Vivian Krause 0:00

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Mike Smith 0:12

Alright, welcome back Vancouver Province columnist Mike Smith filling in for Simi today. Let's talk about the anti pipeline blockades. Now, here's a key question. I get this a lot from people, where do they get their money? Where do these groups get the money for this kind of stuff? Now, a lot of these environmental groups are not participating in the actual blockades, but many of them have issued statements sympathetic to the blockades. Where do these groups get their money? This came up yesterday in question period in the BC legislature. The BC liberals now saying that maybe there should be a ban on foreign funding of BC environmental groups. They say there's a lot of money coming in from American foundations to environmental groups in BC that are causing economic damage in our own country.

Have a listen to this now this you're going to hear Shirley Bond here from the BC liberals here in question period yesterday

Shirley Bond 1:07

The environment minister had dinner with members of Stand.earth who were present at the anti pipeline Strategy Group meeting on Bowen Island.

Just a fact. It's ironic how how facts actually upset the other side. Let's see what that organization is saying on their website. Here's the job posting on their US website and I quote, "campaigns have focused on have focused on

stopping the trans mountain pipeline, the tech frontier mine. In the coming months, we will expand to stop the growth of fracking and LNG in British Columbia" end quote, while the minister of the environment didn't want to get up last week, it's his chance today to stand up and unequivocally reject Stand.earth's American lead campaign to stop BC energy development

Mike Smith 2:09

okay surely bond yesterday and the liberals saying that some of these groups are getting money from US foundations. You heard her mention their Stand.earth one of the major environmental groups in our province. Liberals put out a statement yesterday they received $116,000 from the Tides Foundation, and two over $200,000 from the Gordon E. and Betty Moore Foundation out of the United States. Let's talk about this now. We got two awesome guests on it. Vivian Krause is a researcher who has followed the money on the environmental fights in our country for a long time. Vivian, thanks for coming on again.

Vivian Krause 2:45

Great to be here.

Mike Smith 2:46

I appreciate it. Also on the line is Peter McCartney from the Wilderness Committee in the studio. Peter, thanks for coming in.

Peter McCartney 2:51

Hey, thanks for having me.

Mike Smith 2:52

Okay, Vivian. Let me go to you first, what should people know about the financing of these groups? And is there money coming from the United States and should it be banned?

Vivian Krause 3:01

Well, thanks so much for having me on, Mike. So the problem that I see with this is that, you know, the reason that we're talking about pipelines now is because a controversy over them has been manufactured. We never used to talk about pipelines. They were never in the news, they were out of sight out of mind. No one ever had a panel discussion or a public conversation or anything about pipelines. But they were manufacturers into a controversy as part of a campaign to landlock Canadian crude. Now I'm not saying Pete can speak for themselves about whether his organization is part of that or not. But what I see as the biggest problem here is that this isn't helping the environment

because it's causing a huge amount of economic pain to Canada and for no environmental gain. You know, we use a heck of a lot of oil; 1000 barrels of oil every second. That's how much the that we're using as a planet. And for me, personally, I think it's too much too fast. We need to

Slow down. But this campaign isn't helping that because all it's doing is scaring investment capital away from Canada. We've had projects canceled now well over a billion dollars. We've also lost well over 100 billion dollars. We've also lost well over 100 billion dollars because we're not getting real prices for oil.

Mike Smith 4:21

Okay, speaking

Vivian Krause 4:21

of what we could do with that money,

Mike Smith 4:23

Speaking of money, how much money is coming in from the United States to fund these groups?

Vivian Krause 4:28

Well, so that's the thing that was speaking specifically about the situation with the Wet'suwet'en--Yeah, they've received some some American money. It's in. It's in the thousands, maybe in the hundreds of thousands. I don't even think it's in the millions necessarily. However, these are big groups, for instance of Gordon and Betty Moore foundation. That one foundation alone, one America Foundation alone, has put in more than almost 280 million. 245 million specifically for environmental activists. That's a lot of money. You know. Tides Canada alone 85 million

So those groups create the context in which the, you know, this small protest has been amplified around the world.

Mike Smith 5:13

Peter McCartney, what do you say to that?

Peter McCartney 5:15

I mean, you know, the Moore Foundation does not even fund climate work. You know, they fund things like the Great Bear rainforest.

Vivian Krause 5:24

Yes they do. They fund hundreds of projects

Peter McCartney 5:25

[Krause] talks about in manufactured controversy. I think she's an expert at manufactured controversies. Because her and the right wing politicians in oil and gas industry are creating this to distract from the absolutely urgent conversation we need to have in this country about indigenous rights and title. And so you know, when she talks about, oh the Wilderness Committee received $30,000, from Patagonia via the Tides foundation for our work in mining and the Clayoquot Sound and De Sico. And then somehow we're involved in organizing the, you know, the protests and blockades. We've seen across country

Vivian Krause 5:59

I haven't said that. I never said that

And I love the work that [Tides?] did in Clayoquot Sound so don't put words out of my mouth that I didn't say.

Peter McCartney 6:07

That's what the liberal press release accused us of yesterday. And you know, I just think it's so absurd.

Vivian Krause 6:12

Hang on a sec, that's not me, okay.

Mike Smith 6:14

Guy, guys, I'm going to insist you don't talk over each other. Vivian, go ahead.

Vivian Krause 6:19

Let's stick to the facts. Let's start with what we can agree with. Okay. Pete, I'm sure you and I can agree on a couple of things. One, we're using too much oil. I'm sure you'd agree with me that 1000 barrels a second is too much. We need to slow down. See how you know we still do need to burn some barrels of oil. So let's make the best possible use that we can have what we still need to burn, okay. Trouble is, we don't have the technology that we need to actually go off oil. You know, and Canada, we're so small as a country, that by our actions alone, we can't make a difference. We have to make a difference through our advocacy and our leadership. That's where we need to lead in areas like R&D, like the technology. I'd love to see our country. be the global capital of energy ingenuity, let's develop the iPhone of renewables. You know. That's the kind of leap that we need to make.

Peter McCartney 7:07

if I can jump in here, Canada is the fourth largest oil and gas producer in the world, we have a tremendous impact on the global climate because of the exports of our fossil fuels. And the Trans Mountain pipeline would expand—this is environment Canada's numbers—would expand emissions from the largest polluter in Canada, the Alberta tar sands by 20%.

Vivian Krause 7:29

Hang on, you're misleading.

Peter McCartney 7:30

That, you know, that what we can do for climate change in this country? While we're all you know, switching to electric cars and taking transit to work is tackle this single largest growing source of pollution in this country, which is emissions from the oil and gas industry.

Vivian Krause 7:45

Hang on a sec. You're using all the right sound bites, okay? And all the right talking points, but they're misleading. Here's why. You're right. Yeah, we're the fourth largest but hang on a sec. We're not even at 5% of global oil production. We're even barely at 4%. We build the Trans Mountain pipeline, we wouldn't even go up by 1%. Okay,

So, look, look at us, the United States this year is going to produce more oil and gas than Russia and Saudi Arabia combined. Okay. Texas has tripled its oil production. See, that's the big guy. So no, we're [...]

Peter McCartney 8:19

And you know there are $2.9 billion from foundations who have been giving to climate fights in the United States. This is not unique to Canada. They fight the Dakota Access Pipeline,

Vivian Krause 8:27

It is unique to Canada.

Peter McCartney 8:28

They fight the mountain valley pipeline.

Vivian Krause 8:29

It is unique to Canada

Peter McCartney 8:30

They fight the Bayou Bridge pipeline. This is a global movement of people together

Vivian Krause 8:34

No no no no no

Peter McCartney 8:35

To stand up to the oil and gas industry

Vivian Krause 8:37

No no no no no, there is no

Peter McCartney 8:37

Which has no plan in order for us to reduce our emissions

Mike Smith 8:41

Ok Vivian, real quick and then we take a quick break, okay, go ahead.

Vivian Krause 8:44

Most people don't even know the names of the Bayou pipeline there. It's absolutely silly to say that there has been a campaign against American pipelines that is anything even remotely close to the shakedown of the Keystone, Northern Gateway, Energy East, Trans Mountain, Mackenzie gas pipeline and now the LNG industry in British Columbia. These funders have simply not gone after, after Texas or North Dakota, the way they have after Alberta and that's my concern. Let's go green. I'm all for it.

Peter McCartney 9:14

That's not true. There are these fights all over the world

Vivian Krause 9:15

Let's make the transition but it needs to be fair to all countries.

Mike Smith 9:19

My guest Vivian Krause. She researches the funding of environmental groups in Canada, Peter McCartney, with the Wilderness Committee. Peter, would you say that would you be willing to admit that the environmental movement in Canada does get a lot of money from US foundations and it does have an impact on the debate here in Canada?

Peter McCartney 9:35

Of course, but there's American money flowing in through our country in every different way. You know, Vivian Krauss is a, you know, foreign funded by 33% of the oil and gas industry,

Vivian Krause 9:46

I am not funded by anybody. This is just ridiculous

Peter McCartney 9:46

Which pays the speaking fees at her engagements, is stumping for a foreign investment from the foreign owned companies PETRONAS, the Chinese state oil company and the Korean state oil companies, in a foreign owned newspaper, the Post Media. And so this is, of course, environmental groups are getting this funding

Vivian Krause 10:05

No

Peter McCartney 10:07

Every single other industry in Canada does. And the truth is they're getting only $40 million out of $5 billion that has been spent on the climate movement in the past few years.

Mike Smith 10:16

Vivian, what do you say to that?

Vivian Krause 10:18

Look, the oil industry hasn't supported me. They ignored me. They ignored me for nine years.

Peter McCartney 10:24

They pay you $10,000 at your speaking engagements

Vivian Krause 10:27

Yeah. And I've done a quite a few of those. But over seven years. Actually, I've earned more than $200,000, which is a lot of money, except I did that over seven years. Okay, that's what I've lived off of. So no, the oil industry never has supported me. It's too bad. They didn't pay attention years ago, or our country wouldn't be in the mess that we're in. But for years and years, this was ignored. It wasn't taken seriously. And that was what I was trying to say with guys. It's not just a bunch of ankle biter activists. There's big billion dollar foundations behind this, very well connected.

Mike Smith 11:01

Vivian, do you think that as we see the anti pipeline, pipeline blockades that are hurting the economy here in Canada today, do you think American money American funding is in any way influences those blockades?

Vivian Krause 11:14

Absolutely, because no one would care two hoots about pipelines if it hadn't been for this campaign, that it generated thousands of media stories. And let me be clear, as someone who worked in the slums of Guatemala for six years raising foreign funding, I have no problem with it. That's not the problem. The problem is that these campaigns are not helping the environment. What they're doing is hurting our economy and not helping. That's the problem. And that's why this activism is wrong, no matter who funds it. Canadians or, wherever the money's coming from.

Peter McCartney 11:44

Yea, you now I just, I think the Unistʼotʼen have been on the land opposing pipelines for ten years now. And, to be honest I think this whole concept that indigenous folks can't mount this sort of resistance that we’re seeing all over the country without some shadowy green 'cabal' pulling the strings is, it's racist it's it's,

Vivian Krause 12:02

It's not racist

Peter McCartney 12:04

It's just wrong to try and portray this as something like that

Vivian Krause 12:09

Racism is a serious problem and it has nothing to do with this

Mike Smith 12:12

I'm gonna give you a chance but. don't. don't step on him while he's making his point. Then I'll come back to you and let you make your point. Okay, go ahead.

Peter McCartney 12:18

Yeah you know it's just this whole narrative is gross and it's a, it's a distraction from the actual conversation that we need to be having which indigenous groups in this country are trying to start about rights and title that has never been settled. We could have settled this 20 years ago after the Delgamuukw decision, but provincial and federal governments have ignored it until it got to this point

Mike Smith 12:37

Let me ask you this Peter, if we if we connect the dots and some of this money. So for example, the BC liberals yesterday suggesting a ban on foreign money flowing to environmental groups like your own. If you take a look at the Sierra Club, for example, who have put out a statement in support of blockades. They've said the Supreme Court of Canada has perpetuated violence against the Wet'suwet'en First Nation for approving construction of this pipeline. That's the Sierra Club of BC. They got $641,000 in US funding. Is it fair to connect the dots here? Is that American influence?

Peter McCartney 13:14

I don't think it is, you know, the American funding that people get are for grants that have nothing to do with this problem. Wilderness Committee put out a solidarity statement too, and you know, when we see indigenous allies being removed by the RCMP in direct contravention of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, we have a responsibility to speak up. I couldn't let that happen without saying something about it. Okay,

Mike Smith 13:35

Vivian, what do you say about that?

Vivian Krause 13:37

Well, Pete said something that I totally agree with, and that's that we have to address the issue of rights and title, you know, the federal government in the next budget is going to forgive a billion dollars’ worth of payments that are mostly the lawyers right that have been fussing over this for 20 years and the lawyers are getting rich and the First Nations aren't getting ahead at all. I totally agree we’ve got to address that. Okay. But what's this really about? If you really want to do what matters for the environment, it's about helping India and China get off coal. That's the number one thing if you really care about carbon emissions, that's why LNG in British Columbia can help. That's why this coastal gasoline prep project is good for the environment. It's not bad.

Mike Smith 14:19

Okay, Peter, what do you what do you say that is one of the most common arguments in favor of the natural gas pipeline that it's going to displace coal, coal burning in China, and that's gonna be better for the planet. What do you say to that?

Peter McCartney 14:30

I mean, first of all, I just want to say at the end of that's a giant leap from implying that indigenous rights are only about the environment, but certainly that, you know, that's one of the reasons that we're fighting

Vivian Krause 14:37

I didn't say that

Peter McCartney 14:37

Against LNG and fracking. And so the, you know, this argument that LNG is somehow going to get Asia off of coal, when you look at the life cycle emissions of it all, you know, the benefits are negligible at best. And you know, even worse in some situations if we'd know how much methane is leaking in northeast BC, but the truth is, you know, even regardless of all the fugitive the leaky methane The tremendous amount of energy it takes to power these LNG facilities, which would be one of the most polluting projects in the country, if not the most. We could transition every single coal plant in the world onto fossil fuel gas, and we would still be emitting five times too much carbon to be able to maintain a safe climate. And so we need to, you know, get rid of fossil fuels completely. And the good news is that we can do it, renewables are already cheaper than gas when you look at lifetime cost.

Mike Smith 15:26

Okay, we just got a minute left Vivian Krauss.

Vivian Krause 15:29

I wish everything he was saying is true, but it just isn't true. No, we don't have enough land... there's so many reasons that if we even if we wanted to flick a switch, and go all renewables, it's just not technologically possible and it won't be for a couple of decades. I'm all for developing a technology that will accelerate that, you know, that's,

Peter McCartney 15:49

I think that every study has refuted that

Mike Smith 15:52

Okay, guys, we are out of time. I want to thank you though for a good spirited exchange and a conversation and my thanks to both of you. That is Peter McCartney. Thank you Vivian. That's Vivian Krauss. She's a researcher on environmental funding and Canada. Peter McCartney from the wilderness committee. My thanks to both of them.

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