

From: Frank F. [REDACTED]
Sent: May-06-15 12:44 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: RE: Nova Scotia Film

Greetings!

I'm a 17 year veteran of Nova Scotia's film industry. I have worked largely as creative labor - Animation and Visual Effects - but also as creator of original film and television projects.

I would have it entered into the public record that I firmly believe that the McNeil government has been influenced by the prospect of an investment boom in Nova Scotia which compelled it to commit an egregious betrayal of the public trust.

Since the McNeil's first blitz-like actions against the Nova Scotia film industry - the sudden closing of Film and Creative Industries Nova Scotia (FCINS) and the neutering of the Nova Scotia Film Tax Credit - I noted the parallels of our government's actions with those of well documented hostile corporate maneuvering. Indeed many in my community likened these actions to an "attack" on our industry; I agree with that assessment, not at all accidental or clumsy as some might guess, but entirely willful and tactical. The tactic referred to as "shock doctrine" is a well documented and highly refined tactic utilized by corporate and government entities around the world to create environments conducive to financial investment. The tactic may be employed following a *natural* shock to a community - such as earthquake, hurricane or tsunami - or a *man-made* shock such economic bubble bursting, financial collapse or war. The chaos which follows such instances of shock invariably provide private interest with opportunity for investment; as the old Wall Street adage goes "the best time to invest is when there is still blood on the ground." Indeed it is the proverbial "blood" of my industry colleagues which soaks the ground today. In keeping with the doctrine, the shock of an initial attack is often foreshadowed by a "reveal" of the weapon; as indeed Diana Whalen hinted at the attack two weeks prior to commencing the destruction. This also fits the paradigm of the Shock Doctrine; the reveal of the weapon is meant to create anxiety, disorientation and confusion within the victim community. With the community already anxious of the impending aggression the forthcoming attack is meant to leave the community in shock and overwhelmed with immediate survival planning so that they are unable to mobilize against the aggressive action. The shock rendered against the Nova Scotia film community and consequent chaos is not a natural occurrence, it was a deliberate and entirely willful by-the-book action. Indeed this shock attack was so intrinsically academic in its approach that the only fault to be attributed to it is its lack of imagination.

One might wonder where a former appliance repairman turned Premier might have found the time to research and concoct such a tactical monstrosity. Obviously he didn't. Such plans are devised in the guts of private-interest lobby groups, corporate think-tanks and public relations firms which exist in continuous orbit around sitting politicians. The plans and the intellectual resources required to execute them are never more than a phone-call away from any elected official willing to champion their cause and soak up the gratitude of big business. The intellectual rationale is also easy to identify. Stephen McNeil referred to the budget as "bold"; a word which sounded so swollen and alien from his mouth one would guess that he'd never actually said it before. The spin is doctored behind the scenes and the plan itself was not the plan of any sitting MLA.

The public face of the plan was the Broten Report, penned by Laurel Broten who would immediately thereafter ascend to power as CEO of Nova Scotia Business Inc (NSBI). In this role Broten would immediately assume responsibility of the defunct FCINS programs. So the Broten Report could be criticized as destructive AND

self-serving. Her position in that role raises serious questions about patronage and conflict of interest.

In its own words NSBI is "Nova Scotia's private sector-led business development agency" which is "responsible for attracting foreign direct investment to the province, driving the growth of Nova Scotia's economy." To that end in May 2014 NSBI with Halifax Greater Partnership (HGP) hosted a 300 member delegation from a Shanghai led by Dongdu International (DDI). This investment group had previously expressed its interest in investing in key areas of the Nova Scotia economy; areas which included Rural Development, Tourism and Film Industry. In concluding the visit of the delegation the three groups - NSBI, GHP and DDI - together signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which clearly delineated the areas of their investment interest. DDI Group had projected a high of \$3 billion which they would invest over a 10 year period. Even if this figure were a gross exaggeration by a factor of ten, that would equate to a potential investment of \$300,000,000.00, a figure still powerful enough to seriously impact Nova Scotia's financial forecasts and create a significant economic boom. Under the influence of so much potential investment one could say "there will be a tomorrow" [Diana Whalen] ... Just not one whose profits belongs to Nova Scotians.

What would an investment group have to gain from a pulverized film industry? Answer: Weakened union and labor groups, investment opportunity in the form of starving production companies and production service companies, a ready pool of unemployed talent and a playing field clear of unnecessary competition. A functioning post-production facility which was worth \$X Million before the budget would soon afterward be worth significantly less. All or part of these outcomes are worthy ends.

Even if the glittering promise of Shanghai investment gold turns out to be so much bunk, it is still a promise dazzling enough to woo a caucus of naive sophomore politicians and entice them to abandon their responsibilities as protectors of the public good. Liberals don't have a clear victory in the coming election cycle. In their coming battle they require allies and many large corporate campaign contributions. It is my strident belief that this government has willfully and wantonly abused the public trust to achieve a transient self-serving end.

What proof do I have of these convictions?

History.

Frank Forrestall

Nova Scotian