

Obama showed "willful disregard of political oppression" by leftist dictators, says Washington Post

July 13, 10:36 AM · Hans Bader - DC SCOTUS Examiner

Obama has [demanded](#) that Honduras allow its anti-American would-be dictator, Mel Zelaya, to return to power, arguing that President Zelaya's removal by the Honduras Supreme Court, with the backing of his country's Congress and military, was "undemocratic" because the now-unpopular Zelaya was once elected. He has ignored the many legal and foreign-affairs commentators who have pointed out that Zelaya's removal was a [legal](#) response to Zelaya's flouting of the constitution, and not a "coup," such as attorneys Octavio [Sanchez](#), Miguel [Estrada](#), and Dan [Miller](#), former Assistant Secretary of State Kim [Holmes](#), and the Wall Street Journal's Mary Anastasia [O'Grady](#).

But Obama has shown no interest at all in criticizing the human rights violations, violent repression, and anti-democratic behavior of Venezuela's anti-American strongman, as even the liberal *Washington Post*, which has not endorsed a Republican for president since 1952, noted today in an [editorial](#) by Deputy Editorial Page Editor Jackson Diehl, "Double Standards on Latin America."

The *Washington Post*'s Diehl notes Obama's "[willful disregard of political oppression](#)" by anti-American regimes in places like Venezuela, and the fact that his Administration "for months refused to publicly" criticize human-rights abuses in Venezuela.

Obama's glaring double-standard in favor of despotic anti-American regimes is not new for him. In 1984, the left-wing populist ruler of the Caribbean island nation of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, was overthrown and murdered by hardline Communist thugs backed by Cuban dictator Fidel Castro. Caribbean nations led by [Dominican Prime Minister Eugenia Charles](#) beseeched the U.S. to intervene to fight off Cuban imperialism and restore human rights and democracy, which the U.S. did, with the [backing](#) of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, producing a jubilant response among Grenada's oppressed people. (Disgracefully, the UN General Assembly, representing mostly countries run by dictators, voted to condemn the U.S. for liberating Grenada).

How does Obama view this act of liberation from oppression, which has brought Grenada more than 20 years of peace and democracy? In his 2006 book *The Audacity of Hope*, he derides it as "[the invasion of tiny, hapless Grenada](#)." This is exactly how Cuban dictator Fidel Castro disparaged America's liberation of Grenada. It's also how it is [disparaged](#) by former Weather Underground terrorist Bill Ayers, the close Obama associate who sat on charitable boards along with Obama and [helped him disburse tens of millions of dollars](#).

Why does Obama think it is OK to meddle in foreign countries' internal affairs to force them to accept the return of a would-be dictator — but not to liberate them from tyranny and oppression?

Obama has argued that the mere fact that Honduras's would-be dictator [was once elected means he couldn't be removed](#) even if he violated the law — a ridiculous argument that would have left Richard Nixon in charge of the U.S. after Watergate.

His nominee for Assistant Secretary of State, Arturo Valenzuela has made the [ridiculous, legally-unfounded argument](#) that even though Honduras's president was removed on orders from Honduras's Supreme Court, it was still illegal because he should have received more "[judicial process](#)." Valenzuela has a soft-spot for Anti-American dictators, reflecting his [reputation](#) as a [loud defender](#) of Venezuelan dictator Chavez's terrible record on freedom of the press.

Obama's claim that the removal of Honduras's president was "undemocratic" is belied by the fact that the Honduran Congress [overwhelmingly voted](#) to ratify the president's removal and replace him with the speaker of the Honduran Congress.

Honduras did not use a formal impeachment process to remove its president because its constitution does not have a well-developed impeachment mechanism, [says](#) Latin American scholar Juan Carlos Hidalgo at the Cato Institute. But its unwieldy constitution does have other, less elegant means of removing abusive presidents: Article 239 [bans presidents](#) from continuing to hold office if they seek to extend their tenure, or merely propose an end to presidential term-limits. And Article 272 gives the [military](#) the power to enforce those term-limit provisions, which it did by executing a [warrant for Zelaya's arrest](#) issued by the Honduran Supreme Court.

(The military's law enforcement role is not unique to Honduras: in the U.S., federal troops were used to enforce a court order desegregating the schools in Little Rock in 1957, when the court's order was thwarted by the Arkansas Governor. When confronted with powerful officials who refuse to comply with the law, the courts cannot rely simply on a handful of U.S. marshalls, but rather must look to federal troops or the national guard).

[Church leaders and U.S. Senators](#) are now opposing Obama's demand that Honduras be forced to return Zelaya to power.

Copyright 2009 Examiner.com. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Author



Hans Bader is an Examiner from Washington DC. You can see Hans's articles at:

["http://www.Examiner.com/x-7812-DC-SCOTUS-Examiner"](http://www.Examiner.com/x-7812-DC-SCOTUS-Examiner)