism, as fossil fuel allies attempted to entrench fossil fuels in false solutions, to ensure the continuation of fossil fuel extraction in Canada (Carroll et al., 2020b; Daub et al., 2021). The arguments presented by the fossil fuel bloc in the opinion section align with arguments presented by elected BC officials, who argued for clean LNG (see MacPhail & Bowles, 2021), creating a unified voice across legacy media. While CGL is not named in all the opinion pieces, the pieces are written during the CGL flashpoint. As well, the CGL pipeline will terminate at LNG Canada, which will ship the LNG to Asia, which aligns with the opinion piece arguments. The discourse of clean LNG can pacify some critiques of fossil capital because it casts doubt on the environmental harms of pipelines.

Similarly, a collaborative article written by authors from CGL, Shell, and CAPP did not focus on CGL, but rather on the benefits of fossil fuel projects in BC (D'Avignon et al., 2020). This article included a voice from the CGL project and LNG Canada, who voiced support for the fossil fuel industry overall during the CGL flashpoint. Arguments of economic benefits were used persuasively alongside new denialism, with “we can fight climate change, and at the same time, create more of those high-paying jobs for British Columbians that have provided us enviable standards of living — jobs that our industrial sector creates” (D'Avignon et al., 2020, n.p). Similar to other arguments within the fossil fuel bloc's use of opinion pieces, this statement adhered to new denialism while attempting to secure consent through access to an imperial mode of living (Brand & Wissen, 2024). As demonstrated in the previous section that looked at NRCan's use of the media, access to a “higher” mode of living is a persuasive method to garner consent for pipeline projects. The article attempted to gain working-class consensus for the pipeline projects by promoting access to a higher standard of living while appeasing demands for climate change initiatives. However, the access to a higher standard of living does not have a guaranteed longevity, and it comes at an expense with the costs externalized onto the environment, Indigenous peoples, and the planet's future (see Huber, 2022). Nevertheless, this is a persuasive argument that connects climate change solutions and LNG employment, especially as environmental groups are divisively positioned against fossil fuel projects/jobs within the media.

Economic Benefits

Another overarching theme within the opinion pieces is the focus on the economic benefits of the LNG Canada facility and the CGL pipeline project that aligns with arguments

made by politicians. Many articles focused on the economic benefits for Canadians (Cochrane, 2018; Cox, 2019; Kenter, 2018; Kenter, 2019c). The articles hegemonically intertwine the economic prosperity of Canadians with pipeline projects, specifically CGL. By conflating economic prosperity with Canadian prosperity, fossil fuel allies can hegemonically garner consent for the projects, especially from the working class, who receive material benefits of increased earnings from fossil fuel projects (see Brand & Wissen, 2024). Consent is secured through the promise of new opportunities, such as employment in natural gas. New natural gas and LNG contracts allow workers to access increased earnings, and fossil fuel companies capitalize on new employment and wages to secure consent. However, it is the fossil fuel bloc that enjoys unequal benefits of the pipeline project, while it is workers and communities along the pipeline route that experience the externalized environmental harms of the pipeline project. By creating a situation in which communities can now access new opportunities, fossil fuel companies can align community interests with fossil fuel interests. Similarly, an opinion piece, positioned the Indigenous blockades as an impediment to workers on the CGL pipeline project (Ross, 2021). Here, Indigenous resurgence is positioned as antithetical to oil and gas workers, as a divisive strategy that divides workers from Indigenous resistance and environmentalists. The opinion pieces align the interests of the working class and northern communities with those of fossil capital while simultaneously dividing oil and gas workers against the land defenders.

Fossil Fuel Feminism

Another significant approach found within the opinion pieces was the capitalization of gender disparity within the fossil fuel industry. LNG Canada used training and employment opportunities as an incentive to readers (Kenter, 2019c). One focus was the training and hiring of

women for LNG Canada, focusing on Indigenous women in trades (Kenter, 2019b). Here, the intersections of racial and gender disparity in working-class communities along the pipeline route was hegemonically used to garner consent for the pipeline. The fossil fuel industry employed discourse that appealed to workers, especially those who face intersectional barriers to employment. Access to new employment opportunities is an effective and persuasive argument to gain support. A glaring omission in this opinion piece is that industry man camps (camps that house industry workers, such as for CGL and LNG Canada) are connected to the high number of MMIWG2S in these communities (Morin, 2020; Paradis, 2022). The disparity was manipulated to obtain consent for the pipeline project through access to new employment opportunities. While the opinion pieces attempted to gain consent through the inclusion of Indigenous women, the fossil fuel industry contributes to MMIWG2S, and disproportionately harms the now included group.

In addition to the employment opportunities for Indigenous women, one opinion piece's argument deceptively asserted that Indigenous women support the pipeline project. The misleading logic asserted that because the Wet'suwet'en are matrilineal and some Indigenous women endorse the project, that support should be heeded (Battershill, 2020). Battershill's (2020) article grossly undermined the Wet'suwet'en women who were on the front lines and who have occupied leadership roles since Unist'ot'en began. The opinion pieces here swam in murky and treacherous waters. Speaking on behalf of Indigenous peoples, especially Indigenous women, insidiously misrepresented the situation. This narrative was made visible by the media, highlighting whose voices are favoured (see Janks, 1997). Here, fossil capital, through legacy media spoke on behalf of Indigenous communities, forwarding fossil capital's interests. Contrary to the opinion pieces, Indigenous women are active on the front lines in resisting the CGL

pipeline, engaging in resurgence, and asserting their sovereignty. The media's favouring of fossil fuel opinion leaders, pretending to speak for Indigenous peoples, reveals a space of hegemony, since these opinion pieces distort and overwrite the truth.

Reconciliation

Aligning with the theme of economic reconciliation employed by government organizations, the misrepresentation of economic concessions to Indigenous communities as a form of reconciliation is another theme produced by the fossil capital bloc. Opinion pieces in The Province connected oil prosperity with Indigenous prosperity and attempted to connect the employment of Indigenous peoples as part of reconciliation (Ogen-Toews 2019a, 2019b). Many opinion pieces argued for that LNG projects are intertwined with reconciliation through economic benefits (Battershill, 2020; Cochrane, 2018; Lee Crowley, 2022; Mbarki, 2021; O'Toole, 2020; Ross, 2021). The connection of fossil-fueled prosperity with reconciliation undermines the efforts of Indigenous resurgence and the hereditary chiefs and embeds the fossil fuel industry within reconciliation initiatives. Similar to new denialism, the connection between the fossil fuel industry and economic reconciliation fails to address the root of the issue and cements the fossil fuel industry within reconciliation instead of severing the harmful colonial relationship.

Writing on behalf of fossil capital, Brian Crowley (2022, n.p), founder of the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, argues that

Reconciliation is now inseparable from natural resource development; natural resource companies and Indigenous Canadians are striking hundreds of deals worth billions of

dollars. Many indigenous [*sic*] communities for the first time are facing the challenge of managing prosperity, not poverty. That is reconciliation in action.

This argument, reproduced within the media, capitalized on the structural disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples while again rooting fossil capital within reconciliation. Merging reconciliation and resource extraction obscures that it was private corporations who consulted with Indigenous communities and failed to meaningfully consent with the hereditary chiefs, and that fossil capital benefits historically and contemporarily from dispossession of Indigenous communities from the land (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021). Insidiously, resistance to the pipeline was framed as ensuring Indigenous peoples remain in poverty (Mbarki, 2022; Ross, 2021). Therefore, access to a bourgeois mode of living is conflated with reconciliation. With this vocal group, reconciliation's parameters are dictated by fossil capital, whose interests lie in the continuation of fossil capital and accumulation of capital.

While the blockades were framed as a barrier to Indigenous economic prosperity, they are a direct impediment to “the economic infrastructure that is core to the colonial accumulation of capital in settler-political economies like Canada's” (Coulthard, 2014, p.170). Indigenous resistance and settler-colonial accumulation are inherently ideologically antagonistic. The fossil fuel industry attempted to involve oil projects in reconciliation, a narrative reproduced through the media. Within these pieces, reconciliation is limited to economic prosperity and fails to include Indigenous rights and governance. When the pipeline project is positioned as a form of economic reconciliation, it can rationalize the RCMP's use of force on Indigenous land defenders, especially since opposition to the pipeline is framed as ensuring Indigenous peoples remain in poverty. This framing obscured the role of resource extraction and settler capitalism in the manufactured poverty, and ongoing harms to Indigenous peoples. The function of opinion

pieces, to gain consent and ensure the conditions of production are met, was highly visible in the manipulation of reconciliation by the fossil fuel bloc, intertwining the fossil fuel industry with reconciliation efforts.

Disorderly Protesters

Similar to Shaw's (2021) findings with the TMX pipeline, and Hume and Walby's (2021) research, a recurring theme throughout this project was the portrayal of land defenders as illegal protesters. This pattern was reproduced in opinion pieces by the fossil capital bloc; the Fraser Institute published articles that described land defenders as protesters (Flannagan, 2020a) and disorderly (Burney, 2020; Flannagan, 2020b). Conversely, the Fraser Institute highlighted the cooperation between First Nations and fossil fuel companies for the CGL project (Flannagan, 2021). In this discursive theme, while band councils and hereditary chiefs are framed as divided, fossil fuel allies focus on the cohesiveness between CGL and band councils, legitimizing the pipeline. On the other hand, Indigenous land defenders are described as *militant*, *lawless* (Black, 2020), and as *radicals* (O'Toole, 2020). The CGL pipeline is portrayed as a reconciliatory cooperation threatened by lawless militant land defenders, which is then rationalized with calls to deploy RCMP force to stop the blockades (Black, 2020; Burney, 2020; O'Toole, 2020). The opinion pieces worked in unison to legitimize the pipeline, undermine the land defenders, and ultimately legitimize the repressive actions of the RCMP, who returned law and order for CGL.

Within the same theme, however, outside of opinion pieces, was an accusatory article published by The Frontier Centre for Public Policy. This article suggested that CSIS, the RCMP, and Public Safety Canada have an embedded bias, preferring to police far-right extremist movements while ignoring left extremist movements, such as failing to label the Wet'suwet'en resurgence as extremist terrorism (Quesnel, 2024). However, CSIS and the RCMP considered

the Wet'suwet'en resistance a threat, with CSIS internally debating labeling it domestic terrorism¹⁶⁵ (Forester, 2022b). Both, CSIS and the RCMP have a long history of criminalizing and surveilling Indigenous resurgence and colluding with the fossil fuel industry (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Dafnos, 2020). Moreover, CSIS shifted their focus from external terrorist threats to internal threats, which are often trained on CIP (Crosby & Monaghan, 2018). However, Quesnel (2024) labeled the Indigenous land defenders as eco-terrorists capable of violence, obscuring the violence of the RCMP, while attempting to mobilize consent for an escalation of police repression. This persuasive piece contributed to fossil fuel voices, vocally arguing for Indigenous dissent to be labeled as extremist and as terrorism. While this article is not circulated within legacy media or an opinion piece, it demonstrates how the fossil fuel bloc create alternative media sources to disseminate pro-fossil fuel pieces, similar to the National Post, that ensure fossil fuel voices are heard.

Divide-and-Conquer

Corresponding with the divide-and-conquer theme found throughout this thesis project, the opinion pieces similarly employed this tactic and focused on the division between band councils and hereditary chiefs. The division, flamed by fossil capital, legitimizes the pipeline and the RCMP's response while undermining the land defenders and the hereditary chiefs' authority (Hume & Walby, 2021). A concurrent theme within the opinion pieces was how both LNG Canada and CGL have First Nations support (Battershill, 2020; Black, 2020; Cox, 2019; Kenter, 2018; Kenter, 2019c; Mbarki, 2022; O'Toole, 2020). The opinion pieces render fossil capital as a benevolent force that is "particularly mindful of commitments made to First Nations" (Kenter,

¹⁶⁵ Access Request # CIR-2022-734

2019c, n.p) while alluding that Indigenous communities wish for the pipeline to be built. While Mbarki is Indigenous, the rest of the voices in the opinion pieces are not. Thus, it is settler fossil capitalists and intellectuals serving them, who speak on behalf of First Nations and Indigenous peoples, glaringly paternalistic initiative that replicates colonial violence. The pipeline was portrayed to have obtained Indigenous consent, instead of consent from band councils. This depiction undermines hereditary authority, while fossil capitalists patronizingly capitalize on and tokenize *some* Indigenous support for the pipeline project.

While claiming First Nations support, the opinion pieces simultaneously portrayed Indigenous communities as fractured. One piece dismissed the hereditary chief's authority and Indigenous resurgence: "the hereditary Wet'suwet'en chiefs, representing a few thousand people, demand that the RCMP (under provincial control in B.C.) withdraw from what the blockaders claim to be native land" (Black, 2020, n.p). This statement questions Indigenous land, rights, and sovereignty, while invalidating "the hereditary chiefs as a small offshoot group of pipeline dissidents and the elected band council chiefs as the level-headed decision-makers who understand economics" (Hume & Walby, 2021, p.528). The hereditary chiefs and Indigenous self-governance are described as *unrepresentative* and alluded to as anti-democratic (Lee Crowley, 2022), while implying that the band council is representative and thus democratic (Lee Crowley, 2022; Mbarki, 2022). However, band council's jurisdiction is over their respective reserve boundaries (Temper & Bliss, 2018), in a system imposed by the settler state (Hume & Walby, 2021), and were instructed to quell dissent by TC Energy (MacPhail & Bowles, 2021), which hardly qualifies as a democratic action. TC Energy included a "condition that the band will 'take all reasonable actions' to dissuade its members from doing anything that could 'impede, hinder, frustrate, delay, stop or interfere with the project, the project's contractors, any

authorizations or any approval process.’ That includes dissuading band members from taking part ‘in any media or social media campaign’” (Bellrichards, 2019, n.p). The Wet’suwet’en blockades are described as a minority and from outside the community (Lee Crowley, 2022; Mbarki, 2022), yet the authors are also outside voices, not from Wet’suwet’en territory. The Wet’suwet’en are portrayed as disjointed by outside fossil fuel voices (Battershill, 2020; Lee Crowley, 2022; Mbarki, 2022; Sankey, 2021). Again, the fossil fuel bloc speaks for the Wet’suwet’en, and often as white settlers. These opinion articles undermined the hereditary chiefs and Indigenous governance and positioned the land defenders as minority outliers, similar to themes that Hume and Walby (2021) found in the media. Fossil fuel allies used the media, through opinion pieces, to cast doubt on the authority of hereditary chiefs, and discredit Indigenous land defenders to remove dissent and ensure the pipeline’s completion.

Attempts were further used to discredit land defenders by positioning them as disruptive to Canadians, a similar approach employed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Whether elected government officials (Trudeau) or from the opposition (O’Toole), the same discourse was applied, positioning Canadians against Indigenous resurgence and attempting to align Canadian interests with fossil capital interests. There is an interpellation of the reader as a *Canadian citizen* whose economy is threatened by protesters or an outlier Indigenous group that is labeled criminal. The opinion piece hegemonically attempted to divide *Canadians* against Wet’suwet’en land defenders while simultaneously aligning with fossil fuel interests. However, the piece also demonstrates the role of government officials in organizing consent for the fossil fuel industry through the reach of the media employed by different political parties.

Within the collection of opinion pieces, the constellation of fossil fuel allies became a cohesive bloc attempting to secure hegemony within civil society using legacy media’s reach.

Here, the organized heterogeneous group became visible, as different actors within the hegemonic block take up different angles, news outlets, and methods to garner consent and align readers fossil capital's goals. All are united with the intended outcome, which is the same: to ensure the expansion of fossil capital projects and the construction of the CGL pipeline. However, because Indigenous dissent to the CGL pipeline impeded fossil fuel expansion, the pipeline required on the repressive arm of the state, the RCMP, to remove dissent. While not always overtly championing the RCMP and their actions, the articles bolstered RCMP repression by undermining the Wet'suwet'en resistance, governance, and leadership, while simultaneously, advocating the supposed benefits of the pipeline. The CGL pipeline is framed as an economic necessity, integral to economic reconciliation and reducing global GHGs, thus attempting to entrench the fossil fuel industry in the future.

Concluding Thoughts

This chapter outlined how different organizations within the state apparatus used the media during a flashpoint to garner consent for the CGL pipeline and the ensuing RCMP coercive actions. Shaw (2021) underscores the power of dissent to reshape public opinions during a flashpoint. Because Indigenous dissent is counterhegemonic and has the power to confront the power of the state and fossil fuel bloc, different organizations employed the media during the CGL flashpoint to organize consent. The RCMP were active in their media statements, with access to legacy media that approached the RCMP as a neutral and objective source. However, the RCMP used the media around each injunction enforcement to undermine Indigenous resurgence and legitimize their presence on the territory. The media occupies a critical function as an ISA in garnering consent, and the RCMP capitalized on this. Government organizations and politicians similarly used the media to forward the pipeline project,

demonstrating that the cohesive bloc transcends electoral politics. Lastly, while relatively silent in news media articles, the fossil fuel industry was a very active and vocal group within opinion pieces. Similar to Shaw's (2021) findings, TC Energy remained relatively detached from the conversation, while fossil fuel allies promoted the supposed benefits of the pipeline project, while discrediting dissent. Overall, the themes produced by the RCMP, government organizations, politicians, and fossil fuel allies aligned to produce a cohesive voice within the media during the CGL flashpoint. The rhizomatous power of the fossil fuel industry is made visible by investigating the use of legacy media within a flashpoint, and the reproduction of these themes by the media. While the voices vary, the function is the same, which ensures the completion of the CGL pipeline project.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

During the CGL flashpoint, the coercion of the Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG) was brought into public view, fracturing the longstanding “benevolent Mountie” myth. While TC Energy and the CGL pipeline project are the focus of this thesis, this thesis further examined the intersections between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), with a particular focus on C-IRG, Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS), Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), the fossil fuel industry, and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan). The released Freedom of Information (FOI)/Access to Information (ATI) documents revealed that C-IRG operates as both a repressive and ideological force, employing the reach of legacy media to reconstruct their image, while manufacturing consensus for their actions on Wet’suwet’en territory. Considering the opportunity afforded within a flashpoint to expose the reach of the fossil fuel industry and the function of C-IRG, this thesis additionally examined NRCan and elected governments' statements for legacy media while exploring fossil fuel allies' use of opinion pieces that offered a cohesive voice supporting the CGL project and allowed TC Energy to remain relatively quiet within the media. The analysis of opinion pieces during the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) flashpoint demonstrated the active organization of the fossil fuel industry as a bloc, was active in opinion pieces with their support of the pipeline project and BC LNG. Simultaneously, the analysis revealed how pro-fossil viewpoints are privileged and reproduced within certain media outlets, such as The National Post, which both sanctions the CGL project and RCMP repression that ensures the pipeline's completion.

The first guiding question in this thesis was approached in Chapter Four. It queried: *how is critical infrastructure surveillance organized, and what roles do the RCMP, and fossil fuel industry occupy within it?* The research process revealed a lack of transparency by Canadian

Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), who refused to disclose requested information on communication between the RCMP and Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), aligning with the accounts of Mukbil (2023). The refusal to release the requested documents protects the partnership of CSIS, (CAPP), and the RCMP, shrouding the relationship with secrecy. Nevertheless, CSIS's response simultaneously demonstrated its categorization of Wet'suwet'en resistance as hostile, and previously released ATI requests demonstrated that Indigenous blockades of critical infrastructure are a significant concern to CSIS.

The Community-Industry Response Group (C-IRG), the policing agency that is involved with significant concerns to critical infrastructure, performed a repressive and hegemonic role, with attempts at persuasion first employed by Division Liaison Team (DLT) before injunction enforcements. However, when persuasion fails, repression is always in the shadows (Gramsci, 1971). A key finding from the ATI documents was that C-IRG is pursuing more surveillance measures in preference to coercion, which has a few implications. First, while surveillance is a repressive method, it also has persuasive elements. For instance, increased surveillance can dissuade dissent through the chilling effect (see Robertson et al., 2020). A second implication of the shift towards more intelligence gathering is that surveillance operates as an exception, allowing C-IRG to perform their operations in a legal grey zone, with less accountability and regulation (see Austin, 2015). Within a released ATI package, the RCMP stated that risk assessments inform their actions, which raises concerns of an increase in surveillance yielding greater repression for land defenders. With the new Prince Rupert Transmission Project on the horizon (TC Energy, 2023b), the shift to favour more surveillance raises concerns about the future function of C-IRG (CRU-BC).

The second research question that guided this research project asked: *how are critical infrastructure surveillance and the regime of obstruction interconnected?* This question was addressed in Chapter Four, which looks at the active role of TC Energy within CIP and the discursive relations between TC Energy and C-IRG. A particularly salient insight from the released files was the active and vocal role of TC Energy (and LNG Canada) who attempted to persuade C-IRG to enforce the injunctions with multiple emails and phone calls. TC Energy was an active force, employing the risk assessments produced by their private security to persuade C-IRG to enforce the injunction. The sharing of information between TC Energy and C-IRG enmeshes TC Energy within CIP, blurring the lines between private and public and aligning with the existing literature (Crosby, 2021). The second research question was also addressed in Chapter Five, which examined the assessments of land defenders by the RCMP, TC Energy, and NRCan, whose characterizations reinforced the theme of a divided nation in which the land defenders were disruptive protesters—all of which rationalize the RCMP's presence on the territory as a benevolent peacekeeping force.

The third research question, *what underlying ideological assumptions organize the RCMP ATI documents?* was pursued in Chapter Six. The RCMP's ideological assumptions were apparent in the reproduction of the benevolent Mountie myth (see Mackey, 2005), notably with the recurrent theme of an impartial, neutral, and culturally sensitive force. The RCMP's assessments of land defenders from Chapter Five allowed the RCMP to reproduce claims that they are a peacekeeping force, both internally and within legacy media in Chapter Six. The CGL flashpoint revealed C-IRG's repression, confronting the benevolent Mountie myth, the longstanding ideological project of the RCMP.

The last research question, which questioned: *how are critical infrastructure surveillance and protection discourses structured within internal RCMP communications, and what do the differences from official public documents reveal about the RCMP as an institution?* addressed in Chapter Seven, concerned the incongruencies between internal RCMP documents, their media statements, and actions on the territory. This question was expanded to include government organizations drafted media statements, politician's statements within legacy media, and fossil fuel allies in opinion pieces that demonstrated a cohesive bloc within the media that promoted the fossil fuel project, by delegitimizing land defenders, focusing on economic benefits, and capitalizing on a divide-and-conquer approach. While not always overtly advocating for the RCMP actions and presence on Wet'suwet'en territory, the themes, similar to the assessments carried out by the RCMP and private security, represent the land defenders as illegal, radical protesters that require intervention by the RCMP as a peacekeeping force. Chapter Seven examined the RCMP's use of the media at each injunction enforcement, which demonstrated again how the RCMP fulfil both a coercive and hegemonic role. During each flashpoint period, when the C-IRG invaded Wet'suwet'en territory, the RCMP shaped the legacy media narrative to portray itself as a peacekeeping force while alternatively undermining land defenders. Within legacy media, the RCMP invoked the discourse of anarchists and calls for war to rationalize their militarized injunction enforcement approach. Here, the RCMP's assessments of land defenders informed the RCMP's repressive actions on the territory concurrently with the RCMP's ideological shaping of the narrative in within legacy media. C-IRG's actions on the territory contradicted the benign Mountie myth even as RCMP's statements in the media attempted to restore order to the Mountie's image.

A significant insight revealed in the released FOI/ATI documents is that C-IRG, while performing a coercive, militarized role, simultaneously performed a hegemonic role. As demonstrated on Wet'suwet'en territory, when Indigenous peoples refuse to compromise, C-IRG engages in repressive measures. Tilly (2017, p.76) observes how repression "can raise a group's mobilization costs (and thereby raise its costs of collective action)," which is achieved through policing and surveillance. The ATI documents revealed that while C-IRG first attempted hegemonic persuasion, their militarized and violent approach was always in the shadows, raising the cost of Indigenous dissent. However, at the same time, C-IRG's engaged in routine surveillance of land defenders which can deter action, doubling as both persuasion and repression. It is at this intersection that C-IRG's straddling of coercion and persuasion blurs the lines between the two. However, when this fails, the RCMP returns to repression to restore order to the pipeline project. Surveillance both acts as a deterrent while also providing data that inform the RCMP's repressive actions, which can produce a greater RCMP response on the territory, as seen with the 2021 injunction enforcement, when RCMP surveillance created threats assessments of calls for war and anarchists, precipitating an immense response by C-IRG. At the same time, the RCMP's drafted media statements, documents that outline how the RCMP should engage with media, coupled with the RCMP's media statements, demonstrate the ideological aspect of the RCMP within the CGL flashpoint. The duality of C-IRG's roles is particularly salient for a comprehensive understanding of how C-IRG and the RCMP function when policing dissent.

As evident in the 2021 injunction enforcement, and aligning with the existing literature (Burdon, 2020; Crosby & Monaghan, 2018; Crosby, 2021), the fossil fuel industry played an active and persuasive role. The research for this project revealed the extensive organizing power of the integral state, especially for securing consent (see Maher, 2022). The integral state has had

a multi-pronged approach to organize consent for the CGL pipeline and, consequently, the RCMP repression on Wet'suwet'en territory. As a unifying power, the fossil fuel bloc organizes the diverse members of political society as a cohesive group. The active role of the fossil fuel industry was bolstered by government bodies that, through many instances of lobbying which organizes consent (see Maher, 2022), share the same goals as the fossil fuel industry. Fossil capital's reach is present within different bodies of the state apparatus, from politicians to government organizations such as NRCan, BCER, and the RCMP. The power of the integral state transcends electoral politics (Maher, 2022), as voices from the New Democratic Party (NDP), Conservative Party, and Liberal Party, at both provincial and federal levels, supported the pipeline project. During the CGL flashpoint, the prevailing power of the integral state was made clear in attempts by politicians and government organizations of various political stripes to organize consent, especially employing the reach of legacy media for the interpellation of *Canadians* to align their interests with the fossil fuel industry's interests. Such attempts are in combination with efforts by the fossil fuel bloc within opinion pieces published in legacy media outlets. At the same time, the networks and class power forged by business associations and the state (Maher, 2022) facilitate the relationship between TC Energy and the RCMP. While TC Energy is not part of civil society as a corporation, it benefits from, and is connected to, fossil fuel associations and the linkages produced for the fossil fuel industry as a whole. The relationship between TC Energy, as part of the fossil fuel bloc, and the RCMP demonstrates the power of the integral state, in which when the fossil fuel bloc's hegemony is threatened, they can fall back on (and call upon) legal repression provided by the state. The state apparatus is a complex web of variegated organizations, and the integral state accommodates the power of civil society within the state and the power wielded by fossil fuel corporations. When repression is

required to remove Indigenous dissent, the integral state further employs ideological apparatuses to obscure the of their coercion, thereby securing consent in the midst of repression.

Canada is currently in an era of *reconciliation*; however, the integral state, especially intertwined with fossil capital, demonstrates the futility of true reconciliation. Organizations within the state actively pursued ideological means to secure consent for a pipeline that trespasses Wet'suwet'en territory. While Canada acknowledged the harms of residential schools, it failed to recognize the continued violence of resource extraction projects, which the country continues to pursue. However, the state can *assert* reconciliation by setting the parameters and making small concessions that do not disrupt extraction while refusing to engage in meaningful reconciliatory action. The state employs ideology to organize consent for dispossession that benefits the fossil fuel industry. As such, the power of the integral state ensures that meaningful reconciliation cannot be achieved as resource extraction is hinged on access to land and the *free* commodities it offers. Instead, reconciliation is manipulated by the state while pursuing the same colonial objectives, with the same harms, as in the past. Settler-colonial resource extraction and reconciliation are mutually exclusive; one negates the other.

Key Findings

This project examined the relationship between the RCMP and TC Energy, one corporation in the web of fossil fuel power. The research revealed that C-IRG fulfilled both an ideological and repressive function. C-IRG surveillance and risk assessments on the Wet'suwet'en land defenders informed how C-IRG approaches injunction enforcement. A high-risk assessment can produce a greater show of repression. In the ATI files, it was revealed that the RCMP is opting to pursue more intelligence-led approaches over enforcement-led

approaches, which has a potential consequence of greater repression. Moreover, the assessments by C-IRG represent the land defenders as illegal, occupying protesters, legitimizing the RCMP's presence on the territory as a peacekeeping force concerned with public safety, bolstering the benevolent Mountie myth. It is here where the RCMP/C-IRG is also an ideological force, with the organization's statements and access to legacy media, framing themselves as a neutral force order that is concerned with keeping the peace and order, hinged on producing assessments of the land defenders as illegal, or discrediting the movement as hijacked by outsiders. The CGL flashpoint revealed the repression and organization of C-IRG, a formally secretive force, which simultaneously contradicted the RCMP's public image. At the same time, government organizations intertwined with fossil capital, such as NRCan, elected politicians, and the fossil fuel industry, produced a cohesive voice in legacy media in support of the pipeline project, and at times, the RCMP's presence on the territory, contributing to the ideological support for repression.

Although C-IRG was created with the purpose of policing industry projects, the police organization has been rebranded as CRU-BC (Critical Response Unit-British Columbia). The change in name could be attributed to the negative image of C-IRG, and a desire of the RCMP to distance themselves (and their image) from the contentious name. This rebranding hints at a shift in C-IRG's scope since the force has recently been present at pro-Palestine demonstrations in BC, and C-IRG's budget had a line labeled "convoy" in a released ATI document (Hosgood, 2024b). Perhaps addressing the budget line labeled convoy, in one of the released ATIs for this project, C-IRG members discussed strategies concerning the Trucker Convoy in 2022, a protest in response to COVID-19 restrictions.¹⁶⁶ C-IRG's policing of Pro-Palestine rallies and the

¹⁶⁶ Access Request # A202204718; Access Request # A202204721

Trucker convoy, while attending to both sides of the political spectrum, creates an emerging concern about the function creep of C-IRG (Hosgood, 2024b). C-IRG, that is, CRU-BC, has dropped industry from its name and now appears to function as a unit that responds to dissent, which is a significant concern for all Canadian citizens. A released RCMP document revealed that the RCMP are concerned about future dissent from Canadians due to future economic instability and climate disasters (Hopper, 2024). The RCMP's concern for future protest, coupled with function creep in rebranding C-IRG into CRU-BC, reveals the future of policing for Canada, especially for BC. The government and RCMP, through CRU-BC, are prepared to police dissent beyond fossil fuel projects, taking the knowledge gained in policing and undermining Indigenous movements and employing this knowledge as different protests emerge. All this can contribute to the chilling effect and erosion of democracy, especially as C-IRG has demonstrated its willingness to resort to repressive tactics to raise the cost of dissent.

This research project has demonstrated C-IRG/CRU-BC's readiness to cooperate with industry while also operating separately from the RCMP as a special organization. C-IRG/CRU-BC have engaged in extensive practice in surveilling and assessing risks, which inform their repressive actions when policing dissent, all the while bolstered through the RCMP ideological image. Thus, it is likely that CRU-BC will engage in extensive surveillance of populations that threaten the hegemonic order and will use coercion, informed by their assessments, to manage and marginalize dissent. The research revealed how the CGL flashpoint brought C-IRG's repressive actions into view, challenging the RCMP's benevolent image. As CRU-BC begins to police broad dissent, alternative media sources offer spaces to change public opinion (see Shaw, 2021), which can challenge the RCMP/CRU-BC's public image. Flashpoints bring longstanding issues into view (Shaw, 2021), and future flashpoints policed by CRU-BC offer an opportunity to

confront the force, disrupting their benevolent image and challenging the necessity of a heavily militarized force in British Columbia. CIRG/CRU-BC's repression raises the cost of dissent, which concurrently raises the cost of flashpoints and the possibilities of shifting public opinions on the contentious force. Thus, future dissent, especially Indigenous-led dissent, demands strong solidarity actions to lessen the cost of resistance, and help propel the anti-democratic character of CRU-BC back into public view.

Limitations

This research project was limited by a few factors, the most significant being FOI/ATI responses. First, the municipality of Houston did not respond to my FOI requests after numerous follow-up emails. As already highlighted, both CSIS and the RCMP refused to fulfill a number of my requests, which proved to be a barrier to accessing information. However, by requesting FOI/ATI documents from multiple organizations, to capture the mosaic effect, the lack of responses did not impede the overall project. Second, the RCMP was very slow to respond to ATI requests; at the time of writing this, I am still waiting for previously released and existing documents to be emailed. This project is still waiting for a response to my ATI requests that were submitted in May 2023. The slow response was particularly limiting, especially for the time restraints with a thesis project, and a known issue when requesting ATIs from the RCMP. If time were not a constraint, I would pursue an appeal process, as the delayed response greatly exceeds the RCMP's obligation to return ATI within a reasonable time frame. The RCMP's slow response is limiting to both academics and investigative journalists, and there should be some measure of accountability with the ATI process. A third limitation was the RCMP and CSIS's failure to release documents that included each organization's communication with CAPP, which

could potentially provide more insight into the fossil fuel bloc's organization and role during the CGL flashpoint. The fourth limitation is that FOI/ATI research is a process, which, if time were not a limiting factor (and responses were returned in a reasonable period), further requesting text messages and app text messages, such as WhatsApp or Signal, would have been pursued to potentially obtain more informal conversations between C-IRG internally and with TC Energy. Lastly, my experience with FOI/ATI requests and CDA could be a limiting factor in this project. However, future research that examines the relationship between CRU-BC and different fossil fuel organizations could enhance this project's contribution.

Future Research

As C-IRG, now CRU-BC, is transforming, future research should examine the evolving function of CRU-BC, especially utilizing ATI documents, examining CRU-BC's role within the new Prince Rupert Transmission Project, the monitoring of Indigenous and environmental groups, and if any CRU-BC members are policing different sites of resistance beyond industry. A major limitation of this project is the slow response of the RCMP, notably CSIS, and the RCMP's refusal to fulfill some of the ATI requests for this project, especially concerning communication between the two policing organizations and CAPP. Future research should attempt to uncover the relationship between the RCMP and CSIS during the CGL pipeline project and go beyond the scope of CGL examining any existent communication between the organizations for future natural gas projects. Lastly, with the released NRCan documents, C-IRG revealed within their policing notes to NRCAN that they are more focused on surveillance rather than repression for policing dissent to extractive projects. There is a gap in knowledge surrounding the surveillance measures C-IRG employs and if any new RCMP surveillance

projects are emerging, such as project SITKA, as the RCMP have heightened concern for future dissent.

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