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**Bill +Hillary Clintons lawyers helping Honduran military coup leaders**  
 by Justin Raimondo Anti-war.com  
*Thursday Jul 30th, 2009 11:30 AM*

Hillarys' campaign manager is now managing the coup in Honduras

The Honduran Coup and the Clinton Connection

A pro-coup faction in the Obama administration  
 by Justin Raimondo, July 27, 2009

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If you're a Honduran general and you're chafing at the bit to depose the duly elected president – as your predecessors have done repeatedly over the years – you don't just go for it. That would be impolitic and eminently impractical: after all, the United States is not only your country's number one trading partner, it is also the chief source of funding that keeps the Honduran military flush with so much cash that it is the fifth largest economic power in the nation. A cutoff of that all-important lifeline, not to mention trade sanctions, could put the squeeze on your finances.

So, before you make your move and call the troops out of the barracks, you let Washington know what you're up to – you feel them out and get some idea of how they might react. There are plenty of indications that this is indeed what occurred, including talk of "negotiations" between the coup plotters and the State Department that failed to avert the "crisis." So while the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama has officially taken the position that the coup is illegitimate and President Manuel "Mel" Zelaya must be restored to office, there are hints that the U.S. is playing both sides of the fence – and even tilting toward the coup leaders. When Zelaya announced that he would cross the border between Honduras and Nicaragua on foot and called on his supporters to gather, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton denounced him as "reckless." Which led Zelaya to ask, in effect, which side is she on?

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Good question, and the answer is she's on Lanny Davis' side. Davis, you'll recall, was her chief attack dog during the presidential primary campaign, and now he's sold his services to the Honduran branch of CEAL, the Central American business alliance, which supports the coup. He has always been very close to Hillary, and he was her priapic husband's defense counsel during the impeachment hearings. This time he's taken on a similarly indefensible client and is working his public relations skills prettifying a brazen coup d'état as a valiant attempt to "preserve" the Honduran constitution and "the rule of law."

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Is it really too fantastic to assume he's been on the phone with his old friend Hillary, lobbying hard for the coup leaders and the interests of his corporate paymasters?

Davis, who will do anything for money – he once signed on as a lobbyist for the government of Kazakhstan, one of the most repressive and corrupt governments in the world – is aided by another Clintonista, as the New York Times reports:

"Last week, Mr. Micheletti brought the adviser from another firm with Clinton ties to the talks in Costa Rica. The adviser, Bennett Ratcliff of San Diego, refused to give details about his role at the talks. 'Every proposal that Micheletti's group presented was written or approved by the American,' said another official close to the talks, referring to Mr. Ratcliff."

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The locus of the pro-coup faction in high Democratic Party councils seems to be the powerful



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Washington law firm of Covington and Burling, which is paid a large retainer by Chiquita, formerly known as United Fruit Company. Current U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder is a Covington alumnus. He defended Chiquita against charges of bribery and dealing with a known terrorist entity when it was accused (and convicted) of funding right-wing paramilitaries throughout Central America.

So what we have is this: a powerful group within the Democratic Party, clustered around Hillary Clinton, actively pushing for the legitimization of the Honduran coup on behalf of their corporate clients – Chiquita, which has a long and dishonorable history in the region, and the Honduran association of big businessmen, who have long used the state as their personal instrument.

This corporatist alliance is a logical ally of the Clintonistas, who – along with the neocons – have stepped up to the plate as the coup leaders' leading apologists in Washington. After all, the corporatist model – in which the state acts on behalf of its big business backers, privileging their interests and subsidizing their projects at taxpayers' expense – reached new heights of corruption under Bill Clinton.

Big U.S. business interests are threatened by Zelaya's attempts at social reform and his pursuit of an independent foreign policy that puts Honduras first – not the Honduras business council and the U.S. government. Even Lanny Davis is saying it might not have been such a good idea – but, according to him, we have to let bygones be bygones and "move on." Now where have we heard that line before?

The latest news from Honduras is that the military is beginning to relent and has basically endorsed the "Arias Accord," the compromise worked out by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias. The deal involves Zelaya's restoration, but at a price: he'll be shorn of a good deal of his presidential powers, in effect reduced to a caretaker-figurehead until new elections are held. Arias wants new elections quickly, but with the country deeply polarized, a presidential campaign could well devolve into open civil war.

The accord, which has Washington's backing, is just a soft coup. It rewards the generals and their corporate backers and slaps down the populist surge represented by Zelaya, who had challenged the status quo in ways that are not conventionally leftist. Indeed, it is hard to see why Reason magazine, which bangs away at the drug legalization issue with obsessive regularity, hasn't hailed Zelaya's call to decriminalize – and why the Cato Institute, which noted this a while back, seems to have forgotten it while denouncing him as an aspiring "dictator."

The public relations crew that is being paid mega-bucks to prettify the Honduran military regime is certainly earning its fee: every single "news" account of the events leading up to the coup avers that the referendum Zelaya wanted to hold would have extended his term as president. This is a flat-out lie. Read the translation of the question that was to be on the ballot, and see for yourself.

This has nothing to do with term limits and everything to do with the unlimited greed of the Honduran oligarchy and its American corporate partners, who, acting in tandem with the U.S. government, have looted Honduras for decades. They feared Zelaya would put an end to their racket, so the U.S.-trained-and-supported army put an end to his presidency. In the end, the coup leaders will get their way, Zelaya's supporters will have been put in their place, and the alleged threat represented by Hugo Chavez, the left-populist "Bolivarian," will have been turned back.

But not really. By supporting corporatist oligarchs, who have as good a reason to fear a true free market as they do a Chavista revolution, the U.S. does itself no favors – though Lanny Davis and his clients are doing quite well, thank you. The essential issue in Central America is the all-important land question. The oligarchs, who monopolize scarce land based on feudal land grants, profit by and owe their status to a system of state intervention that amounts to a spoils system. They invariably resort to the army – to coercion – when all else fails, and that is precisely what happened in this instance. They have always gotten away with it, due to U.S. complicity, and if the Clinton State Department has anything to say about it, the much-vaunted "change" promised by Obama won't show its face in Honduras any time soon.

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