

## (8) Corporate Media: Partners in Promoting War (Shows)

This spring, when insurance companies raised their rates due to heightened security concerns, air show organizers turned to the local and national media to present their perspectives. As usual, the corporate media helped air show proponents present their case to the public and to politicians.

John Issen-

man, organizer of Ottawa's air show and a spokesperson for Canadian air show promoters was quoted in several Canadian newspapers on the plight of air shows due to insurance hikes. There was, of course, no mention in any of these articles that many Canadians find air shows to be abhorant, immoral glorifications of war and violence.

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It is completely unsurprising and quite natural that corporate media side with the military air show industry. Whenever there's an air show looming on the horizon, there are corporate media lining up to promote the event. It is common for local media personalities to be given free rides in aircraft before the show to ensure enthusiastic promotions.

No wonder these are mass public events. They receive countless free hours of media promotions. If only peace, social justice and environment activities received that much favourable coverage. If they did, such events would receive many more participants. Conversely, if military air shows were ignored by the media, or described as



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dangerous events where participants are sometimes killed by crashing war-planes, the number of people attending would surely drop.

The fact that the mainstream media actively encourages people to attend air shows comes as no surprise. It is perhaps more disappointing when the CBC advocates for war shows. On May 2, Shelagh Rogers

interviewed Mr. Issenman on CBC radio's national program "This Morning." He used his ample time on our publicly funded airwaves to extol the virtues of military air shows by describing them as particularly valuable for children. After all, he explained, not only are these events educational and useful in providing important "role models" for kids,

air shows also promote wonderful careers in the armed forces. He seemed confident that the federal government would give them the extra millions in tax dollars they need to offset their increased insurance costs.

Ms. Rogers was totally unprepared, or unwilling, to pose such obvious questions as "Why should weapons systems be considered appropriate sources of entertainment for Canadian children?" or "Why should Canadian tax dollars be used to further subsidize the dubious use of war technology to educate children, when schools, hospitals and programs to promote housing, mass transit, the environment and the CBC have all received such devastating cuts?" "This Morning" did not offset Mr. Issenman's obviously one-sided perspective with any alternative views, despite numerous requests.

### A Few Examples

Here are some of the media corporations that have officially "partnered" with Canadian air shows this year:

#### London

New PL, OBIE Media, CKCO TV, CJBK, Q EZ Rock, *London Free Press*, BX 93.

#### Ottawa

CFRA, CJOH, CIMF, Kool, Majic 100, *Le Droit*, The Bear, The New RO, The Team.

#### Owen Sound

Bayshore Broadcasting, *Sun-Times*.

#### Shearwater

ATV (CTV), MBS radio, *The Daily News*.

#### Winnipeg

Global, *Winnipeg Free Press*, Citi FM, KY-58, Bob FM, Q FM, The Team, QX 104, Hot 103.

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