

Date:Wed, 28 Feb 2007 09:53:16 -0700

From:Roman Cooney <email deleted>

To:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>, Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. <email deleted>, Janice Paskey <email deleted>, Barry Cooper <email deleted>

February 28, 2007

<SourceWatch contributor deleted>,

The basic issue I have with your posting is the continued inference that because the University is the mechanism by which funds in the community provide financial support to research and education by a specific organization, the University somehow endorses that research and education. If you publicly make such a statement or inference, you are doing so without recourse to facts and can be held responsible for such misrepresentations.

Although funds in this case are received from the Calgary Foundation by the U of C Development Office, they are forwarded to the funding applicant and held in an appropriate account.

The University's Finance and Development offices have, at my request, reviewed the expenditures. These funds were spent in compliance with their intended purposes. All required aspects of the process to establish a Special Purpose account created for expenditure of the funds were followed, including ethics reviews.

As I said earlier, you have an obligation to inform yourself of the facts, which should include obtaining information about the funds and how they are used from the Friends of Science. I suggest you speak with Dr. Cooper for information on how the funds are spent. Like the Calgary Foundation, we will respect the request for anonymity by the granting organizations.

That said, I specifically asked Dr. Cooper last week whether any of the funds received by the Friends of Science, the Science Education Fund, or any related organizations or funds for which a tax deduction for receipt of a donation was issued by the University of Calgary, were used in any election-related advertising or communication or activities not related to education or research. The answer was an unequivocal no.

I will repeat what I said in an earlier email:

The University of Calgary does not have a position on climate change, nor would it. As an independent, non-partisan research institution, the U of C insists on maintaining its neutrality. If your interest is in providing an accurate reflection of activities around climate change at the U of C, you will take the opportunity to look all of the work done at the U of C in this area. Even the most cursory look at the scope of research going on here will make that clear that the University of Calgary is non-partisan on this issue. Several of our researchers have done internationally-recognized work on climate change; their work is also supported by private funding.

The fundamental principle is academic freedom. Because of this basic commitment to open inquiry, researchers have the latitude to challenge current thinking. You may disagree with their work, but that does not change the fact that academic freedom gives researchers the right to pursue their research interests. In this case, a group of scientists holds a particular viewpoint and have advanced it publicly, with funding support from the external community. The fact that one of the scientists is a faculty member here cannot be taken to conclude that the U of C supports that individual's research. The University of Calgary does not dictate to its professors the kind of research they will or will not conduct.

In might interest you to know that we are currently co-sponsoring a speech by Sen. Al Gore, but I doubt that this fact will be used to put this discussion in perspective. The University of Calgary is neither pro nor con; our responsibility is to remain impartial.

Because you disagree with the approach Friends of Science has taken, you have deduced some inappropriate and unsubstantiated support from the University. Your posting continues to deliberately create the impression that the University of Calgary manages the fund or is withholding information in order to protect some unspecified misuse of funds.

This inference is unsupported by any facts of which I have been made aware, and we are again requesting that you cease and desist with any further actions and/or statements in this regard.

Roman Cooney
Vice-President, External Relations

Subject:Re: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Mon, 05 Mar 2007 17:45:55 -0500

From:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

To:Roman Cooney <email deleted>

CC:Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. <email deleted>, Janice Paskey <email deleted>, Barry Cooper <email deleted>

Mr. Cooney:

You continue to misunderstand and misrepresent my statements on the University Calgary's role as a conduit in the funding of the Friends of Science via Dr. Barry Cooper's Science Education Fund. You state that in my "posting" there is a "continued inference that because the University is the mechanism by which funds in the community provide financial support to research and education by a specific organization, the University somehow endorses that research and education." To the contrary, I have bent over backwards to give your position. But the inference most reasonable people would draw from the detailing of this "mechanism", and your own statements, is that the University of Calgary implicitly recognizes the activities of the Friends of Science as constituting legitimate scientific "research and education." This is not a view shared by the vast majority of the international community of scientists (including, I dare say, virtually all members of the U of C Faculty of Science), as well as one at odds with mainstream public opinion and common sense.

Furthermore, your continued obfuscation and refusal to supply even the most basic details about the Science Education Fund, in the face of clear evidence of unethical and possibly illegal behaviour on the part of the Friends of Science and Dr. Barry Cooper is unacceptable. Moreover, it can only lead to a strong suspicion that the University has been passively complicit in what is essentially a money-laundering scheme to allow oil and other industry interests to secretly fund a disinformation campaign, masquerading as scientific "research and education."

Legitimate scientific organizations do not engage in the sort of behaviour exhibited by the Friends of Science:

- Continued misrepresentation of affiliation with a reputable university (as you are well aware)
- Misrepresentation of associated scientists' credentials
- Reliance on scientists with little expertise and weak or non-existent records of peer-reviewed publication in the relevant fields of scientific study
- Assiduous efforts to hide major sources of funding
- Solicitation of industry funds to mount a politically-motivated disinformation campaign, masquerading as scientific "research and education"
- Production and broadcast of anti-Kyoto radio ads during a federal election campaign, in flagrant violation of laws on third-party electoral advertising

It has been more than three weeks since I first contacted the University seeking information about the Science Education Fund. At that time, I was told that all enquiries had to go through you. Now, for the first time, you are referring me to Dr. Cooper for information on how monies from the Science Education Fund were spent. I presume as well that Dr. Cooper is the sole "funding applicant", a significant piece of information that appears nowhere in your previous correspondence.

You refer to "some unspecified misuse of funds". You do not seem to appreciate the gravity of the situation.

First, it is undeniable that the Science Education Fund was set up by Dr. Cooper to support major projects of the Friends of Science. Despite your previous characterization of Dr. Cooper as a "scientist", it is clear that, as a political scientist, he has no relevant scientific expertise, but does have a well-documented political agenda of opposing the Kyoto protocol. And, as noted above, the Friends of Science is hardly a legitimate research or educational organization. I have been assured privately by the Calgary Foundation that this funding application would not have been accepted had it come directly from the Friends of Science, an organization of dubious scientific merit and ineligible to receive funding from the Foundation in any event. Of course, the donors could have funded the Friends of Science directly, but then tax receipts would not have been obtained, resulting in the concomitant loss of the de facto matching subsidy by the Canadian taxpayer. There were also other apparent advantages to the indirect funding scheme, including assured anonymity and extra degrees of separation between oil and gas industry sponsors and the Friends of Science; as stated publicly by Friends of Science spokesperson, Albert Jacobs, and reported in the Globe and Mail, the "optics" of direct funding from these interests "would have looked terrible". And then, of course, there is the prestige of implicit association with the Calgary Foundation and the University of Calgary, as you have noted at length in your description of your long running battle with the Friends of Science.

Even worse, the Friends of Science conducted third party electoral advertising, in the form of an anti-Kyoto radio ad campaign in the last federal election, but failed to register with the Chief Electoral Officer, as required by law. It also appears that many other rules were violated, including riding spending limits and full disclosure of financial details and major donors.

The Friends of Science Society has publicly stated that "major projects, such as our video and radio ads" were funded by the Science Education Fund. If this is the case, and there is no reason to doubt it, then "funds received by ... the Science Education Fund ... for which a tax deduction for receipt of a donation was issued" were indeed used in election-related advertising. Of course, the tax receipts in question were issued by the Calgary Foundation, not the University of Calgary, so I suppose that, even in this case, Dr. Cooper's denial is technically correct, albeit somewhat misleading. Moreover, I am not prepared to accept Dr. Cooper's judgment as to exactly what constitutes "activities related to research and education", for the reasons noted above.

In light of the above, I intend to ensure that a complaint will be launched against the Friends of Science Society with respect to its flagrant abuses of Canadian electoral law, as well as apparent violations of Canadian tax law. I therefore request hereby that Dr. Barry Cooper furnish the following information immediately:

- 1) All official documentation related to the Science Education Fund, including funding application to the Calgary Foundation, detailed project descriptions and letters of attestation concerning Fund projects
- 2) A detailed account of all payments made, or anticipated to be made, from the Science Education Fund, for each of the fiscal years 2005-6, 2006-7 and 2007-8. This would include any payments anticipated in connection with the climate change conference planned by Dr. Cooper and Dr. Tim Patterson for April 2007 in Ottawa. At a minimum, the account should include payee, description of service or expense, and date of each payment.

I understand your desire to respect the "request for anonymity by the granting organizations", at least until such time that the release of such information is compelled by a competent legal authority. But I'm sure that you will agree that the information I have been requesting for the last three weeks is not covered by any such request for anonymity, as that would only cover the source of funds, not their disbursement.

Therefore, I trust that you will ask Dr. Cooper to comply with the eminently reasonable request detailed above. Rest assured that the co-operation (or lack thereof) of Dr. Cooper and the University of Calgary will be duly noted in any forthcoming complaint as well as in the public record. I look forward to hearing from Dr. Cooper, or yourself, to discuss the modalities of compliance with this request. To this end, I may be easily reached via return e-mail or at my Montreal cell phone number <phone number deleted>.

I also hereby request permission to make public your past and future correspondence on this matter, as it concerns a subject of great public interest. Of course, I reserve the right to make public my own letters to you.

<Sourcewatch contributor deleted>

Subject:Re: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Mon, 19 Mar 2007 23:27:15 -0400

From:<Sourcewatch contributor deleted>

To:Roman Cooney <email deleted>

CC:Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. <email deleted>, Janice Paskey <email deleted>, Barry Cooper <email deleted>

Mr Cooney:

As I have received no reply to my letter of March 5 (see below), I must presume that you have no objection to online publication of your February 28 e-mail to me, especially given your previous encouragement to publish your other letters and your role as public spokesperson for the University of Calgary.

Of course, I am disappointed that neither Barry Cooper nor you have seen fit to release any information about Science Education Fund expenditures, but I trust that error in judgment will be rectified in the course of the inevitable investigation by the Elections Canada Commissioner. I expect to file the complaint within the next two weeks.

I also take it by your silence that you do not deny these essential facts concerning this matter:

- The Friends of Science ran a politically motivated anti-Kyoto radio campaign in the last federal election, targeting key ridings in southern Ontario
- The radio ad project expenses were paid by the Science Education Fund, according to the uncontradicted statements of the Friends of Science
- Tax receipts for the backing donations were issued to the anonymous donors by the Calgary Foundation

A final observation if I may: it might be prudent for the University of Calgary to consider instituting a more transparent and rigorous process with respect to external funding of research and education projects of faculty members. My understanding is that most universities, for example, do not permit anonymous sponsorship of research projects, and in general appear to have more rigorous project evaluation and review procedures. Such changes would go a long way to help the University avoid the unfortunate abuses that appear to have taken place in this case.

<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

Subject:RE: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Tue, 20 Mar 2007 09:00:10 -0600

From:Roman Cooney <email deleted>

To:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>, Linda Barry-Hollowell <email deleted>

Please refer your questions to Ms. Barry-Hollowell. I once again restate that your conclusions are incorrect, based on the information I have been given, and I urge you to ensure that you have your facts right.

Roman Cooney

Subject:Re: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Tue, 20 Mar 2007 11:45:10 -0400

From:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

To:Linda Barry-Hollowell <email deleted>

CC:Roman Cooney <email deleted>

Ms. Barry-Hollowell:

Please advise me as to which of the following facts the University of Calgary considers to be "incorrect". I urge you to be very specific in your answer, and provide any supporting documentation that may be required to support your claims.

- The Friends of Science ran a politically motivated anti-Kyoto radio campaign in the last federal election, targeting key ridings in southern Ontario
- The radio ad project expenses were paid by the Science Education Fund, according to the uncontradicted statements of the Friends of Science
- Tax receipts for the backing donations were issued to the anonymous donors by the Calgary Foundation

<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

Subject:Re: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Wed, 21 Mar 2007 19:32:48 -0600

From:Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. <email deleted>

Organization:UofC

To:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>, Roman Cooney <email deleted>

Dear Mr. Clarke: I have reviewed the correspondence back and forth between you and the University and the e-mail below. Certainly, it is clear that based on the information we have on hand your concerns are without factual foundation. That being said, and in the spirit of full inquiry, I will ask our Internal Auditor to look into this matter and report back his findings to Mr Cooney and me so that these issues might be resolved once and for all. I would request again, while the Audit is being undertaken, that you refrain from any further comment on the matter. Once I contact the Auditor, Brad Braaten, I will be in contact regarding expected time lines. Please advise if you are open to discussing this matter directly with the Internal Auditor. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Subject:Re: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Thu, 22 Mar 2007 02:13:25 -0400

From:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

To:Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. <email deleted>

CC:Roman Cooney <email deleted>

Ms. Barry-Hollowell:

I am willing to refrain from further comment or action until after I have more details about the Audit, assuming you provide these within a reasonable time. Beyond that, much will depend on the actual procedure including timelines and publication of results. You should be aware that I would not consider the matter resolved without, at the very least, full disclosure of all recipients, amounts and dates of all Science Education Fund expenditures and other official documentation.

In my view, the Audit should focus on one simple question: was the production and/or broadcast of the Friends of Science anti-Kyoto radio ads paid for, directly or indirectly, from the Science Education Fund? The Friends of Science Society has answered this in the affirmative, both publicly and in an email written to me personally (attached herewith). That's an undeniable fact, and you should therefore stop suggesting that my concerns have no "factual foundation." On the other hand, the University has yet to confirm or deny this assertion, unless you count Barry Cooper's denial (which was only in regard to tax receipts issued by the University of Calgary, an issue never actually raised by myself or anyone else as far as I know). If there is other information "on hand" that would tend to negate the Friends of Science assertion above no one has yet seen fit to share it, so I frankly doubt its existence.

For the rest, the main point of contention between myself and the University is whether the activities funded by the Science Education Fund constitute legitimate scientific research and education. The University appears to find these legitimate, and Mr. Cooney even called Dr. Cooper a "scientist"! I, along with the vast majority of recognized scientists in fields relevant to climate change, emphatically disagree. But of course no internal audit can shed any more light on that aspect of our dispute.

Of course, regardless of the results of the Audit, I will still be initiating a complaint with the Elections Canada Commissioner's Office, at least against the Friends of Science Society. I am wrestling with the issue as to whether justice would be served by undue delay in this matter.

I am willing to speak to the Internal Auditor about this matter, although I will be travelling a fair amount over the next few days. I can be most easily reached on my cell phone (number deleted).

<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

Subject:Re: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Thu, 29 Mar 2007 09:08:05 -0800

From:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

To:Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. <email deleted>

CC:Roman Cooney <email deleted>

Ms. Barry-Hollowell:

It has been a week since you contacted me concerning a possible Internal Audit with a promise to contact me regarding timelines for the Audit. As I have received no details about this Audit in a timely manner, as I specifically requested, I am no longer prepared to refrain from comment or contact with other parties concerning this matter.

I also repeat to you my intention to make public correspondence between the University and me, as you are presumably now the designated public spokesperson on this matter for the University, and given Roman Cooney's previous encouragement to make public our correspondence.

<SourceWatch contributor deleted>

Subject:Re: Friends of Science/Science Education Fund

Date:Thu, 29 Mar 2007 12:08:38 -0600

From:Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. <email deleted>

Organization:UofC

To:<SourceWatch contributor deleted>, Roman Cooney <email deleted>

The Internal Auditor met Tuesday with key stakeholders and will be determining the scope of the audit and appropriate time frames for delivery of his report over the next few days. I will advise of his estimate as soon as I know and as soon as they are determined. We intend to do this throughly and properly.