

Rights Action

'DIRTY WAR' TACTICS OF STATE TERRORISM INCREASE IN HONDURAS

Day 37, Honduran Coup Resistance, August 3, 2009
(Alert#41)

The Honduran regime is increasing its tactics of repression, including 'dirty war' tactics of state terrorism, in direct response to the extraordinary size of the pro-democracy movement, and its creativity, peaceful nature and resiliency.

The coup regime is hanging on to its illegal power through its wealth and use of repressive force; it has no legitimacy whatsoever.

The onus increases on the "international community", particularly those countries and entities (private companies and banks, the "development" banks) that maintain financial and commercial relations, and military relations with the pro-coup sectors in Honduras.

- Please re-distribute this information all around.
- To get on/ off Rights Action's email list:
<http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3/>
- To donate funds to pro-democracy movement in Honduras: see below

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DIRTY WAR TACTICS OF STATE TERRORISM INCREASE IN HONDURAS

<http://www.diariodigital.com.do/articulo,43507,html>

Martin Florencio Rivera Barrientos, age 37, took a taxi home following the wake for Roger Abraham Vallejo Soriano, the teacher killed last Friday, after being shot in the head by police. Reports indicate that Florencio was followed home and when he got out of the cab, he was stabbed 25 times, similar to the death squad type murder of Pedro Magdiel a week ago in El Paraiso near the Nicaraguan border. Teachers have been leading effective strikes, and are clearly the target of the repression perpetrated under the coup regime.

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DESPERATE REGIME

Gloria Oqueli Gloria Oqueli, president of the Central American parliament, said:

"They are desperate because they will be defeated, because power will be taken from them by a people with no machete, with no gun, with no weapon."

<http://www.telesurtv.net/noticias/secciones/nota/55020-NN/presidenta-del-parlacen-dice-que-protestas-han-desesperado-a-gobierno-de-facto/>

La presidenta del Parlamento Centroamericano (Parlacen), Gloria Oqueli, dijo este viernes en San Salvador que la "resistencia popular" en Honduras ha "desesperado" al gobierno de facto que encabeza Roberto Micheletti.

"Ya están desesperados, porque hay un pueblo que sin ningún machete, sin ninguna pistola, sin ningún arma, los va a derrocar, los va a quitar", declaró Oqueli, quien participó en la capital salvadoreña en un foro sobre la situación en su país. Aseguró que esa "forma de llegar al poder ya no se puede permitir en este tercer milenio".

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INTERNATIONAL MISSION FOR SOLIDARITY, ACCOMPANIMENT, AND OBSERVATION IN HONDURAS, July 31 Press Release

CRISIS IN HONDURAS DEEPENS

- violence erupted again in Tegucigalpa yesterday
- Honduras now in a state of brutal dictatorship
- international attention and solidarity needed to restore democracy and human rights in Honduras

Yesterday, Thursday 30th July, political violence returned to Tegucigalpa, the capital of the Central American state, Honduras, as police fired at a peaceful demonstration in support of the deported president of the country, Manuel Zelaya.

In the attack, Roger Abraham Vallejo Soriano, a 38 years old teacher, was shot in the head from close range. (He later died in Hospital)

Nine more persons were taken to the local hospital for medical treatment, including Carlos H. Reyes, a coordinator of the National Front Against the Coup and chairperson of the trade union STIBYS, and an independent

presidential candidate for the elections scheduled for November this year.

Reyes was treated for a fracture of one arm and sown with ten stitches in the head near the left ear. In the afternoon members of the mission met Reyes in the hospital. Reyes seemed to have recovered well and was given interviews from a stretcher there.

Members of the mission could also yesterday visit inside the jail of the fourth police district in Tegucigalpa. At least 80 persons from the demonstration had been detained, many of whom had been beaten with sticks with bad bruises. Some were covered with blood on their head and clothes, others were in a shock. Three women we talked with complained about sexual harassment. At least five children and youngsters were among the detained persons. Juan Barahona, another leading figure of the national front against the coup, was also among the detained.

The demonstration in Tegucigalpa yesterday continued an unbroken series of 33 days of peaceful popular manifestations and resistance against Roberto Micheletti who was installed after the coup. During the past month parts of the country have been heavily militarized. The border area of El Paraiso next to Nicaragua, visited by the mission on Monday, is partly under marshal law, with heavy presence of the army and also police forces. According to several civil society sources and individuals other areas of the country, such as Copan, have also been militarized with road blocks under army control, detentions and curfew from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Thursday marked the return of violence to Tegucigalpa, where demonstrations have proceeded peacefully since the clash at the airport when Zelaya tried to return to the country by air.

Interviews and observations in public places made by the members of the mission during the past week show severe limitation and abuses of basic human rights including state violence against innocent people and severe

restriction on the freedom of movement and expression, imposed by the Micheletti regime.

According to written documentation and reports from interviews that include, among others, interviews with two parliamentarians from the Liberal Party the party of both ousted president Zelaya and the president of the coup regime, Micheletti) and two MPs from the opposition party Partido nificacion Democratica there are major irregularities in the parliamentary procedures. Severe allegations are made against the Supreme Court of the country, but under the current circumstances, when there is no confidence in the capacity of the de facto government to provide credible information, these remain extremely difficult or impossible to verify.

The mission also notes the occurrence of obscure, extreme violence that, as any individuals we have talked with independently interpret it, seems to be the expression of the new strategy of terror imposed by the coup government.

Rodrigo Trochez, an MP from the liberal party testifies that while he was with a delegation to Washington to lobby for US support of the reinstatement of Manuel Zelaya his son, Juan Carlos Tochez was the victim of an armed attack on a petrol station. A car drove up beside the car of Juan Carlos Trochex, shooting 40 bullets, four of which hit and injured him severely. Juan Carlos Trochez is not critically wounded but receives medical treatment in a hospital in Santa Barbara.

According to reports from the police in the capital of Tegucigalpa, gathered by the Hondurian human rights organization, CODEH, there were 62 people murdered here during the first 28 days after the coup. According to the director of Codeh, Andres Pavon, many of the victims have been shot dead with bullets of the same caliber as is used by the police and the armed forces.

The body of one young man dressed in a t-shirt defending the democratically elected president was found in a garbage bin in the streets says Andres Pavon.

The International mission for Solidarity, Accompaniment, and Observation in Honduras must in the light of the observations made here during the last week conclude that Honduras has entered into a brutal dictatorship.

Despite prolonged peaceful resistance the situation has worsened during the past week. Popular mobilization to restore the democratic government of Manuel Zelaya still continues here, with more manifestations announced at least for today by the popular front of movements, trade unions, indigenous groups, farmers, artists, concerned citizens, student's movements, and others.

The international mission condemns the repression by the dictatorship and appeals to the international community to take all measures to promote the restoration of democracy and human rights in Honduras.

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Members of the International mission for Solidarity, Accompaniment, and Observation in Honduras include:

- Nora Cortiñas, Madres de la Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora/Jubileo Sur (Argentina)
- Thomas Wallgren, member of the city council in Helsinki (soc.dem)/ FinnishRefugee Council / Coalition for comprehensive democracy – Vasudhaiva utumkalam (Finlandia)
- Mauricio Valiente, Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado-CEAR (España)
- El padre Efrén Reyes, from Servicio Internacional Cristiano de Solidaridad con los Pueblos de América Latina Oscar Romero - SICSAL (El Salvador)
- Claire Chastain, International Relation, Communist Party of France-European Left Party
- Martha Figueroa Mier, World March of Women, (México)

- Bernadete Esperança Monteiro, World March of Women, (Brasil), and
- Tom Kucharz, Ecologistas en Acción/Transnational Institute (España)

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COLIN BURGON, BRITISH MP, SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON HONDURAS COUP

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090721/debtext/90721-0012.htm>

(Distributed from the UK by Dr Francisco Dominguez, depaula_frank@hotmail.com, Campaña de Solidaridad con Venezuela, Gran Bretaña)

Neville Chamberlain once talked about “a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing.” That could apply to the subject that I want to raise today—the recent military coup in Honduras.

People probably do not know much about Honduras, but the journal Business Week tells us: “Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. Two-thirds of its 7.8 million citizens live below the poverty line...The country has one of Latin America's most unequal distributions of wealth: the poorest 10 percent of the population receives just 1.2 percent of the country's wealth, while the richest 10 percent collect 42 percent.”

President Zelaya was elected to lead the country in 2005. A member of the Honduras Liberal party, he was a wealthy rancher and a man of the centre or centre right. Under pressure of events, however, he began to change his politics and he implemented several progressive measures during his time in office. He raised the minimum wage by 60 per cent.—something that new Labour might note. He also gave out free school lunches and provided milk for babies and pensions for the elderly. He cut the cost of public transport, made scholarships available for students and forged alliances with the progressive Governments in the continent of Latin America such as those of Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador.

President Zelaya also sought to institutionalise many of his progressive developments with constitutional change. The non-binding poll of the public that he proposed for 28 June was aimed at gauging support for a proposed constituent assembly to redraft the constitution ahead of a

ballot in November. This is the translation of the question: "Do you agree that, during the general elections of November 2009 there should be a fourth ballot to decide whether to hold a Constituent National Assembly that will approve a new political constitution?"

That step was too much for the military, and as a result, on 28 June—the day the ballot was supposed to take place—the President was kidnapped, bundled on to a plane and flown out of the country, and the military junta and the leading oligarchs in the country came together to form what is effectively an illegal Government.

The Honduran junta has rightly been almost totally isolated. It has been rejected by the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Organisation of American States and the European Union, among others. It is rare that I pay tribute to Ministers, but I pay tribute to the newly installed Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Rhondda (Chris Bryant), who has responsibility for Latin America. He responded very quickly and efficiently and made a statement to put on record Britain's opposition to the coup. It is also important that the EU yesterday suspended more than \$90 million in aid to Honduras in the wake of the coup.

However, such opposition has so far been ineffectual in restoring Zelaya to government and stronger action is needed. Obviously, that stronger action should come from America, because at the end of the day, it calls the shots in what is historically its back yard. There were hopes of real change with the election of President Obama, but we can see that there are tensions within the American Government. Clinton, the Secretary of State, is possibly somewhat enamoured of the new regime and does not want to take the action that others in America would like. If the US is to break with the past and work with people rather than against them, as President Obama told the conference of Latin American leaders it wants to, the steps that he must take are clear. The Honduran Government—or rather, the supposed Government—must be replaced and a democratically elected President must be installed.

We hear lots about human rights in the media, but since the coup on 28 June that installed Roberto Micheletti, the regime has unleashed a wave of repression of human rights. Protesters and political activists have been killed, 1,300 people have been arrested, and there have been curfews, widespread media censorship and the violation of other civil liberties.

That is important, because although we have joked in the past about banana republics and Governments being changed on a monthly or

daily basis, most of Latin America has emerged from that darkness and the people have begun to take charge of their destiny. We have seen that throughout the Latin American continent, including central America. The military junta represents an attempt to turn the clock back to those dark, dark days. If those dark days return, it will mean real hardship for the millions of people in central and Latin America.

I hope that the deputy Leader of the House will re-confirm that the UK is absolutely and implacably opposed to the Honduran military regime, and that the UK will do all it can to restore the democratically elected regime.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090721/debtext/90721-0012.htm>

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TO DONATE FUNDS TO PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT IN HONDURAS, MAKE TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS TO "RIGHTS ACTION" AND MAIL TO:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887

CANADA: 552-351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: <http://rightsaction.org/contributions.htm>

Upon request, Rights Action can provide a proposal of which organizations and people, in Honduras, we are channeling your funds to and supporting.

AMERICANS AND CANADIANS SHOULD CONTACT YOUR OWN MEDIA, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, SENATORS & MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, EVERY DAY, DAY AFTER DAY, TO DEMAND:

- an end to police, army and para-military repression
- respect for safety and human rights of all Hondurans
- unequivocal denunciation of the military coup
- no recognition of this military coup and the 'de facto' government of Roberto Micheletti
- unconditional return of the entire constitutional government
- concrete and targeted economic, military and diplomatic sanctions against the coup plotters and perpetrators
- application of international and national justice against the coup plotters

- reparations for the illegal actions and rights violations committed during this illegal coup

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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