

To: Richmond City Council

For: Council Meeting Jan.10, 2011

Re: Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

First of all, I will quote one of the ALR's founders , Bob Williams□

(Source: From Bull Houser and Tupper report by Olga Rivkin " Demystifying the Agricultural Land and Farm Protection Laws " <http://www.bht.com/cms/video/10LG/OLR.pdf>)

During the creation of such organizations as the ICBC and the ALC, Robert Williams, then minister of resources in the NDP government of 1972-1975 is purported to have said:

"I will make such an omelette that no one can unscramble it "

Rafe Mair, a well - known broadcaster who was a cabinet minister in the Bill Bennett Gov't that immediately succeeded the 1972 NDP Gov't , wrote a column re: this issue of the ALR on "The Tyee".

SOURCE: <http://thetyee.ca/Views/2006/07/31/Farmland/>

NDP 'sins' became sacrosanct

Fast forward to December 11, 1975, when the Socreds came back into power and Bill Bennett took over his father's old office. The new troops on the backbench had two targets -- abolish the land freeze and get rid of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC). The new government, that is to say cabinet, of which I was a member, did neither.

ICBC, though a financial mess, was a case of eggs turned into an omelette -- there was no going back. Private companies had their fingers burned once, and there was no guarantee the NDP wouldn't return to office and burn them all over again. Instead, the Socreds set up a committee, chaired by Pat McGeer, of which I was a member, which investigated the matter thoroughly, taking a great deal of advice from those opposed to ICBC. We concluded that it was a deal that couldn't be undone.

Instead, the government brought in a substantial rise in premiums to put the corporation on its feet. We had the province white with anger and the demonstrations that followed were second only to the land-freeze ones.

The land freeze, like ICBC, had become popular. Moreover, most of us saw that something like it had to come. We decided to fix the problem of abundant non-agricultural land caught in what's now known as the Agricultural Land Reserve through "fine-tuning."

Thus, in a relatively short period, two NDP Initiatives became sacrosanct.

While I have much more to submit at a later date,I will categorically state the time has arrived that the ALR, in its past and current manifestation, become exposed for what it truly is, ie the **ALR is one of the biggest FRAUDS and THEFTS ever perpetrated on the BC Public.**

No one wins in this scenario, as the General Public is left with a false sense of food security, and often made to look like dupes and fools once their perceptions of the ALR are debated if not outright challenged by those that have actually taken the time to perform even a minor amount of due diligence and peel back the veneer of mythology the ALR currently exists on. On the other side, ALR property owners existing property rights are increasingly attacked and confiscated as evidenced by several recent initiatives by the Province of BC, Metro Vancouver and individual Local Gov'ts.

Since the ALR's creation almost 40 years ago...in Venn- diagram fashion, there are so many overlaps of different designations, bylaws, legislation, inconsistencies, etc etc. that no other class of private property owner in history has ever had to tolerate nor be subjected to. The increasing amount of red tape on ALR properties would smother even the hardest weed. **This is classic discrimination.**

It is beyond evident that various Gov't officials cannot simply accept the status – quo of the existing discrimination against ALR property owners, but continue to attack the rights of ALR property owners based on shallow ill - advised perceptions by ALR's more active "cult members", many of whom for some reason do not own ALR land, but are concurrently "experts" (?) on the ALR issues.

In my objective view, the ALR is simply an ideological tumour that, since 1972, has undergone such a metastization legislatively and rooted in the public psyche that perhaps Bob Williams, quoted earlier, is "partially" correct. However, Rafe Mair's article (given Mr Mair, as an MLA, was an elected insider at a crucial time when the issue of the ALR's continuance was at stake) basically explains why the ALR was kept and still exists today. The ALR's continuance has nothing to do with food security, it is simply a HUGE legal (and ultimately fiscal) albatross that no Post 1972 Barrett Gov't would dare touch, given that the ALR effectively confiscated and expropriated private property rights, which ultimately impacts their properties true value.

The only crutch the ALR can use as machiavellian camouflage is a "land bank" for future farming, one crutch that will undergo serious scrutiny in the very near future. However, the ALR and the ALC Act's Achilles Heel (in fact, one of many) is its active avoidance of any/all economic issues re: ALR lands.

The ALR never took into account that farming is a business, a private sector venture . Excluding the “ Farm Status” (*a topic for another discussion*) category of non professional farmers and legal tax avoidance , professional farmers only farm if there is a profit to be made. In other words, the ALR land needs a professional farmer or it cannot be deemed farmland.

There is also no follow- through re the ALR.....what is THE plan if latest ALR propoganda of Food Security becomes an armageddon-like issue? What is going to happen to ALR properties? Are we ALR property owners going to become wealthy over-nite,like an OPEC cartel, charging \$50 lb for blueberries,\$100/lb for beef, \$75/ lb. for carrots ?

Somehow I don't get that feeling, not even remotely.

What I do extrapolate is that the “FINAL SOLUTION” re the ALR will be 100% expropriation of private lands for the “ Public Good ”, given the ALR has already created partial expropriation of private lands expeditiously deemed ie” zoned” ALR , without any true scrutiny as to their agri-capability.

Regardless of how any Elected Official at any level of Gov't treats this correspondence, the time has now arrived, if not long overdue, that ALR Property Owners unite and start to make it clear :

” We have had ENOUGH , and are NOT going to take it anymore.”

The quasi- colonial mentality that exists by the Non ALR public that “ WE ” in the ALR owe THEM something is one of the first items on the ALR propoganda agenda in serious need of correction .

FACT = We ALR property owners owe them N - O - T - H - I - N - G.

These Urban fans of the ALR should reflect on how such a legislated tumour as the ALR even exists in a so-called democracy. Each and every Non ALR(Urban) property owner has made sufficient personal gain off OUR backs via the artificially educed land shortage the ALR has created, that is INdisputable. In addition, many ALR property owners pay full Urban Tax rates , but in return get little, if any, crumbs thrown their way, but instead these funds are obviously patriated into the Non ALR Urban areas , effectively further subsidizing the Urban property owners.

Therein lies the key that arrogant Elected Officials from the 1972 NDP Gov't never foresaw...given their self - blinding hubris...ALR Judgement Day would one day arrive, the B.S is simply” Non -Sustainable” .

To be Continued.....

Roland Hoegler