

Peru Elections 2016: The Story of a Coup d'État Foretold?

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While this essay focusses on Peru – it might be relevant for all of Latin America and beyond. The world has entered an ever more unscrupulous manipulation by the Empire of Chaos, with false flags, lie- and sleaze propaganda, military interventions in sovereign states, proxy-conflicts and military coups resulting in mass killings and 'strategic' assassinations (drone-killings) – all to accelerate the global take over under the One World Order which is nothing less than full spectrum dominance of the globe's resources, people and money.

Imagine a country that in the last four decades has been governed (sic) successively by thieves; that every five years goes through the same circus of having to elect a President as the lesser evil, already knowing that whoever is elected will continue robbing their nation; a country that arguably can be considered the richest in natural resources (per capita) of all of Latin America, but where the people at large have hardly benefitted from the exploitation of the mostly unrenewable resources, to the contrary, the population has grown poorer and the gap between rich and poor has grown wider over the past 30 years; a country that boasted an average annual growth of 5% to 7% in first ten years of the 21st Century (confirmed by the Masters of International Finance, the World Bank and the IMF) – a growth rate of which 80% went to 5% of the population – again widening the divide between the haves and have-nots, increasing unemployment and delinquency; a country basically controlled by five families which also control and manipulate 90% of the news the people are subjected to; a country that has been under neoliberal reign for at least the last 25 years – and a country that is firmly in the grip of the United States of America. This country is Peru.

For the last weeks and months Peru was and is in a frenzy about who may win today's – 10 April 2016 – Presidential elections. Of lesser importance seem to be the 130 Parliamentarians, belonging to a myriad of parties and new and old alliances and cross-alliances, a political amalgam for hardly anybody understandable. It is unclear whether the chaos is by design or simply part of the Peruvian electorate system which reoccurs every five years; with the same type of candidates (in one case even the same candidate since 1985!), with the same empty promises and lies, with the same accusations towards one another – and all of them with an honest-to-god face proclaiming they would eliminate corruption – spoken by the same people about whom the electorate knows are all corrupt. The common question goes: Who is the least corrupt to vote for?

A couple of months ago, there were 19 Presidential candidates from an equal number of political parties. There are many more parties who did not have the financial means, nor a charismatic enough contender to present a candidate. It is said, to run a decent campaign for President you need at least two million dollars.

Today, on the Big Day, there are 10 candidates left. Last weekend they gave themselves the

last TV debate before the elections, presenting their dreams, fantasies and lies of what they wanted to do for the 30 million Peruvians – none of them having an idea on how to pay for their programs – or they were simply lashing out at each other. It looked and sounded like a debate of adolescents. It would have been a hilarious spectacle if it wouldn't be so serious, putting one of these clowns at the helm of a complex multi-cultural nation with uncountable riches, below and above the ground. And mind, you almost all of the candidates are totally submissive to the Northern Neighbor, who graciously concedes them for now being part of his 'backyard' (Obama about Latin America).



Keiko Fujimori

Among the remaining candidates is the current frontrunner, Keiko Fujimori (40), the daughter of the imprisoned ex-President Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000), condemned for corruption and crimes against humanity. Former President Fujimori is also infamous for the *autogolpe* (auto-coup) he carried out on 5 April 1992, supported by the armed forces, dissolving 'temporarily' the Parliament.

The runner-up is another woman, Veronika Mendoza (35), psychologist by education, socialist by vocation and belonging to the Party 'Frente Amplio'. Veronika served in Congress since 2011.

Third in the race is Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, also called PPK (77), economist, with a long history in Peru's rightwing (neoliberal) politics. He was Minister of Energy in Fernando Belaúnde's Government (1980-1985) and Minister of Finance and Prime Minister under President Alejandro Toledo (2001-2006). Kuczynski is widely accused of large-scale corruption, mainly in dealings with Hunt Oil, during his mandate as Energy Minister, and is said having had to flee Peru in the trunk of a car to Ecuador from where he went to the US (where else?), where he was awarded with a plum job at the World Bank.

Two additional candidates, who might have been competitive, Julio Guzman (45), economist, never served in public office, and César Acuña (63), self-styled entrepreneur, who represented the Department of 'La Libertad' in Congress from 2000-2006. None of them have a clean record. Both of them were expelled from running by the Election Commission a month before elections (9 March), one for registration irregularities, the other for corruption. Obviously not the same criteria were applied to all candidates, if not, other than Veronika, none of them would remain in the race. The opposition of Ms. Fujimori immediately launched a series of legal measures to get her expelled too. Of course, these measures didn't go anywhere.

It is unlikely that Keiko who has a 12 to 15-point lead over Veronika will win in the first round, meaning a runoff on 5 June 2016 will be necessary. To win in the first round, a candidate needs 50+% of the vote. If there is a runoff between Keiko and Veronika it's a tough shot, but if things would play out honestly, Veronika the socialist candidate, is favored to win. If PPK makes it into the second round, the runoff result is not clear.

In Peru it has happened on several occasions that the candidate coming in second in the first round has won the election. Cases in point, Alberto Fujimori who came in second in the first run in 1990 against frontrunner Nobel Prize Literature, Mario Vargas Llosa, won in the runoff by a landslide. Similarly, in 2006, Ollanta Humala (the current President), a leftwing military man, was the frontrunner against Alan Garcia, but lost in the runoff.

In all of this we should not forget the Empire's semi-clandestine dirty fingers in every election of the globe. Peru is no exception. The country rich in mineral resources and hydrocarbons is already run by a neoliberal regime, subservient to Empire. America's influence is becoming increasingly sophisticated, including infiltration of NED (National Endowment for Democracy) trained 'groups' or 'NGOs' to stir social unrest and help spread lies and false propaganda by corporate controlled so-called 'free media'; through the social media à la 'Arab Spring' and the different 'Color Revolutions', and – yes – also through the Google Search Engine which puts the 'relevant' (and of course manipulated) information at the fingertips of ever more cell-phone and tablet fanatics, mostly but not exclusively young people.

Ollanta Humala, a left-winger, who won the 2011 Presidency, was thoroughly scrutinized by Washington's analysts for his steadfastness and commitment to the cause he was elected for, much like Obama was in 2008, before he was made President. Humala qualified as he accepted a number of rules, including keeping Toledo's neoliberal Minister of Finance. After just 4 months in office in 2011, I am told by some of his former ministers, he was given orders by Washington to dismiss his Cabinet and follow the neoliberal extractive industry course of his predecessor, plus listen carefully to what Washington has to say.

Thus, Humala the first nominally socialist President after the Juan Velasco Alvarado – left-wing military dictatorship (1968-1975), dismissed his left-leaning cabinet consisting of highly intellectual and transparent politicians, to replace them with a group of shady neoliberals. The so-called '*Peru Profundo*', meaning rural Peru, where poverty today is still rampant, the people who voted for him, felt and still feel betrayed.

Their hope now in Veronika, is strong, though with reasonable doubts from past experience with the left. However, they have nothing to lose. – But would the United States of America tolerate a left-wing President in Peru? – Or for that matter anywhere in the world? – See Alexis Tsipras, Greece; Manuel Zelaya, Honduras; Dilma Rousseff, Brazil, being smothered by sleaze propaganda; Daniel Scioli, Argentina being outmaneuvered by the long arm of the United States in favor of ultra-neoliberal Mauricio Macri – and the list goes on.

That's where the potential for a (military) coup comes in. People have reached a boiling point. It takes a long time for Peruvians losing their temper and going on the barricades, comparatively speaking. Looking at people's revolutions in Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Peruvians are complacent, but now discontent is running high, especially if dirty tricks are being played in these up-coming elections.

A former army general has told me already weeks ago, that people are unhappy, that they

despise this electoral process and that there are rumors that they may take to the streets in masses not seen for a long time. Indeed, such demonstrations have recently taken place, for example against Keiko Fujimori, on 5 April, anniversary of her father's 'internal coup' (1992), where reportedly between 150,000 and 200,000 took peacefully to the streets; and during the campaign 'closure meetings' this week of the presidential hopefuls, where tens of thousands were cheering their respective candidates. If unhappiness arises in preparation for a possible runoff, or if irregularities are found in a first run election win, a polarized public might no longer tolerate fraud, betrayal, and corruption by the mighty, in which case "the military might support the people" – so the ex-general.

On the other hand, the army itself is split. There are those who are with the *Comandante* Humala, others are *Fujimoristas* and others still understand that Peru needs to get out of a decades-old quagmire, and that Peru should be returned to the 30 million Peruvians, to whom she belongs. They want a Peru not just for a few who have no interest whatsoever in building their land as a viable, sustainable, equitable and socially progressive country for all. These few elitists want to continue pillaging and selling Peru to foreign corporations and for their own benefits – leaving the vast majority of the people in poverty, many in abject poverty, promoting a country of extractive exports, destroying the environment and the social fabric of the population. They have no interest in building a manufacturing base which would add economic value in Peru and create decent jobs.

Let's hope for a fair election and a fair election process; no foreign intervention and no bloodstained streets – but, yes, may a new President emerge who has finally the interest of the 30 million Peruvians at heart.

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