

# Honduras Peoples Anger–Imperialist Manipulation

**Tens** of thousands of people defied the army takeover of the capital Tegucigalpa in a mass rally and march. People around the country had erected road blocks, flaming barricades, blocked toll booths and occupied strategic bridges. The Hondurans are protesting electoral fraud alleging the Juan Orlando Hernandez and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal had manipulated the results of elections held on November 26. For the last three weeks, the protest actions of the Hondurans continued while the army used brutal methods of repression. At least 20 civilians have been killed, 70 injured, 800 arrested and others reported missing. The army and police, armed by the US imperialism, are kidnapping, and murdering those leading the ongoing protests, with reports and videos of uniformed but masked officials carrying out extra-judicial murders of demonstrators and entering homes even during day time. Violent clashes are still continuing. The opposition leader Manuel Nasrulla has gone to Washington for talks with the US administration to assure it that he would serve US interests.

After the three weeks of impasse, on November 17 the Supreme electoral Tribunal declared that the incumbent president Juan Orlando Hernandez was elected by a slender margin of 1.5 per cent against the opposition candidate Salvador Nasrulla. On the same day, The chief of Organisation of American States (OAS), US imperialism's diplomatic arm for the Americas since its foundation after World War Two, Luis Almagro issued the following statement: "Facing the impossibility of determining a winner, the only way for the people of Honduras to be the victors is to call for a new general elections". This marked the US imperialism's intention of imposing its preferred rulers on Honduran people.

One has to look into recent history to understand the situation prevailing in Honduras which is being created and manipulated by the US imperialism.

The US imperialism has both military and economic interests in Honduras. Over the decades, the Pentagon has launched military interventions against Cuba, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Dominican Republic and now Venezuela from the Palmerola air base in Honduras, which has the longest runway in Central America. Since 2009 US has given \$114 million as military aid to Honduras.

The Dole and Chiquita agribusiness monopolies have huge plantations in Honduras. Honduran company Dinant, whose shareholders include major world financial capitalists, is a big producer of African palm oil. Since 2009 coup, the government has handed over large tracts of land and water ways to foreign mining companies, areas formerly owned by Afro-descendants and indigenous communities.

The country's poverty rate has increased by 10 per cent since 2009 coup pushing two thirds of the population below the poverty line. The retired and current Honduran officials refer constantly to the threat of an "insurrection" and "civil war", which indicates the crisis brewing in Honduran society.

When US-backed coup in 2009 deposed Manuel Zelaya from the presidency, mass protests erupted and brutal repression was unleashed on the people as is being witnessed today. The US made the new regime headed by Hernandez, the opposition and OAS to sign a pact. At the same time, the police and army were ordered to unleash repression on the people. Rights activists, indigenous communities, Afro-hondurans, women, teachers, students and youth and trade unionists were terrorized and murdered by the police and military. Murders include environmental activist Berta Caceres and human rights leader Margarita Murillo.

The same policy is being pursued by the Trump administration. It wants Hernandez to continue in power disregarding the opposition's promises to defend us interests. It made it clear that it is vital to maintain ongoing austerity measures, militarization and dictatorial form of rule to contain the growing discontent and unrest among the Hondurans. There were strikes by police forces and many officers are reluctant to carry out repression on people as ordered by the government. Since 2016 the government removed 4000 officials from service for not implementing its orders. On 18<sup>th</sup> November about 17 police officers resigned to the Special Commission for Deputation.

It is clear that the OAS will seek to mediate and eventually reach a deal between the two factions of Honduran bourgeoisie, while the US and its puppet government in Honduras carry out a bloody suppression of Honduran people.

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