

Rights Action – March 10, 2011

Honduras Regime Impunity Watch – LA PRENSA newspaper report on Canada's "Porn King"

"... you can only hope that no "villains" appear on the scene, but unfortunately, a few first class villains have indeed turned up. And Randy is our number one villain."

BELOW

An article - "'Porn King' Developer of Projects in Trujillo" - from the Honduran LA PRENSA newspaper, about Canada's 'Porn King' now involved in the mega-tourism business along Honduras' northern Caribbean coast and about his relations with Porfirio Lobo, the de facto of the military-backed regime in Honduras.

BACKGROUND

- Article by Dawn Paley, "Snowbirds Gone Wild! Canadian retirees and locals clash in Honduras", <http://this.org/magazine/2010/11/04/canada-snowbirds-honduras/>
- Article by Karen Spring, "Canadian porn kings, tourism "development" projects, repression & the violation of indigenous-Garifuna rights in Honduras", http://rightsaction.org/articles/Garifuna_repression_021711.html

CANADA'S FACE IN HONDURAS

In recent years, Canada's reputation has taken a turn in Honduras.

Firstly, Canada, along with the USA, justified the June 2009 military coup against the democratically elected government of Honduras. Since then, Canada and the USA have economically and politically backed the illegitimate, military-supported regime of Porfirio Lobo, even as police, military and para-military repression occurs regularly across the country, even as Honduras has not been allowed to re-enter the OAS (Organization of American States) due to the military coup, the ensuing State repression and the illegitimate November 2009 "elections".

Secondly, more and more information has come to light about the extensive mining interests of numerous Canadian companies in Honduras; not only Goldcorp Inc, that operated a very controversial and harmful open-pit-cyanide leaching mine in central Honduras (the Siria Valley) from 2000-2009, but moreover the fact that, backed by the Canadian government, the Canadian mining industry, including Goldcorp, are now pressuring the regime of Porfirio Lobo to pass a new mining law that would again give a green light to global (mainly Canadian) mining operations.

Thirdly, "Canada" is now associated not only with the 'Porn King' and tourism investment along the Caribbean coast, but a whole host of Canadian and other international tourism "development" projects, that are entering into direct conflict with the historic land claims, human rights and development and environmental well-being of campesino & indigenous-Garifuna communities that have long inhabited the north coast.

Indeed, regime leader Porfirio Lobo met with Canada's "Porn King" as well, to discuss his economic tourist interests on the north coast.

Fourthly, the Canadian government is pushing ahead with efforts to sign a "free" trade agreement with the regime of Porfirio Lobo – such an agreement would favor short-term Canadian mining, tourism and sweat-shop economic interests, at the expense of the development, democratic and human rights aspirations of a majority of Hondurans.

SEE BELOW: How to support Honduras' courageous and tenacious pro-democracy movement that is peacefully and relentlessly working for the re-establishment of the rule of law and democracy in Honduras.

- Please re-post this information all around
- To get on/ off Rights Action's listserv: www.rightsaction.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION, ENGLISH & ESPANOL

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“PORN KING”, DEVELOPER OF PROJECTS IN TRUJILLO

<http://www.laprensa.hn/Apertura/Ediciones/2011/03/07/Noticias/Empresario-de-la-pornografia-dirige-proyectos-en-Trujillo>

Honduras, March 6, 2011

[Translation for Rights Action by Rosalind Gill, RGill@glendon.yorku.ca]

In Canada, Randy Jorgensen is a leader in the pornography industry. In Honduras, he is CEO of the company that will build a new cruise ship terminal.

Until recently, Trujillo was the lost paradise of Honduras, a uniquely beautiful city waiting to be discovered by the outside world. Today, at last, Trujillo's dream has come true - a cruise ship terminal will be built in the city, allowing people from all over the world to experience the unforgettable beauty of the place. As well, there are plans for four housing projects that will allow tourists to own a quality house in Trujillo and come back to this paradise every year.

After years of being forgotten, suffering from the indifference of governments that never did anything to develop the area, Trujillo is becoming a mega-project centre. Looking at this promising situation, you can only hope that no “villains” appear on the scene, but unfortunately, a few first class villains have indeed turned up.

And Randy is our number one villain.

In fact, all the mega-projects in Trujillo are being developed by Randy Jorgensen.

The Grand Trujillo Authority Consortium is developing the Banana Coast Cruise Ship Terminal in the Río Negro neighbourhood; and the four housing projects for Canadian and American tourists are being developed by the Life Vision Properties Company.

In Honduras, Randy Jorgensen is known as CEO of both these companies, which are backed by Fast Track Capital, a Canadian investment group. But there is a lot more to Randy's story than that of the typical successful investor looking for new ways to make money in exotic countries.

Miriam Miranda, Director of OFRANEH (Honduran Black People's Fraternal Organization) provided us with some details about Jorgensen's life: “He is known as the “King of Porn”, and has even had problems with the law. Here in Honduras, authorities have allowed him to go ahead and harm protected areas. We have been denouncing this for some time now but nobody has done anything because the only thing that counts here is money,” said Miranda.

FOUNDER OF AOV (Adult Only Video)

There are innumerable web pages, mostly in English, that provide details on Jorgensen's activities. Randy Jorgensen was born in Canada, a country where he is known as the "King of Porn". He is the founder of Adult Only Video (AOV), Canada's biggest pornography retail chain.

"The only problem I have had in Honduras was with an ex-employee who was caught stealing and tried to make accusations against me to avoid facing charges but they turned out to be false allegations and she had no proof to present to the Court."

OFRANEH, a Garífuna organization, tried to accuse me of buying land illegally, but the case was not deemed valid by the Public Ministry," said Randy, who agreed to talk to the newspaper, LA PRENSA.

Sonia Parra revealed in the International Press Service that the Capiro and Calentura protected areas were at risk because of the housing projects being developed by Randy. As well, other serious matters concerning Jorgensen's activities have been raised.

On January 26, 2011, the bank holding his company's funds informed him that all his accounts would be closed and he was given limited time to withdraw his capital. "This cannot be because of money-laundering or drug-trafficking, because if that were the case, my funds would have frozen. All the letter says is that the law allows them to close an account if they see fit", said the Canadian businessman.

SUPPORT FOR JORGENSEN'S PROJECTS

Final approval for the cruise port was given at the time when the country was experiencing political turmoil. Luis Alonso López was Mayor in the former municipal administration of Trujillo. On December 10, 2009, this administration declared that the cruise port was a necessary public utility for Río Negro. Final authorization for the project was granted just five days before Porfirio Lobo became President. The official announcement was published in the January 22, 2010 of La Gaceta (official Government publication).

This edition of La Gaceta provoked a controversy known as the "Gacetazo", because on that day, two versions of the bulletin were printed, only one of which included the decree authorizing the highly disputed concession for the Nacome dam.

The environmental permit for the construction of the Alta Vista Beach project, a tourist housing development, was granted on January 25, two days before the termination of the former Government.

The Life Vision Properties blog states that President Porfirio Lobo invited Jorgensen to meet him at the Christopher Columbus Hotel in Trujillo on November 27, 2010. The meeting was attended by a number of civil servants, including Ramón Lobo, the President's brother and advisor.

According to the company blog, details of Randy's tourist projects were discussed at the meeting. In the end, Lobo instructed his ministers and José Laínez, the Mayor of Trujillo, to do their best to ensure that the projects be implemented as quickly as possible.

OPINIONS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

After a life of economic difficulty, unemployment, low opportunity and urban stagnation, inhabitants of Trujillo are not really interested in the identity of those who will carry out the development projects. The only thing they are concerned about is that the development does go ahead. These programmes bring hope for improvement in their quality of life – a change this humble city has long awaited.

However, some people, like Miriam Miranda, cannot understand why the future of Trujillo's tourism would be put in the hands of a porn industry magnate.

DETAILS OF THE AGREEMENT

According to Randy Jorgensen, the profit share is fair and everything was carried out according to the law. "Our investment group receives 50% of profit, the Municipality of Trujillo receives 20%, community members of Río Negro will receive 10% and the remaining 20% will be available for possible new investors", said the Canadian. Jorgensen also said that they expect the land part of the project to be ready by 2012, while the maritime part will take 18 months.

Randy revealed that he has received bids from three companies for the construction and supervision of the terminal. The companies are not from Trujillo because the area cannot offer services at that level.

Jorgensen also said that the investment group he represents did not choose Trujillo by chance - the decision was based on tourist studies carried out by the Honduran government several years ago. He pointed out that the city should prepare itself for the big change that is coming. For Jorgensen, a highlight of the contract is the possibility that in 20 years, the Municipality will have the opportunity to buy the rights that belong to Canadian investors at this point.

Protests or no protests, on March 11, ground will be broken to begin construction on the cruise Terminal. President Lobo is expected to attend the event.

"My company did not produce or make the films, we just sold them."

Some people in Honduras are scandalized by him while others see him as a model of a visionary business man, but no one is indifferent to him. Randy Jorgensen founded Adult Only Video (AOV) in Saskatoon, Canada, a country where the porn industry is legal.

"The company is a chain of retail stores, not a production or film company. From 1980 to 1990, I worked with several provincial and federal film boards in Canada to create viable standards for the adult video industry, so that an illegal market would not develop," said Randy.

In only seven years, his retail business went from being a small local store to a business with 500 employees, according to the Canadian magazine, MacLean's. "MacLean's did a report on me and my company in 1993. It was they who gave me the name "King of Porn". The article was very favourable and gave a positive evaluation of my work to create fair standards to ensure that the industry remains regulated and legal", said Jorgensen.

According to business magazines, the porn business is so profitable that it remained stable, even during the recession. "The name "King of Porn" does not bother me, what does bother me is when they base their opinion on rumours or half-truths", said the Canadian.

Because of the growth of pornography in Canadian culture, Canadian authorities have had to keep revising and modifying laws governing videos and explicit content material and they have had difficulty defining with precision the different situations that can arise in these productions. There is no way of counting the number of users of pornography but the profits are an indicator of the money that can be made with this type of material.

Finally, Randy spoke of his wishes for Honduras. "This is one of the poorest countries in the Western hemisphere and it has a high level of illiteracy. Tourism is the fastest way to fight these problems. I would like to see the introduction of a general education system and the creation of an economy that will give the youth of Honduras a fair chance at life so that they will not have to leave Honduras to improve their lot. For the past four years, I have worked to make the Trujillo Bay project a reality", said Jorgensen.

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WHAT TO DO:

Canadians interested in these tourism/ "development" projects should be aware that they are getting involved in what are 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.

We believe that it is the responsibility of the Canadian government to alert prospective developers and investors in this project.

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

Randy Jorgensen
Life Vision Development
Tel (Toronto): 416-805-7443
Tel (Honduras): 504-9967-6005
randy@aov.ca, info@aov.ca
(These email addresses use the Adults Only Video domain 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
(see promotion of the "Paradise Properties":
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

Global Destinations Development (Involved in building cruise ship dock on Garifuna land, Rio Negro, Trujillo)
Miami, Florida, USA
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
loeey@loeey.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.

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tglpa@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

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

To make a tax-deductible donation for community based organizations in Honduras' pro-democracy movement working to eradicate poverty and exploitation and to re-found their nation-state, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887
CANADA: 552 - 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: <http://rightsaction.org/contributions.htm>; or go to: www.rightsaction.org. (Credit card donations can be done anonymously)

FOR DONATION OF STOCK: contact info@rightsaction.org. (Stock donations can be done anonymously – have your stockbroker contact info@rightsaction.org)

SPEAKERS

Contact us to plan educational presentations in your community, school, place of worship, home (info@rightsaction.org)

EDUCATIONAL DELEGATIONS TO CENTRAL AMERICA

Form your own group and/ or join one of our educational delegation-seminars to learn first hand about community development, human rights and environmental struggles (info@rightsaction.org)

- CREATE YOUR OWN email and mail lists and re-distribute our information
- RECOMMENDED DAILY NEWS: www.democracynow.org / www.upsidedownworld.org / www.dominionpaper.ca
- RECOMMENDED BOOKS: Eduardo Galeano's "Open Veins of Latin America"; Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States"; James Loewen's "Lies My Teacher Told Me"; Naomi Klein's "The Shock Doctrine"; Paolo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"; Dr Seuss's "Horton Hears A Who"

WWW.RIGHTSACTION.ORG

Rights Action is a not-for-profit organization, with tax charitable status in Canada and the USA. We directly fund and work with community-based development, environmental, disaster relief and human rights projects and organizations fighting to eliminate poverty and impunity and the underlying causes of poverty and impunity in Guatemala and Honduras, as well as in Chiapas [Mexico], El Salvador and Haiti. We educate about and are involved work aimed at critically understanding unjust north-south relations and global development, environmental and human rights issues and the challenges of poverty eradication.

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