

## Introduction to the Following Email

The Canadian LabourWatch Association was copied on this email to PSAC from a former South African resident who rightly criticized the campaign by Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) to equate their strike with the horrible reality of "blood diamonds". PSAC and its other supporters in the labour movement in 2006 consistently misled their Members and Canadians about the truth at Ekati. No external replacement workers were ever hired to do the work of striking employees. Instead that work was performed by the almost 50% of PSAC unionized employees (Members and non-Members) who crossed the picket line for a host of reasons. Some of those reasons include strongly held beliefs of unionized employees, including PSAC Members that the union had taken over their employee association in a manipulative manner and in particular the significant and well-founded concerns employees had about the conduct of the strike vote run by PSAC. We point out that in many countries unions are no longer or never were allowed to run their own strike votes. Further, other countries have clear rules for all aspects of the notification process, timing and conduct of vote and subsequent steps. These employees needed a third party to run their strike vote under such legislated guidelines.

---

**From:** Berold Baijius [mailto:berold.baijius@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 19, 2006 9:41 PM  
**To:** deslauj@yt.sympatico.ca  
**Cc:** john@labourwatch.com  
**Subject:** Canada's Conflict Diamonds - Dirty Diamonds

Dear Sir;

I refer the above mentioned subject matter which is the headline of an advert that your union, in association with the Union of Northern Workers recently placed in The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times in your struggle with corporate giant BHP Billiton in support of the Ekati workers whilst in negotiations for a better employment/contract deal.

Whilst I fully recognize that you may not even be the person that was directly involved in this campaign, in the absence of any other information regarding the author of the advert and campaign, I would humbly request that you consider the contents of this communication and forward this Email, in it's entirety, to the correct person, persons or department.

To whom it may concern;

The context of this communication may in seem like a tirade against your stated ideals, in fact it is not. What it is meant to be, however, is a personal comment on what must be either a statement of your naivete or a planned and malicious deception perpetrated on an unknowing and unsuspecting public.

I was born and raised in South Africa as a white African who was certainly not from a background of privilege. It was an honour and my pleasure to be working as a young man in management just as the union movement in South Africa was beginning to gain ground for the underprivileged and majority of black African workers of that region. I was one of the relative few in management who enjoyed the confidence, faith and trust of the workers who fell under my control and care during that period of my involvement in a long awaited and outstanding process.

Not for a moment can I decry the validity of union movements worldwide, nor can I discount what struggle has occurred in this country whilst struggling for the rights of the worker. I am now a Canadian citizen and proud of that fact. Moreover, I am of an entrepreneurial character and depend on my own skill set to provide me with compensation in a very competitive society. I fully understand the pitfalls of allowing too much control to rest in the hands of corporate bodies and the bureaucracy of government. I listen with empathy,

compassion, and often disgust, to the tales of greed and corruption in acts perpetrated on a daily basis by corporate Canada (I include government at all levels in this description) on the very core of our society. The people who in fact made these bodies as successful and strong as they are suffer the greatest indignity in their working conditions and terms of employment. Compounded by that is the heavy burden of taxation that is forced upon us all by a government that seems to have little care or concern for the people who put them into power (Irrespective of the ruling party of the day, federal or provincial).

I think it is clear, to me anyway, that I am not a corporate flunky.

However, it rankles me, in fact raises my ire, to have to see you use the words "conflict diamonds" and "dirty diamonds" in your campaign against BHP Billiton. Do you even have a clue as to what real suffering is? Do you inkling of what it is to have to work a life long just to provide your children with even the most basic of needs? Do you have any idea of how much pain and suffering exists throughout Africa in the struggle just to survive each day in a continent that for the most part is racked with corruption at every level? When did any of your workers, or your union leadership, have to get up at four in the morning and walk for five or six hours, one way, just to get water for the days cooking?

Do you even have a clue of what suffering really means? Or are you one of those people who is always complaining about how bad the bus service is but you've never had to walk more than a few blocks to get to the bus stop?

We had a word in South Africa, in Afrikaans, that I feel is adequate to describe how I feel about your advert that insults the countless number of Africans, mostly black, who have lost their lives in the name of freedom. "FIESLIK!"

As far as I'm concerned, the ends of your campaign did not justify the means. No doubt BHP Billiton has little intention of being a good 'corporate citizen' and is far more interested in protecting their bottom line and shareholder dividend. Yes, you needed to take the gloves off in order to compete in an unbalance and difficult fight. But did you have to insult the lives of people that you are apparently so far removed from as to not even know of their struggle just to exist?

Perhaps this communication means nothing to you at all and perhaps it won't reach the eyes of those who I believe you've insulted. And even if it has no meaning in the grand scheme of the universe at all, what it does in my mind, heart and soul, is redress your bland and uninformed campaign that to me was as totally self serving as the body against whom you were campaigning.

In truth and with sincerity,

Berold Baijius.