

## **Manipulated CBC (As It Happens) Reporting on Latin America and Venezuela**

March 1, 2015, by Grahame Russell

Letter to As It Happens (AIH), March 1, 2015

Dear As It Happens (CBC),

(Feel free to share this with your editorial and news decision-making gang.)

Recently, the CBC has reported a number of times in quite a misleading fashion about political upheaval in Venezuela. Are your news selection choices your own, at AIH, or are you getting messaging directions from further up the food-chain in CBC?

It is not that there are not complex political issues going on in Venezuela – there are, and there have been going back many years, to well before the “Hugo Chavez” years; there will be for many years to come.

One problem with your manipulated coverage is your biased selection of focus and “experts” to speak with. The next time you choose to shine your media flashlight on Venezuela, here is just one expert (Mark Weisbrot) you might invite to help begin to balance out your discussion and debate.

### **Recommend Reading**

“The truth about Venezuela: a revolt of the well-off, not a 'terror campaign'”, by Mark Weisbrot

[http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/20/venezuela-revolt-truth-not-terror-campaign?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/20/venezuela-revolt-truth-not-terror-campaign?CMP=share_btn_tw)

On request, I can provide you with names of many other experts to speak with.

I find your reporting on Venezuela manipulated not only for the perspectives you invite on your programme, contrasted with the perspectives you choose not to air, but also because of the CBC’s slanted media coverage, or absence of coverage on other Latin American countries.

You talked of violence in Venezuela. Yes, there are high levels of violence there, but not nearly as high as in Honduras (the “murder capital of the world” since the U.S.- and Canadian-backed military coup in 2009), Guatemala, El Salvador or Haiti.

You talk of repression in Venezuela. Yes, there are political tensions there, and some cases of State human rights violations, but repression in Venezuela does not remotely compare to the levels of systemic State and para-military repression in Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and Haiti.

Your invited “expert” (Feb. 26, 2015) reported there was no evidence of U.S. government intervention, and then there was no follow-up questioning of that statement. Again, contact Mark Weisbrot, or anyone of many experts I could put you in touch with, to have a proper media discussion of the on-going interventionist role of the U.S. government (and the Canadian government) in Venezuela, let alone talking about the U.S.-backed military coup attempt in 2002 in Venezuela.

You talked of freedom of expression in Venezuela. There is far more diversity of opinion in the mainstream media in Venezuela than there remotely is Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico (or in Canada, in some ways).

### **General Recommendation**

I urge CBC journalists to regularly watch Democracy Now ([www.democracynow.org](http://www.democracynow.org)), and then consider asking them (perhaps a journalist-to-journalist training exchange) how they are so able, so regularly, to find so many articulate experts, on such a wide range of complex global political, military, economic issues?

### **Specific Questions**

Is it that the CBC’s on-going, slanted coverage of Venezuelan issues is related to the fact that for over 15 years, the U.S. government and (increasingly) the Canadian government have been ideologically and politically opposed to the economic, political and social policies of successive democratically-elected governments in Venezuela?

Whereas, your lack of even remotely comparable coverage of much more serious issues in Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico and Haiti is due to the fact that the Canadian and U.S. governments, and North American corporations and investors have deeply invested economic interests in those countries, comfortably doing business and politics ‘as usual’ with those quite undemocratic and repressive regimes in power?

Look forward to hearing from you.

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