

# **Bolivia: Criticizing Evo wasn't wrong, but will the racist, misogynist, Bible-thumping right unite the people?**

Sunday 24 November 2019, by [HINES Sarah](#) (Date first published: 14 November 2019).

Dear all, please take what follows as an effort to figure out how to understand what is happening in Bolivia. I by no means think that I have it all figured out and welcome all comments, criticisms, and conversations.

I am terribly saddened by what is taking place in Bolivia. It was surreal to watch Morales and Garcia Linera's resignation speeches. It felt like going back in time to the early 1970s. And forward to an unraveling of all the gains of the last twenty years.

I have been reluctant to call it a coup because 1) the opposition movement calling for Morales's resignation was broad and included social movement and unions, 2) Morales created the crisis by running for an unconstitutional third/fourth term against the will of the popular referendum he promised to respect, 3) it was as far as I can tell the most violent elements of the opposition that were burning houses, tarring and feathering MAS officials, etc. even and especially after his announcements of new elections and not primarily the military's "suggestion" that led Morales to resign, and 4) the military did not take power.

That said, I think it was a mistake for the popular democratic elements of the opposition movements to effectively align themselves with right-wing forces and embrace the police mutinies. Calling it a popular uprising, as Zibechi does, is misleading because it was a cross-class opposition that included and was commandeered by the extreme right. Ousting Morales through police mutinies and horrific violence was no victory for democracy. And the military "suggestion" that Morales should resign was an unacceptable military intervention into politics. The military didn't take over in Honduras in 2009 either and I think that was rightly called a coup. What has made me pause this time is that while Morales called new elections after the OAS report came out, he did not declare he would not run unconstitutionally again, and people had strong reason to believe that he had overseen fraudulent elections given the OAS and other reports and therefore little confidence that his government would oversee fair elections the next time around. And because almost everyone I know in Bolivia is urging people outside to stop calling it a coup. I am not there and so all of these conclusions are tentative.

I am more and more convinced that we should call what is happening a coup because of the way the right is using this opening to take over the country undemocratically. I have far less faith that Áñez will preside over free and fair elections than Morales would have.

The saddest thing about all of this to me is that ordinary Bolivians are divided between supporters and opponents of the MAS on the streets, and that the extreme right is using and will continue to use the legitimate grievances of sections of the popular classes that generated this political crisis to run roughshod over all the gains of the last twenty years for the poor, indigenous people, women, workers, and the environment, as limited and contradictory as those have been.

I also have hope that the actions of the racist, misogynist, Bible-thumping right will unite people

across those divisions, as has happened so many times before.

**Sarah Hines**

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**P.S.**

- NO BORDERS ON NOVEMBER 14, 2019:

<https://nobordersnews.org/2019/11/14/sarah-hines-criticizing-evo-wasnt-wrong-but-its-a-coup-will-th-e-racist-misogynist-bible-thumping-right-unite-the-people/>

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