

Letter from Anarcho Féministe Outaouais (Ottawa, Canada):

We hijacked the banner sponsorship Coca Cola from Cafe Nostalgica.

It will not be returned.

We find it unacceptable that the student union, GSAED, accepts to be sponsored by a multinational guilty of serious anti-union practices and human rights violations.

Our demands :

Public explanations from officials about the nature of this partnership.

A commitment to refuse any sponsorship from any company that violates the fundamental rights of workers throughout the world.

Letter from the GSAÉD (University of Ottawa Graduate Students' Assn):

To our compatriots in class struggle,

We at the GSAÉD would like to express our respect for decentralized direct action of affinity groups in undermining corporate influence and power in post-secondary education. Our campuses – and affiliated student and workers unions – should be free of private, for-profit motives in order inspire the unhindered flow of ideas, actions, and pursuit of knowledge. Unfortunately, this is far from being the case – but student unions and our spaces should lead by example.

In your ransom letter you state that the banner in question will not be returned. Since, as the anarchist saying goes, all property itself is theft, that is absolutely fine by us. Although, rather than destroying it, we would suggest reusing it – possibly as an umbrella or repainted for a banner drop on Tabaret (these are only suggestions, as we commit to independence in action and organizing. Also, technically to be a ransom letter, one would have to commit to returning the item being held, but that is besides the point).

More to the point – in 1998, the GSAÉD and the SFUO were coerced by the University of Ottawa administration and the Alumni Association in to accepting a campus-wide beverage exclusivity contract wherein only Coca-Cola products would be sold at all establishments. In return, the student unions received a mere pittance of money/table scraps to buy students off for the proceeding 5 years. This is clearly an example of capitalism working for a few capitalists/administrators and against us, the students – while dividing students and working class. This is also an example of poor decisions in

the 90s: the same year the exclusivity contract was imposed, Titanic won best picture at Oscars – in retrospect, The Full Monty, The Big Lebowski, and Amistad were all much better films, but yet not a single award among them.

Since the end of the exclusivity contract, the GSAÉD has actively opposed exclusively agreements of any kind on campus and has not received any remuneration from Coca-Cola. The banner had been kept by the campus Coca-Cola representative/capitalist abettor and was placed on the Cafe Nostalgica railing without requesting to the GSAÉD executive to do so. This corporate affront to student union space was to be removed by Cafe staff with clean up at the end of the same night the of Great Banner Hijacking of 2013. Your tenacity and efficiency ensured this corporate smear – from a company who repeatedly commits human and environmental injustice the world over – was removed post haste.

We look forward to continued solidarity, mutual aid, and general patriarchy-smashing.

Sincerely,
The GSAED Executive.
No pasaran!