

Governments of Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras –all U.S. and Canada allies– use repression to force refugees to stay in countries they are fleeing from due to repression and destitution, corruption and impunity

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/governments-of-mexico-guatemala-and-honduras-all-us-and-canada-allies-use-repression-to-force-refugees-to-stay-in-countries>

Henry Adalid Díaz Reyes, a Honduran refugee, was shot dead by Mexican forces

28 October 2018

<https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Honduran-Asylum-Seekers-Dies-In-Clash-with-Mexican-Police-20181028-0020.html>



Photo: Guillermo Arias. Refugee caravan walking through Chiapas, towards Oaxaca, October 27, 2018

Guatemalan Police Attacks Central American Asylum-Seekers

<https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Guatemalan-Police-Attacks-Central-American-Asylum-Seekers-20181028-0018.html>

13 days of refugee caravan reporting, by Sandra Cuffe

<https://www.aljazeera.com/profile/sandra-cuffe.html?fbclid=IwAR0v8J89VkkxRSHqITwwKVTX-gePFbZrWxTyrVscakQLOOV2hrLp94kb8Fo4>

While refugees flee Honduras, the CBC does not report on how Canada contributes to underlying causes

By Grahame Russell, Oct.27, 2018

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/while-refugees-flee-honduras-the-cbc-does-not-report-on-how-canada-contributes-to-underlying-causes>

“Trump is incensed by a ragtag group of migrants - here's what the fuss is about”, begins Jonathon Gatehouse, CBC News, Oct. 18, 2018 (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/thenational/national-today-trump-immigration-calgary-olympic-bid-1.4862911>).

No, this is not a “ragtag group” of forced migrants. These are thousands of people -children and elderly, men and women- fleeing endemic violence and government repression, organized crime and corruption, economic exploitation and destitution, and impunity for the rich and powerful.

No, Trump is not incensed. He is a scheming politician riling up and misleading anyone he can about what is going on with the refugees fleeing Honduras and Guatemala, with an eye to winning elections.

No, this is not “more about protest than relocation” as Jonathon dismissively writes. This is about people desperately fleeing violent, untenable living conditions. The reason “few participants make it to the [U.S. border]” is not because this is “more about protest” but because, along the way, migrants suffer violence, kidnappings and killings; criminalizations, jailings and deportations; corruption and extortion; hunger and disease.

No, what Jonathan and the CBC report are not “what the fuss is about”. The “fuss” is about fleeing a corrupt, violent, oppressive regime that is backed by Canada, the U.S., the World Bank and other actors in the “international community”.

This is a “Canadian” story. When will the CBC –and most media in Canada, for that matter- report on how the Canadian government, companies and investors (without addressing here the role of the United States) contribute directly to the underlying causes as to why 10s of 1000s of Hondurans flee their homes and country, year and after?

The number of people fleeing Honduras spiked significantly after the 2009 military coup that ushered in this ‘now-permanent-crisis’ of: violent, fraudulent elections (2009, 2013, 2017); systemic government and private sector repression; corruption and organized crime (including drug trafficking) infiltrating most branches of the government, judiciary, military and police; and increased exploitation and destitution of the majority.

The 2009 coup and the three ensuing violent, fraudulent elections were all supported and/or legitimized by the U.S. and Canadian governments.

By effectively censoring from public scrutiny the consequences of Canadian policies and actions that contribute to this ‘now-permanent-crisis’, our government, businesses and investors continue to maintain mutually beneficial relations with the regime in power in Honduras, helping re-create the very conditions people are fleeing from.

(Grahame Russell is an activist; non-practicing Canadian lawyer; adjunct professor at University of Northern British Columbia; and director of Rights Action (www.rightsaction.org). Since 1995, Rights Action has supported community, human rights and environmental defense struggles in Guatemala and Honduras.)

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