

GOLDWASHING - ROB FROM THE POOR TO GIVE TO THE RICH

BELOW: an article, by Krissy Darch, about Goldcorp Inc's 2010 "gift" to UBC (University of British Columbia).

GOLDCORP ANNUAL SHAREHOLDER MEETING (Vancouver BC, May 18, 2011): To get involved in Vancouver: Jason Tockman, tockman@riseup.net, 604.727.9081

SEE BELOW: for more information and how to support gold mining communities in Honduras and Guatemala

- Please forward this information and re-post

To get on/off Rights Action's listserv: www.rightsaction.org

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GOLDCORP'S \$5 MILLION GIFT TO UBC RAISES QUESTIONS WE DESERVE TO KNOW HOW MUCH GOLDCORP HAS DONATED IN TOTAL TO UBC, AND HOW THESE DECISIONS WERE MADE. WE DESERVE SOME ACCOUNTABILITY

By Krissy Darch

<http://ubyssey.ca/opinion/25797/>

Late last year, Stephen Toope announced the building progress of the new Earth Systems Science Building. What he failed to mention was that the project was made possible in part by a five million dollar donation from Goldcorp, the Vancouver-based mining giant.

Toope went on to say that UBC's "commitment to sustainability is vital to UBC's growth as a globally significant university, and as an example of how a large institution comports itself in a world that demands — and desperately needs — a much higher level of environmental responsibility than ever before."

However, I can't help but notice that Goldcorp donating to the Earth and Oceans Sciences is sort of like Paul Bernardo donating to Women's and Gender Studies.

At SFU, students are organizing in outrage against the administration for accepting a ten million dollar donation from Goldcorp to its Woodward's art facility, which is now the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts. SFU President Andrew Petter, has said that Goldcorp's human rights record is a "non sequitur."

At least Petter is not trying to defend the company, as its chilling human rights record and environmental record have been reported and investigated by CBC and the BBC, alongside a slew of independent journalists and researchers.

Goldcorp has been laid with criminal charges for water pollution by both Honduras and Guatemala. In Honduras, the company uses massive sprinklers that spray cyanide into the air; even by the low chemical standards we have here in Canada, this would never be permitted. Regular explosions near mining sites allegedly make cracks in houses of local residents, which the company claims to be the result of loud music. Water pollution has caused body rashes and hair loss in children born downstream from the mines, rashes which the company claims to be the result of poor hygiene.

Andrew Petter received an open letter from the Siria Valley Environmental Committee in October 2010, describing how the community has lost access to safe drinking water, how the people are suffering blood-based arsenic and lead contamination, and how local people have lost food security. It also cited an increase in militarization and violence due to the private security working for the company.

UBC isn't the only Canadian institution investing in conflict in Latin America. The Canadian Pension Plan is currently holding 256 million dollars in Goldcorp shares, while public sector pensions in BC have 280 million dollars invested in the company.

Why is UBC helping one of the most notorious Canadian corporations to launder its reputation on our own campus? What does it mean that our educational institutions are being used as vessels of corporate advertising?

Stephen Toope likes to talk about UBC's commitment to sustainability and social justice; a pillar displaying the word "sustainability" and a pillar displaying the phrase "social justice" flank the entrance of the Liu Institute for Global Issues.

So why don't we engage in public and systemic analysis, looking at the decision to accept these donations? Is someone conducting an analysis on the corporate privatization of the university, and the effects of moving public goods into private hands?

The new building will be called the Goldcorp Teaching and Learning Wing. If we're naming buildings after Goldcorp, UBC risks condoning corporate actions. On the Goldcorp website under "Corporate Social Responsibility," one can see that undisclosed amounts have also been accepted by The Liu Institute of Global Issues, the National Centre for Business Law and the Mineral Deposits Research Unit.

We deserve to know how much Goldcorp has donated in total to UBC, and how these decisions were made. We deserve some accountability.

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WHAT TO DO – FUNDS

Since 2004, Rights Action has been funding the community development and environmental and human rights defense work of ADISMI (the Association for the Integral Defense of San Miguel Ixtahuacan) in Guatemala and the Siria Valley Enviro-Defense Committee in Honduras.

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

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

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FOR QUESTIONS & INFORMATION about Goldcorp's mining related environmental and health harms and other human rights violations in Guatemala & Honduras, contact: info@rightsaction.org.