

Deconstructing Bolivia: Voices Inside and Outside Challenge Mainstream and Alternative Narratives

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Global Research, December 08, 2019

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean, USA](#)
Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR, History, Media Disinformation, Politics, Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

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"A coup is underway, carried out by the right-wing with foreign support...what are the methods of this coup attempt?" – Evo Morales (October 23, 2019) [1]

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On Sunday November 10th, following 20 days of street protests and attacks on fellow party members, President Evo Morales, on the advice of the head of the armed forces and the air force, resigned from his position as Head of State of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.[2]

For 20 days, street protests, escalating in their violence and intimidation of members of Morales's political party, MAS (Movement Toward Socialism) had ravaged the Andean republic. These demonstrations were sparked by accusations that election authorities had rigged the vote count in favour of a first round victory for Morales. [3][4][5]

The civil unrest that had gripped the country did not end with his departure. When a senator from an opposition party, Jeanine Añez, [declared herself president](#) during a contested session, Morales supporters began their own protests including blockades which blocked the delivery of fuel, food and other supplies to major population centres.[6]

Repression by this interim government, Añez is supposedly only acting as president until new elections can be held, has resulted in human rights abuses. A delegation of human rights observers from Argentina reported at a November 30th press conference that based on testimonies carried out in the city of El Alto:

“the repressive system set up by the de facto government has caused dozens of deaths, hundreds of arbitrary detentions, thousands of wounded, innumerable cases of apprehensions, torture, rape and other crimes against the physical, psychological and sexual integrity of the victims, who are men,

women, children, elderly and members of groups.”[7]

There are differing points of view with regard to whether the events leading up to the November 10th departure of Morales constitute a coup d’etat and to what extent the U.S. and other outside agencies might have played a role. Some activists within Bolivia, however, such as Maria Galindo of the group [Mujeres Creando](#), warn of the dangers of framing the crisis as a conflict between popular forces, personified by Evo Morales, and right wing forces currying favour with domestic and foreign elites. Decisions made and tactics employed by the ousted president had encountered popular opposition across the board and is at least partly to blame for the current crisis. Consequently, the role and agency of critical progressive movements in the country are being glossed over by international commentators both on the left and the right.

If that analysis is sound, and if foreign actors are mobilizing to undermine Bolivian democracy, then no clear resolution to the country’s troubles is likely to be realized as a result of a new election alone.

This week’s Global Research News Hour radio program endeavours to probe several of the factors and several of the players influencing the turn of events in Bolivia. Four guests, two from inside Bolivia, two from the U.S. will share their perspectives on the political upheaval rocking the landlocked South American country.

W.T. Whitney Jr. is a political journalist with a focus on Latin America and health care issues. He is a Cuba solidarity activist who formerly worked as a pediatrician. He is the author of the November 25th article: [Evidence Talks: US Government Propelled Coup in Bolivia](#).

La Paz based Sara Jaurequi has been active as an anti-racism activist and is a former student. She outlines her disappointment with Evo Morales and her understanding of the dynamics shaping the political situation in her country, and shares some of her own experiences in the midst of these historic events.

Jeb Sprague is a Research Associate at the University of California, Riverside and the author of [“Globalizing the Caribbean: Political economy, social change, and the transnational capitalist class”](#) (Temple University Press, 2019), He is also a co-founder of the Network for the Critical Studies of Global Capitalism. He outlines the basic premise of his recent article [Top Bolivian Coup Plotters Trained by US Military’s School of the Americas, Served as Attachés in FBI Police Programs](#).

Cochabamba -born María Galindo is a Bolivian anarcho-feminist and founder of [Mujeres Creando](#) (Women Creating). She has also worked as a radio and television presenter and has authored three books. She recently wrote the article [Kristallnacht in Bolivia](#), which is a reference to the events of November 10th as the release of racist, colonialist and fascist elements in Bolivian society.

(Global Research News Hour Episode 279)

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Los Angeles, California based [Thepowerofvoices.com](#) airs the Global Research News Hour every Monday from 6-7pm Pacific time.

Notes:

1. <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Evo-Morales-Warns-Coup-Attempt-Underway-in-Bolivia-20191023-0002.html>
2. <https://peoplesdispatch.org/2019/11/10/evo-morales-resigns-after-bolivian-army-backs-right-wing-coup/>
3. ibid
4. Mat Youkee (Oct. 22, 2019) ‘Bolivia braces for fresh protests as officials say Evo Morales close to victory’, The Guardian; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/21/bolivia-confusion-over-election->

results-sparks-fear-and-protests

5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-50360413>
6. <https://www.news.com.au/world/breaking-news/food-shortages-hit-bolivia-amid-blockades/news-story/b9c6426a425a228726da08da3ff74b83>
7. <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Crimes-Against-Humanity-Are-Reported-in-Bolivia-20191130-0006.html>

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