

Rights Action
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TELL NPR TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON “MODEL CITIES” IN HONDURAS

‘Click’ below, to write to Ira Glass and reporters Jacob Goldstein and Chana Joffe-Walt, and tell them to set the record straight on Honduras.

(ira@thislife.org; chana@joffe-walt.com)

(From SOA Watch ...)

TELL NPR TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT

http://org.salsalabs.com/o/727/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=13630

On January 4th of this year, This American Life, a radio show produced by Ira Glass and aired on WBEZ Chicago and National Public Radio, presented an episode entitled "[Some Like it Dot](http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/483/self-improvement-kick?act=2)" (<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/483/self-improvement-kick?act=2>), which featured a segment devoted to the proposal for “Model Cities” in Honduras. The name of the piece itself is telling, as the term “dot” refers to the piece of land proposed as the site of the new city. During the program, reporters Jacob Goldstein and Chana Joffe-Walt refer to the site as an inhabited dot, effectively erasing the Garífuna population living in the area. But the Garífuna are not the only people threatened by the specter of privately run cities within Honduran territory.

The story painted a picture of the neoliberal agenda of militarized land-grabs in Honduras in a very different light than it is on the ground. While This American Life framed the issue of private model cities in Honduras as a wholly ameliorating process, we believe that they would primarily benefit large or foreign companies while further marginalizing the already struggling populations of Honduras. This is why we are asking you to contact Ira Glass and urge him to tell the other side of the story on the charter city; the people’s story. By following this action, you can help to flood his email inbox with demands to redress the skewed portrayal of the crisis posed by the “Model Cities” initiative.

BACKGROUND:

The military death squads [Xatruch I & II](#), led by Col. Germán Alfaro, a graduate of the School of the Americas, have been the driving force of misery in the Lower Aguán region of Honduras. Since the illegal coup of 2009, the Honduran military has targeted campesinos, the LGBT community, and lawyers who support either group. The Xatruch battalions are paramilitary troops that represent the latest initiative to privatize security and to protect the interests of large corporations conducting business in Honduras. One such company is Grupo Dinant, an agro-industrial giant owned by the largest landowner in Honduras, Miguel Facussé.

Not only is the military being sold out to the private sector, but violent land grabbing is part of a vicious neoliberal campaign to auction off land to the wealthy elite, both domestic and international. The problem is, and what This American Life failed to report, that these lands are already home to several communities of campesinos and indigenous peoples. It is this exact misrepresentation of the human impact of neoliberal policies, especially in Honduras, which portrays the “development strategies” and “economic growth” driven by wealthy elites, multinational corporations and financial institutions as agents of positive social change. In reality, these policies and practices are the active agent of the suppression of self-determination the world over. When liberal U.S. media outlets characterize the facts on the ground in Latin America, it is up to us to ask them to set the record straight.

WRITE THEM:

Please correctly spell out the full address, and do not abbreviate (for example, spell out SAINT PAUL instead of St. Paul). Please refrain from including any extra dashes or symbols when you enter your street address. If you continue to receive this message, you can find your ZIP+4 at <http://zip4.usps.com>

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BACKGROUND - GENERAL

For more information about the over-all situation of repression and human rights in Honduras, contact Rights Action.

BACKGROUND – “MODEL CITIES” IN HONDURAS

Listen to a debate on the CBC radio network in Canada:

<http://www.cbc.ca/thecurrent/popupaudio.html?clipIds=2337585546>

BACKGROUND – “THIS AMERICAN LIFE”

For information about a TAL news piece done last year about massacres and reconciliation in Guatemala, that censored all reference to the role of the United States: <http://rightsaction.org/action-content/american-life-radio-report-digging-truth-about-dos-erres-massacre-guatemala-not-about>

THE AMERICAN / CANADIAN CONNECTION

Please send copies of this information, and your own letters, to your Canadian and American politicians (MPs, Congress members and Senators) and to your own media. Since the June 2009 military coup, that ousted the democratically elected government of President Zelaya, Honduras has become the ‘Murder Capital of the world’. State repression has again reached the levels of the worst years of the 1980s. Since the coup, the U.S. and Canadian governments have ‘legitimized the illegitimate’ post-coup regime. North American companies and investors have increased their business activities in Honduras since the coup. In no small part, this repressive regime remains in power due to its political, economic and military relations with the U.S. and Canada.

CONTACT

- MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT: <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>
- CONGRESS: <http://www.house.gov/> to get info for your member of Congress, and call: 202-224-3121
- SENATE: <http://www.senate.gov/> to get contact for your Senator, and call: 202-224-3121

COMMENTS / QUESTIONS: info@rightsaction.org

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