



Mr. Clean

Inside Peter German's mission to stop the flow of dirty money

**BY ADRIENNE TANNER
PHOTOGRAPH BY TROY MOTH**

A man in a dark jacket approaches the cash cage at a B.C. casino, carrying a red cloth shopping bag. Flanked by security guards, he slides the bag across the counter, and a casino employee dumps out its contents: stacks of \$20 bills bundled in elastic bands, just like in the mob movies. The cashier lines them up in even rows and begins to count. The sum, in excess of \$250,000, will be exchanged for chips and later cashed out in the form of larger-denomination bills and cheques. This is how dirty money becomes clean.

Video footage of this transaction—just one of countless such exchanges that have taken place over the past decade—provided a visual punch to the release of “Dirty Money,” an explosive report on money laundering in B.C. casinos. At a June 2018 press conference in Vancouver, the report’s author, lawyer and former RCMP deputy commissioner Peter German, stood by as the security camera feed rolled. The source of the money, he told reporters, was the drug trade—mostly proceeds from opioid sales controlled by organized crime. “You’ll notice the elastic bands around the wads of twenties,” he said. “That is not how the banks issue cash.”

“Dirty Money,” along with a subsequent report that German released in March 2019, sent shock waves through Canada’s political, legal, business and law-enforcement circles.