

HONDURAN REGIME IMPUNITY WATCH  
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## **CANADIAN PORN KINGS, TOURISM "DEVELOPMENT" PROJECTS, REPRESSION & THE VIOLATION OF INDIGENOUS-GARIFUNA RIGHTS IN HONDURAS**

BELOW: an article by Karen Spring, Rights Action

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## **CANADIAN PORN KINGS, TOURISM "DEVELOPMENT" PROJECT, REPRESSION & THE VIOLATION OF INDIGENOUS-GARIFUNA RIGHTS IN HONDURAS**

By Karen Spring, Rights Action, [spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com)

Canadian "Porn King" Randy Jorgensen's tourism "development" projects are stirring up conflict and destroying afro-descendant Garifuna communities in Trujillo on the north coast of Honduras.

Jorgensen, president of the Canadian pornographic video store chain Adults Only Video (<http://www.aovtv.com/>, [info@aov.ca](mailto:info@aov.ca), AOV, Suite 8, 2900 Argentia Rd, Mississauga, ON L5N 7X9, Canada), through his real estate development company Life Vision Properties (based in Trujillo, Honduras, <http://www.lifevisiondevelopments.com/index.html>), plans to convert a beautiful coastal area of Trujillo into a large scale tourism project that includes a series of vacation home developments and a cruise ship dock, displacing and destroying indigenous Garifuna communities.

Since 2008, the local Garifuna community organization, OFRANEH (Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras) has denounced that the "Porn King" and his Life Vision Properties are illegally purchasing land belonging and titled to Garifuna communities. (Since 1998, Rights Action has supported the community development, environmental defense and human rights work of OFRANEH)

The Garifuna are an indigenous people descendants of Arawak native Americans and escaped African slaves. For years, OFRANEH and the 46 Garifuna communities on the north coast of Honduras have been battling the very same "tourist development" interests that Randy Jorgensen promotes in Trujillo (1).

Communally owned land, an essential part of Garifuna culture, rights and community well-being, is constantly under threat by interests ranging from Honduran government officials, organized crime, international "development" institutions (Inter-American Development Bank) and foreign investors (like the Porn King). All of these have used various illegal, brutal and/or manipulative means to appropriate ancestral Garifuna lands, interested in exploiting it in the name of economic "development" and tourism, despite national and international law that obligates the full recognition and respect of indigenous collective land rights.

Also disturbing to Honduran communities is Jorgensen's sordid legal history. Canada's Macleans magazine reported in 2001 that Jorgensen had been "accused of making X-rated films with underage girls in his vacation home in Honduras" (2).

This is very worrying, considering his home in Trujillo, located within the Life Vision project confines, neighbours an orphanage, in a country with high levels of impunity and little political will to persecute wealthy locals and foreigners for their criminal activities.

#### CANADIAN PORN KING PILLAGING THE CARIBBEAN COAST

Jorgensen and his Life Vision Development company have plans to build a series of gated communities marketed to Canadian and US citizens between the coastal towns of Trujillo and Betulia - Alta Vista, Campa Vista, Coroz Alta and New Palm Beach - and a cruise ship port called 'Banana Coast' in Trujillo, which is scheduled to begin construction in March 2011(3).



(Photos: Karen Spring. Entrance to one gated community land development project 'Campa Vista'. Most of the lots were sold to Canadians.)

Jorgensen and his associates seem to benefit from every stage of the Trujillo coast "development": they acquire the land, construct the vacation homes, promote the project and sell properties in Canada. Life Visions buys land and sells properties. Jorgensen's construction company, Jaguar Construction, builds the homes.

The "Banana Coast" port is owned by the Trujillo Grande Authority (GTA), a consortium between Life Vision, the Municipality of Trujillo and Global Destinations Developments, a Miami tourism promotion company. Jorgensen sits on the GTA Board of Directors (4). The GTA consortium will facilitate the expected \$15 million investment needed to construct the "Banana Coast" port.

On February 6, 2011 a Honduran newspaper reported that GTA signed an agreement with the last remaining Garifuna landholders who had refused to sell their lands, giving the "green light" to start construction. The agreement was reached with the assistance of a government commission that included Ramon Lobo, the brother of 'de facto' President Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo.

#### TOURISM & REPRESSION

Pepe Lobo ordered thousands of Honduran troops to occupy the North Coast region, which includes Trujillo, in March 2010, where corruption in the administration of justice (following the June 2009 military coup that ousted the democratically elected government of President Zelaya, and opened the way for de facto regime leader Pepe Lobo to become President) ignited land conflicts which had been in the process of resolution. Other land conflict negotiations in the region have been marked by the detention, kidnapping and torture of campesino advisors, and dozens of campesinos have been killed.

The same area where Life Vision plans to build vacation homes has been heavily militarized by Honduran regime forces since the military coup. Just 20 minutes away from one of the Porn King's proposed project sites, five campesinos were massacred on November 15th, 2010 by private security guards of large land owner Miguel Facusse.

#### DISAPPEARANCE OF THE GARIFUNA COMMUNITY OF RIO NEGRO & OTHERS UNDER THREAT

The Banana Coast cruise ship port will be built in the Garifuna community Rio Negro, just footsteps away from the home of one of six Garifuna men who for years refused to sell his lands. Under many pressures as the community disappears and as their neighbour's houses are being bulldozed to the ground, residents of Rio Negro found it difficult to hold on.



(Garifuna community of Rio Negro slowly disappearing. One of the many houses that have been destroyed to allow the building to begin steps away from where the "Banana Coast" cruise ship dock will be built.)

An hour down the dirt road that connects Rio Negro to Trujillo, three other communities where many Garifuna and Pech (another indigenous people) families live, is the community of Guadalupe. On the western edge of Guadalupe, Jorgensen and Life Visions have begun selling land plots for their Alta Vista project after successfully selling a reported 200 lots in 90 days to Canadian families in their Campa Vista site located on the same dirt road closer to Trujillo.

Community representatives in Guadalupe report that "the Canadians" or testafellos (Honduran nationals that act on behalf of the Canadians and buy the land in their name)

regularly pass through the community and have visited various individuals asking if they want to sell their land.

To date, 141 acres within the Guadalupe land title has been acquired by Life Vision Properties for their 292-acre Alta Vista project for a total price of 150,000 lempiras or \$7,500 USD. Besides being in violation of Garifuna-indigenous community rights, these are extremely low prices considering Life Development Properties are advertising and selling their 0.4 acre-size lots in Canada starting at \$30,000.

#### "PURCHASES" OF GARIFUNA LAND IN VIOLATION INTERNATIONAL LAW

What Jorgensen and Honduran authorities ignore is that individual land plots cannot legally be purchased within Garifuna communities, or owned or rented by someone outside of the Garifuna community itself.

International law is clear that "development" projects, such as those advanced by Life Vision Properties (with the assistance of the regime put into power by a military coup), cannot be implemented without the free, prior and informed consent of the affected indigenous (Garifuna) communities. As part of this legal requirement, States are obliged to recognize indigenous communal lands.

A Garifuna authority from a directly impacted community, who forms part OFRANEH, describes the lack of consultation and information that has been given to the communities about the projects:

"We have our own traditions, customs, but they [the Canadians] aren't respecting our traditions as an ethnic group. We, as an organization, are in a process to rescue our culture and here [in Rio Negro], there is a process of cultural destruction going on. For example, the Canadians come here and buy up a huge amount of land that is part of our communities. Sociologically, development does not come from outside, it comes from within the community, is constructed locally and from the bottom-up."

#### A "NATURE PARK" RESULTING IN MORE ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION

According to OFRANEH, many of the planned "tourist development" projects will be built in the buffer zones of protected areas of the Capiro and Calentura mountains and will cause deforestation and destruction in a zone that is highly vulnerable to natural disasters (5).

Despite the environmental destruction that its tourism apparently will promote, Life Vision advertises an "ecological" side to its 'development.' It will build a 'Nature Park' that's primary mission is the "preservation and rehabilitation of Honduras' native fauna." Under the banner of conservation, these projects will contribute to environmental destruction, as OFRANEH has denounced before the Ministry of Ethnicity and Ministry of the Environment, the Honduran government bodies responsible for regulating such projects(6).

OFRANEH has denounced environmental damages and deforestation that will be caused by the Alta Vista project and the illegitimacy of the environmental license issued by the Honduran Secretary for the Environment and Natural Resources, SERNA, for the Alta Vista project during the final days of de-facto leader Roberto Micheletti and his regime that took power following the military coup that ousted President Zelaya (7).

Micheletti's regime committed various acts of brutal repression against the anti-coup social movement and pro-democracy people's movement that formed after the coup. The Micheletti regime has also been implicated in corruption scandals, including a Wikileaks'

memo written by US Ambassador in Honduras, Hugo Llorens, for various acts of corruption, including attempting to illegally grant concessions to an Italian company interested in a hydro-electric dam project in southern Honduras.

**“CHARTER CITY”:** GIVING A PIECE OF HONDURAS TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS & COMPANIES  
In the last month, the Honduran Congress, controlled by the Pepe Lobo regime (“elected” in illegitimate elections after the June 28th, 2009 military coup), approved a law that would allow the creation of “Model Cities” within Honduran territory.

The Model City project, promoted by US economist Paul Romer, would allow for 33 km-squared city to be built within Honduran territory but governed by foreign governments or investors. The city would have its own justice system, constitution and private security forces that would not be subject to Honduran laws.

All of this is a more extreme version of a “free trade zone” or “special administrative region.”

According to various Honduran newspapers and Government officials, Trujillo is considered a perfect location for a model city, from Puerto Castillo-Trujillo-Santa Fe to Betulia, the same land strip where Jorgensen and Life Vision Properties are “developing” tourism projects and displacing Garifuna communities. Some speculate Jorgensen’s cruise ship port, expected to be up and running by 2012, is an essential part of the proposed Model City government officials are proposing for Trujillo.

Many Honduran activists and grassroots organizations have denounced the Model City proposal calling it a form of neo-colonialism, comparing it to Henry Ford’s failed Fordlandia in Brazil, also questioning that the project may be a money-laundering scheme. Newspaper reports claim that unknown investors from the Cayman Islands have shown interest in the project. The Cayman Islands are infamous for secretive banking procedures that hide the identities and sources of income for individuals and corporations. Recently Wikileaks was given documents from Cayman Island banks that it has promised to expose in the coming months.

The connection between the Canadian real estate development interests and those promoting the Model City is not clear, though both seem to share intentions for the land located between Trujillo and Betulia on the north coast.

Unfortunately, Model Cities, Porn King Randy Jorgensen and Canadian property development projects, or all of the above, present the same threat to the Garifuna and campesinos communities living on the project site and near Trujillo. The projects bring displacement and illegal appropriation of Garifuna land essential for their survival, ... in the name of “development”.

(Karen Spring works for Rights Action ([www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)) and lives in Honduras. [spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com). Feel free to re-publish this article, citing author and source.)

(1) <http://upside-down-world.org/main/content/view/full/1195/1/>

(2) “Charged: Randy Jorgensen (Owner of Adults Only Video)”, MacLean’s magazine, December 3, 2001.

(3) <http://www.tiempo.hn/component/k2/item/3200-en-marzo-inicia-construcción-de-terminal-de-cruceros.html>

(4) <http://www.newmanpr.com/2010/06/03/banana-coast-honduras%E2%80%99-first-mainland-cruise-destination-launches-website/> and <http://www.viviun.com/AD-147034/>

- (5) <http://bellaciao.org/es/spip.php?article7299>  
(6) <http://bellaciao.org/es/spip.php?article7299>  
(7) <http://alainet.org/active/44265&lang=es>

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### **WHAT TO DO:**

Write letters of concern about the forced and illegal evictions of indigenous-Garifuna communities, in the name of "development", and send them to:

Life Vision Properties  
3998 Chesswood Drive  
Toronto, Ontario, M3J 2W6  
Tel: 416-635-0613  
Fax: 416-635-0616  
[info@lifevisionproperties.com](mailto:info@lifevisionproperties.com)

Randy Jorgensen  
Life Vision Development  
Tel (Toronto): 416-805-7443  
Tel (Honduras): 504-9967-6005  
[randy@aov.ca](mailto:randy@aov.ca), [info@aov.ca](mailto:info@aov.ca)  
(These email addresses use the Adults Only Video domaine name.)

Fast Track Group (Partnered with Life Visions Properties)  
Cathy Bernier  
Fast Track to Paradise (Fast Track Group)  
Client Relations (Life Visions)  
Director of Customer Relations  
Tel: 1(780) 418-3427  
Fax: 1(780) 459-7581  
[info@fastracktocashflow.com](mailto:info@fastracktocashflow.com)  
(see promotion of the "Paradise Properties":  
[http://www.fastracktocashflow.com/newsletter/E-Track\\_September2009.shtml](http://www.fastracktocashflow.com/newsletter/E-Track_September2009.shtml))

Cathy McLarney  
Customer Service Construction  
Coordinator  
Tel (Canada): 905-251-4366  
Tel (Honduras): 504-9647-2517  
[cathy@jaguarcon.com](mailto:cathy@jaguarcon.com)

Global Destinations Development (Involved in building cruise ship dock on Garifuna land, Rio Negro, Trujillo)  
Miami, Florida, USA  
[info@globaldd.com](mailto:info@globaldd.com)

Loeey Tremblay (Real Estate office selling 'New Palm Beach' lots in Ontario, Canada, part of land 'development' in Trujillo)  
Re/Max Twin City Realty Inc.  
901 Victoria St. N

Kitchener, ON N2B C3, Canada

Office: 519-579-4110

Email: looey@looey.com

(Real Estate office selling 'New Palm Beach' lots to Canadians as part of land 'development' project in Trujillo)

**CANADIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:**

Please send copies of your letters of concern to your own member of parliament, and to other government officials.

Canadians interested in these projects should be aware that they are getting involved in quite possibly illegal land purchase schemes and projects that are violating international law and contributing to the disappearance of Garifuna communities on the north coast of Honduras. It is the responsibility of the Canadian government to alert prospective developers and investors in this project.

COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Lawrence Cannon

Minister of Foreign Affairs

509-S Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6

[cannol@parl.gc.ca](mailto:cannol@parl.gc.ca)

Dean Allison (Chair)

163 Confederation Building

House of Commons

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Tel: 613-995-2772

Fax: 613-992-2727

[Allison.D@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Allison.D@parl.gc.ca)

Carmen DePape (Clerk of the Committee) – Ask Ms. DePape to distribute your letter to Committee Members.

Sixth Floor, 131 Queen St.

House of Commons

Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Fax: 613-992-7974

[FAAE@parl.gc.ca](mailto:FAAE@parl.gc.ca)

Jean Dorion (Vice Chair)

Bernard Patry (Vice Chair)

Lois Brown (Member)

Johanne Deschamps (Member)

Paul Dewar (Member)

Peter Goldring (Member)

James Lunney (Member)

Deepak Obhrai (Member)

Glen Douglas Pearson (Member)

Bob Rae (Member)

Dave Van Kesteren (Member)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE MINISTER

Peter Van Loan  
Room 157, East Block  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6  
Tel: 613-996-7752  
Fax: 613-992-8351  
[vanloan.p@parl.gc.ca](mailto:vanloan.p@parl.gc.ca)

CANADIAN EMBASSY FOR HONDURAS

Canadian Consulate in Honduras  
PO Box 3552, Tegucigalpa, Honduras  
Tel: (504) 2232-4551  
Fax: (504) 2239-7767  
[tgjpa@international.gc.ca](mailto:tgjpa@international.gc.ca)

Canadian Embassy in Costa Rica (For Business and Commercial Affairs & where Honduran Ambassador is based)  
Attn: Cameron MacKay (Canadian Ambassador)  
PO Box: 351-1007, Centro Colón, San José, Costa Rica  
Tel: (506) 2242-4400  
Fax: ((506) 2242-4410 - Administration, Assistance to Canadians (Consular), Public Affairs (506) 2242-4411 – Political Affairs, (506) 2242-4415 – Commercial Affairs  
[sjcra@international.gc.ca](mailto:sjcra@international.gc.ca)

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**Rights Action's EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES & MATERIALS**

**EDUCATIONAL DELEGATIONS**

TO HONDURAS (MARCH 19-27): "HONDURAN PEOPLE'S PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT, in resistance to the post-military coup regime". CONTACT: Karen Spring ([spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com))

TO GUATEMALA (APRIL 17-23): "INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS \* versus \* MINING COMPANIES & IMPUNITY". CONTACT: Grahame Russell ([info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org), 860-352-2448)

TO HONDURAS (MAY 14-22): "HONDURAN PEOPLE'S PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT, in resistance to the post-military coup regime". CONTACT: Karen Spring ([spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com))

TO HONDURAS (JUNE 28 - JULY 5): The Alliance for Global Justice is organizing a delegation to Honduras. We'll be hosted by the FNRP and led on the ground by Rights Action's Karen Spring. CONTACT: [AFGJ@AFGJ.org](mailto:AFGJ@AFGJ.org), 202-544-9355 x1

**SPEAKING TOURS**

IN USA (MARCH-APRIL 2011): "FROM CONQUEST TO COUP - INDIGENOUS & AFRODESCENDENT PEOPLES IN HONDURAS: 519 Years in Resistance to the Conquest, 580 Days (as of January 21, 2011) in Resistance to the Military Coup". Rights Action announces two speaking tours of



representatives from Honduran Indigenous and Afro-descendent (Garifuna) organizations - Ofraneh & Copinh. CONTACT: Annie Bird ([annie@rightsaction.org](mailto:annie@rightsaction.org), 202-783-1123)

### **SPEAKERS**

On an on-going basis, Annie Bird & Grahame Russell (Rights Action co-directors since 1995) are available for speaking engagements in Canada and USA, showing slides and documentaries, and speaking about:

- \* the pro-democracy, anti-military coup movement in Honduras, and its implications for the Americas, south, central and north
- \* indigenous and community resistance to environmental and health harms and other human rights violations caused by gold and nickel mining (Goldcorp Inc. in Guatemala & Honduras; HudBay Minerals in Guatemala; Pacific Rim in El Salvador), hydro-electric dams (the infamous Chixoy dam in Guatemala; the pending Xalala dam in Guatemala) and other mega-"development" businesses
- \* on-going struggles in Guatemala to achieve justice for the genocide, massacres and disappearances of the 1970s, 80s and 90s
- \* widespread community-based work and struggle for "another world is possible and necessary"

CONTACT: Grahame Russell ([info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org), 860-352-2448); Annie Bird ([annie@rightsaction.org](mailto:annie@rightsaction.org), 202-783-1123)

### **STUFF FOR SALE**

FILM: "All That Glitters Is Not Gold"

"All That Glitters Isn't Gold" (60 minutes), by Steven Schnoor, documents the stories and resistance of community members residing near and harmed by Goldcorp's "San Martin" open-pit, cyanide-leaching gold mine in Honduras' Siria Valley. CONTACT: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

FILM: "THE BUSINESS OF GOLD in Guatemala: Tale of a Conflict Foretold"

"The Business of Gold in Guatemala" (50 minutes), by Gregory Lassalle, documents the struggle and resistance of the Mayan-Mam people of San Miguel Ixtahuacan against the Canadian company Goldcorp Inc, and the harms and violations caused by its "Marlin" open-pit, cyanide-leaching mine. CONTACT: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

BOOKS: "CODE Z59.5: There Is Only One People Here" & "The Never Ending"

"Code Z59.5" (2010) and "The Never Ending" (1993), by Grahame Russell, are self-published books of diary excerpts (comments, facts, quotes, stories, etc.) from the 1990s and 2000s, related to the author's work in Central America, Mexico and North America, in defense of human rights, in promotion of a caring and just global economic development model. CONTACT: Grahame Russell ([info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org), 860-352-2448)

BOOKS: "RECOVERING OUR HISTORICAL MEMORY" & "OUR CULTURE IS OUR RESISTANCE"

"Recovering Our Historical Memory", a photography-based book by Jonathan Moller, is about Guatemalan populations displaced by the conflict. It is a visual testimony to Guatemalans working for truth, memory & justice, and for reconciliation for the victims of the violence. "Our Culture is Our Resistance", by Jonathan Moller - It is said that the bones of the dead tell no lies. In Guatemala, every clandestine cemetery that is dug up, every bone that is recovered from Mother Earth speaks of the people who were massacred; the bones speak of crimes against humanity, of genocide committed by the Army against the indigenous

population. The photographs speak of this and they also show the face of life, hope, redemption, and demands for change. CONTACT: Katy Troyer (katytroyer@gmail.com) or Jonathan Moller ([jonas@igc.org](mailto:jonas@igc.org))

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