

Guatemala Election Watch #12 – July 31, 2023

Who is Arevalo? From the father (1944) to the son (2023)

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/who-is-arevalo-from-the-father-to-the-son>

21 days to August 20th run-off vote

"Arevalo's dream is a nightmare for the hegemonic power."

"From the first days of the electoral campaign it was evident that Arevalo was going to sweep the polls."

It is impossible to keep up with the breadth of attacks being carried out daily by the Covenant of the Corrupt government and allies, on the electoral process and against the Semilla Party.

Stay tuned. See below for more information ...

ARÉVALO

By Sergio Tischler Visquerra, July 25, 2023

<https://prensacomunitaria.org/2023/07/arevalo/>

They are afraid. It is not only the corruption, the cynicism, the moral degradation, the contempt, the class hatred of the oligarchic elites, whose most visible political expression is the "Covenant of the Corrupt".

There is something deeper: they are also afraid. Fear that the democratic history interrupted in 1954 may raise its head in the figure of Bernardo Arévalo, son of former President Juan José Arévalo.

1944

In June 1944, a broad popular movement deposed dictator Jorge Ubico. Its political effects went beyond the resignation of the dictator in office. In fact, they put in crisis the entire power structure of the liberal dictatorships.

The popular movement pushed through these structures and opened a space of political self-determination unprecedented in the history of the country.

As part of this process, Dr. Juan José Arévalo, at that time a prestigious (and self-exiled) university professor in Argentina, ran for the presidency of the country.

From the first days of the electoral campaign, it was evident that Arévalo was going to sweep the polls. The power structure of "ubiquismo" [named after the ousted dictator Jorge Ubico] reacted by organizing a coup d'état to prevent the elections. The hope for change was in jeopardy. Then came the military uprising of October 20.

The challenging of the dominant power structures by the popular movement had given rise to a crisis within the army, resulting in an uprising led by young officers, among whom the then-Captain Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán stood out.

With this, the political structure and the State apparatus of traditional oligarchic power had entered an irreversible crisis. From the democratic process underway, new government institutions and programs would emerge, representing milestones in the history of popular demands in the country.



“AREVALO SWEEPS THE NATION”

El Imparcial Newspaper, December 1944. Hemerographic work: Prensa Comunitaria

Arevalo won the presidency by a wide margin. In the 1944 elections, he received 256,514 votes, while his closest competitor, Adrián Recinos, barely managed 20,550.

During his administration, the Labor Code was enacted, the IGSS (National Social Security Program) was created, and the Industrial Development Law was approved, among other reforms. One of his main efforts was public education.

As a democrat and educator, Arevalo was convinced of the need for a profound reform of education, which, in addition to promoting technical and scientific development, would have a strong ethical and moral content.

In fact, Arevalo's idea of democracy was based on the need to develop a robust citizenship, which required an education that fostered the development of mutual respect and the critical thinking capacities of citizens. A robust citizenship could only go hand in hand with a process of deepening democracy, which implied the self-organization of the working classes, hence the Labor Code was a key element in its development.

This process was broken in 1954. The democratic revolution was broken by the US intervention and a military coup d'état. Democracy was perverted in Guatemala.

After that, the government and State served to provide a “legalistic” cover to a corrupt and repressive system, designed to guarantee the interests of the oligarchy and global capital – capital that today is also linked to drug trafficking.

2023

It can be understood then why Arevalo's dream is a nightmare for the hegemonic power. Not only are they afraid that a government headed by his son will put an end to the political and social decomposition caused by a system that generates power to benefit only a few, but also that through these cracks that open up in the history of domination, the airs of a [new democratic] spring could filter through.

Antagonism has memory: for the powerful, it is to act against any change that may come from below; for us, memory is forged by resistances where the hope for change has not been extinguished.

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Get involved/ Act

The US and Canadian governments, our companies and investors, have a significant measure of responsibility for what is occurring in Guatemala, given the past 69 years of full economic, political and military relations with repressive, 'open for global business, Covenant of the Corrupt regimes.

Electoral coup d'état in Guatemala
A democracy and rule of law challenge for United States and Canada

By Grahame Russell, July 24, 2023

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/electoral-coup-detat-in-guatemala>

Rights Action calls for Americans and Canadians to share this information widely (including media outlets), and to contact your Senators, Members of Congress and Parliamentarian.

Urge them to make public statements and bring all pressures to bear on the Guatemalan authorities to ensure that the electoral process proceeds transparently and peacefully to the August 20 run-off vote, and that the Semilla Party is allowed to participate fully with no further attacks of any kind.

- U.S. Senate: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact>
- U.S. House: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
- Canadian Parliament: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members>

More information

- Follow daily twitter feeds of Festivales Solidarios (@festivalesgt) & Prensa Comunitaria (@PrensaComunitaria)
- Read Prensa Comunitaria's daily news (<https://prensacomunitaria.org/>)
- Read Rights Action's "Guatemala Election Watch" alerts (www.rightsaction.org/emails)

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