

Honduras: An Improbable Solution

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Has the political crisis in Honduras been resolved? Although a window of opportunity has opened, every indicator suggests that there is not a lot of room for optimism. It's worth recalling what we said here before when the coup d'état took place: that Micheletti would only remain in power as long as he could count on the support, whether active or passive, of Washington. It took four months for the White House to understand the high cost that a coup regime would exact in the region. Beset by the various problems which he faces in his foreign policy, above all, by the rapid deterioration of the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the miring of his troops in Iraq, Obama wrested the steering wheel from his Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, the main architect of support for the putschists, and sent Thomas Shannon to Tegucigalpa with the task of restoring order in the tumultuous back yard. Shortly afterwards, Micheletti shelved his bravado and meekly accepted what had previously been unacceptable. Of course, Shannon had just laid down the imperial mandate. To sweeten the moment, he publicly expressed his admiration for the two leaders of Honduran democracy: the putschist and the deposed.

Zelaya proposes a three point program: restitution, amnesty and a government of national reconciliation. The first will be resolved by the Honduran Congress, the same which enthusiastically validated the coup d'état and was unsparing in its insults and lies against him.

The outcome remains to be seen, but it will not be simple. Amnesty, for whom? For the civilian and military employees of a government which violated human rights and infringed upon every freedom? Or for Zelaya, for crimes he did not commit, such as having the audacity to try to ask his people if they were in favor of holding a constitutional convention? And of the third, closely tied to the second, the less said the better. Because under current conditions, isn't a government of national reconciliation simply a passport to oblivion, to forgetfulness, to impunity?

A cursory review of the crisis and its apparent resolution reveals that the putschists can feel satisfied because they preserved their two main objectives: deposing Zelaya, even if he re-assumes the presidency for a few months until the end of his term; and having achieved international recognition for the flawed elections scheduled for November 29, something that Shannon took upon himself to assure. For its part, the Honduran oligarchy removes itself from the danger of more aggressive action by the United States against its properties and privileges; something that might have occurred if an agreement had not been reached. A stickier sort of control by Washington over their assets and funds in the United States caused them sleepless nights, and Micheletti's intransigence had become an unnecessary threat to their interests.

For Zelaya, the balance is far more complex, and that is precisely what overshadows the Honduran landscape. His restoration doesn't remove the underlying causes that provoked the coup d'état, not in the slightest. Furthermore, as a result, would it not simply validate the results of elections plagued with extremely serious irregularities and a campaign that unfolded under the climate of violence and terror imposed by the putschists? Micheletti has already been beating the war drums. The agreement was barely sealed when he told CNN en Español that once restored to power, "Zelaya and the people who come with him are sure to undertake a campaign of retribution. Only someone who is unaware of Zelaya's attitude could believe that there will not be consequences." What will the response be should the government be restored? Amnesty for the putschists,

reconciliation with them, hugs for Micheletti?

But Zelaya is far from being the only actor in this drama: How may the heroic militants who risked their lives and their physical integrity to defend their legitimate government react, especially once the possibility of calling a popular referendum to reform the constitution has also been completely ruled out? There are many dead and wounded, much imprisonment and humiliation along the way. Will these men and women who won the streets in Honduras accept the forgetting of so many crimes and the pardon of their victimizers? Also, the one lesson taken by the efforts of the people and social movements over the past four months of resistance is that if they organize themselves and mobilize their influence in the political juncture can be decisive, much more than they realized before. The crisis taught them, brutally, that they can stop being history's objects and turn themselves into its protagonists. And perhaps because of that, beyond what has taken place with this accord, they may decide to continue onward with their struggles for a different Honduras , one that does not come about with unjust amnesties or spurious reconciliations.

P.S.

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