

March 23, 2015

Letter to The Current (CBC news)

<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/contact>

Your March 17, 2015 report “U.S. Faith Groups Try To Block Access To Emergency Care For Migrants” was very moving, and helps cover up conditions of rape, violence & impunity that women and girls are fleeing

- <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-march-17-2015-1.2997944/u-s-faith-groups-try-to-block-access-to-emergency-care-for-migrants-1.2997961>

Your report about how Latin American women and girls are fleeing exploitation and poverty, corruption and impunity, and general and gender-based violence, and are getting raped while travelling through Mexico (to hopefully enter the U.S.), is moving and serious, and it is misleading.

The vast majority of women and girls fleeing north are from Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras. The Canadian and American governments, the American military, and many North American companies and investors have extensive political, military and business relations with the regimes in power in these countries, contributing to (and even profiting from) the very conditions that force people - desperate and afraid - to migrate ... and then many get raped along the way.

The role of the media is not only to report on harms and violations people suffer, but to investigate and expose the underlying causes of such harms and violations. The media must always be a critical check and balance on the abuse of power by power-holders in our world, from the local to global levels.

I believe The Current chose not to address the underlying causes of repression and exploitation, violence and impunity in Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico because of the extensive Canadian and American military, political and economic interests involved.

The women and girls being raped are not fleeing regimes that the U.S. and Canadian governments love to hate.

The undemocratic, corrupt and repressive regimes in power in Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras have beneficial military, economic and political relations with Canada and the U.S. Through so-called “free trade” agreements (NAFTA, CAFTA and the recent Canada-Honduras agreement), hundreds if not thousands of North American companies are profitably doing business (mining, dam building, tourism, garment factory sweatshops, African palm, coffee, fruits, etc) in these countries, contributing to and benefitting from the corruption and impunity, exploitation and poverty, violence and repression that force so many people to flee.

Your report leads the listener to shake their head at “those countries” that so many people flee from, and does not inform the listener of the complicit role of their own governments, companies and investors. One result is that few Canadians and Americans – though moved by your report - are going to demand changes in Canadian and American policies that contribute to the very harms you were reporting on.

Tens of thousands of people will continue to flee, year after year, generation after generation. Women and girls will continue to get raped in the countries of origin, and during flight. And every now and then the media will report movingly about this dire situation.

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Rights Action (USA & Canada)

Rights Action believes in the interdependence of all humans and life forms on the planet, and in our fundamental emanation from and dependence on the natural elements of Mother Earth. Most injustices, inequalities and environmental destructions suffered by humans and other life forms across the planet are the result of human value systems based on domination, superiority and inferiority, competition, ‘winners and losers’ and ‘we versus them’, and on separation from and domination over the natural elements of Mother Earth. Rights Action funds grassroots organizations in Guatemala and Honduras (and less-so in southern Mexico and El Salvador) working for locally-controlled development, environmental and human rights protection, and the strengthening of real democracy and rule of law. Rights Action does education and activism work concerning how the United States and Canada (governments, companies, investors, consumers) contribute to and benefit from environmental harms and human rights violations, repression, corruption and impunity in these countries.

Get Informed / Get Involved

- Speakers: Invite us to give presentations about these issues
- Educational Delegation: Form your own group or join one of our educational-solidarity delegation seminars to Guatemala and Honduras to learn more about these issues and struggles
- Daily News: www.democracynow.org / www.upsidedownworld.org / www.dominionpaper.ca / www.rabble.ca /
- Recommended Reading: “This Changes Everything: Capitalism versus The Climate”, by Naomi Klein

Say No To ‘International Business and Investments, Militarism and Impunity As Usual’

The U.S. and Canadian governments, the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, and North American companies and investors (including public pension funds like Social Security and the Canada Pension Plan) maintain profitable economic and military relations with the Guatemalan and Honduran (and Mexican) elites, turning a blind eye to death and suffering by drought, repression, violence and impunity that are the norm in both countries.

Because of impunity and immunity from legal liability in Canada and the U.S., it is extremely difficult to hold our companies, investors, governments and international “development” banks accountable when they contribute to and benefit from human rights violations and environmental and health harms in other countries.

Send, and keep on sending copies of this information, and your own letters, to your own elected politicians (MPs, Congresspersons, Senators), to your media, and to your own pension and investment funds, asking: Why our governments, companies and investment firms do nothing about the poverty, repression and violence, and environmental and health harms associated with North American businesses, while benefiting from these economic relations with the Guatemalan and Honduran (and Mexican) political, military and economic elites?

Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & United States)

To support community organizations working for locally-controlled development, the environment, human rights, real democracy and the rule of law in Honduras and Guatemala, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

- Canada: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8
- USA: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091
- Credit-Card Donations: <http://www.rightsaction.org/tax-deductible-donations>
- Stock donations: info@rightsaction.org

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