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Do you know where your donation is going?

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Have you ever wondered where your donations are going? KSTP TV News (Channel 5) shed some light on a company called U'SAgain (pronounced use again).

You have probably seen their boxes around, including in Kimball and Luxemburg. U'SAgain uses the hard-to-miss, bulky containers that ask for your clothing donations. If you think you're actually donating clothing to charity, you're not reading the fine print.

U'SAgain bins say, "We are a commercial company doing something good for our environment. Together we can reduce waste and conserve." By "commercial," they mean they are a for-profit company, and what they do with the clothes is sell them. The items are not going to charity as some may think.

Another impression given is that the donated items are being recycled. But KSTP caught on video a number of U'SAgain workers throwing away unwanted items such as books and rugs. Later, KSTP spoke with a Salvation Army spokesperson who said that they were upset and could have taken those items.

These two U'SAgain collection boxes were placed about two years ago in front of JB Liquor in Kimball by the Roseville-based organization. There are hundreds of them located in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. While it may appear the boxes are for charitable donations, they are instead a convenient collection point for items that will be sold for profit in third-world countries.

John Bolvin, owner of JB Off-Sale Liquor in Kimball, says that after the couple of years the boxes have been located in front of his store he doesn't remember what U'SAgain said when they asked to have the boxes at his location, only that they compared themselves to Goodwill.

Bolvin says he originally liked having the boxes because they were convenient. But now knowing what the company is doing, Bolvin says, "I don't like the idea, to be honest with you."

there is no way to confirm this since for-profit entities don't have to disclose their financial information as do non-profits. KSTP found U'SAgain boxes at Rutherford Elementary in Stillwater and, when they spoke to a district spokesperson, they were told that "For an entire year of donations they've received about \$100."

KSTP says U'SAgain claims they've donated \$30,000 last quarter, but

KSTP also spoke with Rick Ross, who has studied for years the organization behind U'SAgain: Tvind or "Teachers Group."

Ross said the organization is based in Denmark and is "headed by Amdi Petersen who is a fugitive now wanted by the Danish court." The Teachers Group has a billion-dollar compound in Mexico.

"What I see is an operation that has benefited a very small elite group at the top, at the expense of many well-meaning volunteers that form its base," Ross said.

When KSTP spoke to Minnesota's U'SAgain president, Janice Bostic, she said she is a member of the Teachers Group. She says that she doesn't know where the Teachers Group funding comes from, but that "U'SAgain does not fund the Teachers Group."

U'SAgain has operations in Georgia, Illinois, Colorado, Wisconsin, Minnesota, New York, Washington, and Missouri.

In 2008, Missouri passed a law to protect its residents by requiring U'SAgain and similar organizations to clearly state their motives. The U'SAgain bins in Missouri now state, "Donations are not for charitable organizations and will be resold for profit." For every bin that is not clearly labeled, U'SAgain can be fined \$1,000.

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