

Indigenous Farmers Being Murdered In Honduras

In Memory of Alicja Rozanska and Walter Borgatti

Story by Danny Beaton
(Turtle Clan Mohawk)

We Farmers, citizens, educators and the public came from Simcoe County, Georgian Bay, Ontario, to Saint Stephen-In-The-Fields Church, Toronto, to organize an event that would bring awareness to the atrocities happening in Honduras and across South America, mostly from mining companies in Canada, but also Honduras' own government. There were five great speakers at this event and one after the other they gave presentations concerning human rights violations, land theft, drug trafficking, organized crime and 90% impunity rate, which means that 90% of all violent crimes goes unpunished. Many crimes are against journalists, environmentalists, lawyers, or anyone trying to protect human rights. It was very powerful to see local Simcoe farmers at this gathering supporting farmers in Honduras, believing that their own kind were being terrorized and not only terrorized, because the government of Honduras was letting murder to Indigenous people happen. So the citizens of Simcoe, Ontario, and farmers and professionals founded The Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor, following the arrests of Edwin Espinal and over twenty other Hondurans in the context of the 2017 electoral fraud in Honduras. The governments of the world are known for handing out mining permits to corporations who are resource-extracting on Indigenous lands and today one of the ways corporations succeed in mining on Indigenous lands is by offered partnership-sharing profits. Mining on Indigenous Territories in South America is common practice by corporations who work with government extraction permits and impunity, because giant sums of money are used to buy corrupt politicians and government officials. Throughout the drug industry in South America, our chiefs have said in the past that the drug industry/economy is second to the sale of weapons in the world. Everywhere in the cartels there is bribery, threats, intimidation and murder, so it is no surprise that Honduras has become a leader in criminal activity; only, they are disguising themselves as legitimate businesses, using the police, military and secret goon squads to force farmers' families, peasant people to give up their communities, farmers and territories. Mining companies in Toronto are responsible for asking for mining permits to employ behind closed door tactics that are now being documented by citizens of Simcoe County and people like myself, who cannot stay silent because it is Indigenous people who are now being murdered and jailed for long periods of time for trumped up lies, so that organized criminal activity can generate profit for corporations who have no



Danny and Professor Tyler Shipley

shame in terrorizing or killing. Solidarity groups throughout Canada and the USA are asking the United Nations, Canadian Government and US Governments to stop funding a corrupt puppet government like the Honduras one, because the money is not going to farmers and the poor but to criminals. These kinds of crimes are already well documented in the Mexican Cartels, the Middle East, Africa, Bosnia, even Palestine, etc. Professor Tyler Shipley at Humber College compares what is happening in Honduras to the colonization of Canada and North America during first contact. He was part of the speakers' panel at the church event I attended. Tyler's presentation of the atrocities taking place in Honduras and South America was more than convincing to the audience. Also speaking was Yves Engler, author of six books on social justice and foreign policy, praised by Globe and Mail columnist Rick Salutin for writing "A Propaganda System and The Ugly Canadian" regarding Stephen Harper's commitment to supporting the oil industry, mining, the tar sands and foreign policy. Yves Engler was a strong speaker giving insights to the world of corruption and propaganda which fuels violations throughout South America, which allows police and military to enforce illegal development on Indigenous Territories throughout the world. Having heard the speakers from the Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor, the most important message at Saint Stephen's Church was farmers and Indigenous people were being killed and jailed for long periods of time, especially Edwin Espinal and Raul Alvarez, who had protested Human Rights Violations during the Honduras election. They were in fact locked up for nineteen months. Without this forum and gathering at Saint Stephen's Church I myself would not know everything taking place in the Honduras now. Indians there are being killed for speaking out against land theft, corruption, mining etc. This has been going on

since colonization or first contact; it has been well documented in all Universities in Canada and the United States, through indigenous studies to environmental studies and Political Science. Now we need to ask our local politicians throughout Canada, through our own offices, to stop the mining companies from land theft and corruption. All the mining companies getting permits are known to Human Rights groups, but they continue to seek profit from Indigenous Territories. When the Amazon was being burned, the world came to its aid; the forests were being killed and Indians too. The same is being done in Honduras through genocide, because when you destroy Mother Earth and Indigenous Peoples, it is Genocide. What is happening is women and children being terrorized in Honduras and their fathers and sons locked up or killed for resisting modern day colonization in their country and trying to stop their own government from colonizing them and ending democracy. We in the north need to speak out for democracy and justice for our neighbors in the south; everything negative thinkers do behind closed doors must be exposed to the media, journalists, human rights activists and humanitarians of the world. Our governments are failing the people over mining permits and profit seekers. As long as we maintain our sacred fires and sacred ways, sacred thinking, something positive will happen, something positive needs to happen for our women and children; they are the ones who give life. The Lakota say men are the ones who are strategic thinkers and protectors. So we have spoken and the Good Minds are still here. My hope is Canada will see the cancer or negative thinking that is killing life in Honduras. Thank you for listening.

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Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor Statement
Edwin Espinal and Raul Alvarez were freed from La Tolva Prison through a court order on August 9, 2019. Yet they await a decision of the Appeals Court that will be ruling on their freedom. If the three-judge panel of this higher court rule against the two men's release from La Tolva, they may be sent back to prison in the very near future, despite the release ruling from another court. This legal injustice continues as the Honduran government rules with impunity, robbing the Honduran people of their rights and freedoms and


terrorizing human rights defenders like Edwin and Raul. Thousands of Hondurans have taken further measures, stepping up their protests in the streets against this illegal, narco-trafficking government of Juan Orlando Hernandez. President Hernandez has been implicated in serious drug trafficking violations for many years. In the ongoing October 2019 New York trial of Tony Hernandez, brother of the Honduran president, evidence has been produced that alleges that to fund the two 'elections' of 2013 and 2017, Hernandez received \$5.54 million from drug traffickers. In return, Hernandez allegedly assisted them in running drugs through Honduras to the United States. As further information in Honduran government continues to surface in

New York, the majority of Hondurans are adamant that Juan Orlando Hernandez step down. The Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor demands that the Canadian government stop 'doing business as usual' with this narco-trafficking regime. We demand total freedom for all political prisoners in Honduras and that their rights and freedoms of the Honduran population be upheld.

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