

HONDURAS IMPUNITY WATCH
Rights Action, July 14, 2011

TOURISM & ETHNOCIDE IN HONDURAS

Canadian investors (Canadian Shield Fund, Barrick Gold, Toronto-Dominion Bank, 'Porn King' Randy Jorgensen, and more) investing in tourism "development" projects in Honduras, causing slow crushing and ethnocide of indigenous Garifuna communities

BELOW: article by Karen Spring, Rights Action, spring.kj@gmail.com

BACKGROUND

- 2010 article by Dawn Paley, "SNOWBIRDS GONE WILD! CANADIAN RETIREES AND LOCALS CLASH IN HONDURAS",
http://rightsaction.org/articles/Honduras_tourism_conflicts_110510.html
- 2011 article by Karen Spring, CANADIAN PORN KINGS, TOURISM "DEVELOPMENT" PROJECT, REPRESSION & THE VIOLATION OF INDIGENOUS-GARIFUNA RIGHTS IN HONDURAS, http://rightsaction.org/articles/Garifuna_repression_021711.html
- (Going back to the early 2000s, Rights Action has written & re-circulated many articles about the rights violation & repression caused by global tourism "development" projects. We can provide more.)

1. Please re-post this
2. To get on-off Rights Action's listserv: www.rightsaction.org
3. Follow Rights Action on Facebook: www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org

TOURISM & ETHNOCIDE IN HONDURAS

Canadian investors (Canadian Shield Fund, Barrick Gold, Toronto-Dominion Bank, 'Porn King' Randy Jorgensen, and more) investing in tourism "development" projects in Honduras, causing slow crushing and ethnocide of indigenous Garifuna communities

By Karen Spring (Rights Action, July 14, 2011, spring.kj@gmail.com)



On the beach of Trujillo, Caribbean coast of Honduras, at sunset in the now disappeared Garifuna community of Rio Negro, steps away from where Randy Jorgensen's "Banana Coast" cruise ship dock is set to be built.

Supposedly, the cruise ship dock is an important piece of the privatized "Model City" construction plan.

Various Canadian investors - including Canadian 'Porn King' Randy Jorgensen and the Canadian Shield Fund (with investments from Barrick Gold, Toronto-Dominion Bank, Canadian oil and gas companies and others) – have partnered up and have held meetings with President Pepe Lobo of the post-military coup regime to plan the construction of a large-scale tourist project, presented as a privatized Model City, on the north coast of Honduras, in Trujillo.

Canadian investors are pushing the project forward while indigenous Garifuna communities, resisting the illegal incursion of this "development" project onto their communities, are being threatened and forced out.

Lands that have been 'acquired' illegally are being pitched and sold to buyers in Canada. Poor Hondurans are being exploited and excluded from decisions pertinent to their community and cultural survival under the so-called banner of 'developing Honduras' that the post-coup regime and Jorgensen are so desperate to promote.

"MICOS BEACH AND GOLF RESORT" TOURISM ENCLAVE

A few years ago, Rights Action published a series of urgent actions and articles concerning the "Micos Beach and Golf Resort" tourism enclave, a "development" project funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and some Italian private consortiums. That "development" project continues to advance, further west along the Caribbean coast, and includes: 18-hole golf course, 5-star hotels, an equestrian center; 400 private vilas, shopping centers, bars and restaurants, pools, etc.

The Micos project is threatening to disappear the Garifuna community of Miami. Other communities – Barra Vieja, San Juan, Tornabe and Triunfo de la Cruz – continue being pressured and threatened with removal, to make way for the global tourism industry.



The beginning of one of the gated communities being developed by Jorgensen's "Life Vision Properties". Parts of this specific project are being built on Garifuna community owned land in the community of Guadalupe.

GARIFUNA LEADER DENOUNCES CANADIAN TOURISM INVESTORS & DEVELOPERS, DEATH THREATS BEGIN

Every morning, right on the Caribbean beach, Garifuna youth, women and community leaders broadcast a variety of programs on the Garifuna community 'Star Radio.'

The majority of these programs discuss issues pertinent to the Garifuna coastal communities, the cultural integrity of the Garifuna people and the looming threat of the Canadian funded and masterminded tourist 'development' project already being built in Trujillo.

When these radio programs began, particularly those critical of the tourist project, Garifuna community leaders started receiving death threats both via telephone and text message.

Unknown and suspicious pick-up trucks have also been seen driving by various times in front of the houses of Garifuna community leaders and the radio both in the morning and the evening.

Community leaders believe the threats come from people linked to the corporate and investor interests pushing forward with the tourist project.

(Please read articles by Dawn Paley, "SNOWBIRDS GONE WILD! CANADIAN RETIREES AND LOCALS CLASH IN HONDURAS", http://rightsaction.org/articles/Honduras_tourism_conflicts_110510.html, and by Karen Spring, CANADIAN PORN KINGS, TOURISM "DEVELOPMENT" PROJECT, REPRESSION & THE VIOLATION OF INDIGENOUS-GARIFUNA RIGHTS IN HONDURAS, http://rightsaction.org/articles/Garifuna_repression_021711.html)

The project represents a huge threat to the survival of various Garifuna communities in the Trujillo area who – for over 200 years - legally own and hold land title to areas that Jorgensen has recently 'acquired' and supposedly 'owns' and who is pitching them to real estate firms & potential buyers, mostly in Canada.

MODEL CITIES: MODEL DISASTERS

In early 2011, Honduran President, Pepe Lobo and the National Congress, all illegitimately 'elected' in November 2009, five months after the military coup against the government of President Zelaya, passed legislation approving the construction of a privatized Model or Charter City in Honduran territory.

Final 'authorization' of Jorgensen's "Banana Boat" cruise ship dock and the environmental assessment approvals for other aspects of the project were granted to Jorgensen within five months of the June 2009 coup, during the illegal regime headed by coup leader Roberto Micheletti.

The validity and legality of these laws and approvals will probably not stand up to judicial scrutiny and challenge, once Honduras returns – sooner or later – to real democracy and the rule of law.

The Charter City project would allow for a 33 km-squared 'privatized' 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."

At first, many Hondurans did not think the Congress would take the idea seriously, but on June 8, 2011, a group of Canadian investors met with President Lobo to discuss funding the construction of the Model City in Trujillo. This heightens serious concerns regarding land and community survival issues both for the Garifuna communities who have inhabited most of the coast for hundreds of years, and also for campesinos in the region that are in direct and violent conflicts with large land-owners, foreign banana companies and international funded tourist projects.

"CANADIAN SHIELD FUND" PARTNERING WITH THE PORN KING

Canadian mining giant, Barrick Gold, the TD bank and other institutions are investing funds in the Canadian Shield Fund that is trading on the Toronto Stock Exchange. In partnership with Randy Jorgensen, the Canadian Shield Fund is investing in the Model City.

SHADY DEALS, AT BEST; OUTRIGHT ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES AND REPRESSION, AT WORST

Canadians – and other investors - that do not care to understand, or choose to ignore repression and impunity in Honduras and Garifuna cultural integrity and survival, should take warning that investing in these tourism projects is resulting in directly or indirectly contributing to and benefiting from corruption, shady or outright illegal deals and repression.

WHAT TO DO?

NO "BUSINESS AS USUAL" WITH REPRESSIVE, MILITARY-BACKED REGIMES

We urge North Americans to write letters of protest and concern to their own politicians and government officials, and to the investors and companies below, denouncing the slow ethnocide that is being carried out against the Garifuna people of Honduras.

In the name of the rights, development and cultural survival of the Garifuna peoples, we urge the Canadian government to put an 'investment advisory' on this project.

ADDRESSES – COMPANIES & INVESTORS

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: 416-805-7443, Tel (Honduras): 504-9967-6005, randy@aov.ca, info@aov.ca
(Randy's email addresses use the "Adults Only Video" domaine name, which is one of his porn businesses.)

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: 905-251-4366, Tel (Honduras): 504-9647-2517, cathy@jaguarcon.com

MacKenzie Investments, Canadian Shield Fund
service@mackenziefinancial.com

Barrick Gold Corporation
Brookfield Place, TD Canada Trust Tower
161 Bay Street
Suite 3700, P.O. Box 212
Toronto, Canada M5J 2S1
Tel: 416 861-9911, Toll Free: 800-720-7415, Fax: 416 861-2492

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
tel: 519-579-4110, E: loeey@loeey.com

ADDRESSES - 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.

(* Rights Action realizes some of these contacts are outdated. Please send us updated information)

CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT:

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>

PRIME MINISTER Stephen Harper

harpes@parl.gc.ca

Minister of International Cooperation Bev Oda
509-S Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6
Oda.B@parl.gc.ca

Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas) Peter Kent
125 Sussex Dr, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0G2
(613) 992-0253, kent.p@parl.gc.ca

Gilles Duceppe, leader, Bloc Quebecois
1200 Papineau Av, #350, Montreal, QC, H2K-4R5
ducepg@parl.gc.ca

Jack Layton, leader, New Democratic Party
221 Broadview Ave, Suite 100, Toronto, ON, MM-2G3
laytoj@parl.gc.ca

Elizabeth May, leader, Green Party
Saanich Gulf Islands EDA, Box 20076, Sidney, BC, V8L-5C9
emaytowin@greenparty.ca

Michael Ignatieff, Liberal Party
656 The Queensway, Etobicoke, ON, M8Y-1K7
ignatm@parl.gc.ca

Bob Rae, Liberal, Foreign Affairs Critic
(613) 992-5234, RaeB@parl.gc.ca

Francine Lalonde, Bloc Quebecois, Foreign Affairs Critic
(613) 995-6327

Paul Dewar, NDP, Foreign Affairs Critic
1306 Wellington St. W, Ottawa, ON, K1Y-3B2
dewarp@parl.gc.ca, 613-946-8682

Larry Bagnell, Liberal
bagnell.l@parl.gc.ca

Stockwell Day, Conservative
613-995-1702

Peter Julian, NDP International Trade Critic
Rm 178, Confederation Bldg., Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6
Julian.P@parl.gc.ca

John McKay, Liberal, Scarborough-Guildwood
(613) 992-1447, MckayJ@parl.gc.ca, 613-947-4609
Claire Lehan, Legislative Assistant
(613) 992-6512, McKayJ8@parl.gc.ca
549-D Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6

Kevin Sorenson, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Room 518, Justice Building, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A6
(613) 947-4608, SorenK@parl.gc.ca, 613-992-2971

Dean Allison, Foreign Affairs Committee Chairperson
4994 King Street, Beamsville, ON, L0R-1B0
allison.d@parl.gc.ca, 905-995-2772

Barbara Curran, CIDA Director
200 Promenade du Portage, Gatineau, K1A-0G4
819-994-4092, barbara.curran@acdi-cida.gc.ca

Kate Stefanuk, Acting Director (& responsible for Honduras)
kate.stefanuk@acdi-cida.gc.ca

CANADIAN Embassy in Costa Rica (responsible for Honduras)
Ambassador Cameron MacKay, Cameron.MacKay@international.gc.ca
(506) 2242-4400, (506) 2242-4411, sjra@international.gc.ca
Honduras Office of the Canadian Embassy
Centro Financiero Banexpo, 3 Piso, Boulevard San Juan Bosco, Colonia Payaquí, Tegucigalpa,
(504) 232-4551; tglpa@international.gc.ca

AMBASSADOR to the OAS
H.E. Allan Culham
wshdc-prmoas@international.gc.ca
(202) 682-1768

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

For Garifuna organizations implementing their own community development, human rights and environment projects, and resisting the harms caused by large-scale tourism "development" projects, 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://www.rightsaction.org/Templates/donations_index.html

* * * * *

- Please re-post this
- To get on-off Rights Action's listserv: www.rightsaction.org
- Follow Rights Action on Facebook: www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org