

USA Presidential Campaign: Clinton Backing of Netanyahu and Record on Honduras Illustrates Her Foreign Policy

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At the recent meeting of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the three remaining Republican presidential candidates and Democratic Candidate Hillary Clinton vied to be seen as the most pro-Israel and pro-Netanyahu.

AIPAC is the powerful lobby in the U.S. for the Israeli government and every one of its policies. It exerts great pressure on all members of Congress.

Clinton probably won that competition with a “disgusting militaristic, hawkish pro-Israel speech that you could ever possibly hear, without the slightest pretense of concern for the people of Palestine,” in the words of renowned journalist Glenn Greenwald.

She emphasized the need for the U.S. to keep building up the nuclear-armed Israeli military with billions of dollars and weapons, so that it could dominate all other countries in the region, backing the ridiculous Zionist narrative that poor little Israel is in danger from its neighbors.

In her speech, Clinton went out of her way to attack the growing Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement fighting the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and its strangling of Gaza.

“Many of the young people here today,” Clinton said, “are on the front lines of the battle to oppose the alarming divestment and sanctions movement known as BDS ... We must repudiate all efforts to malign, isolate and undermine Israel and the Jewish people.”

The “young people” in the audience are the rabid Zionists on many campuses seeking to outlaw growing student groups supporting the BDS movement, including Jewish Voice for Peace. She is also aligning herself by this statement with those who equate opposition to Israeli policies with maligning the Jewish people, i.e. anti-Semitism.

At the University of California, the state-appointed Regents who run the system recently tried to pass a motion equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism, outlawing BDS and Jewish Voice for Peace on all the UC campuses. After an outcry, they watered this down to equating “some” anti-Zionists with anti-Semitism, still a false innuendo that anti-Semitic graffiti etc. are the work of BDS groups.

In some states, laws have been introduced in their legislatures to equate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. This would mean asserting, among other falsities, that many anti-Zionist Jewish people, including Israeli citizens, figures like Noam Chomsky, Jewish Voices for Peace members, Jewish members of socialist organizations and many others are anti-Semitic. This fits in with the Zionist narrative that all such Jews are “self-haters” or worse.

Clinton’s statement to AIPAC puts her firmly in support of this Zionist campaign. It also equates the Jewish people with the Israeli state, a false Zionist claim that Israel is the state of all Jews world-wide.

Both the Democratic and Republican parties and all U.S. administrations, including Obama's, have and continue to pour vast sums and armaments into Israel, back Israel diplomatically, and support Israel's almost 50-year occupation of lands it conquered in the 1967 war (whatever noises they make to the contrary.) Clinton is endorsing these policies, but in a more strident manner.

As Greenwald said, Clinton has made "a central part of her campaign embracing not just the right-wing Israeli government but Netanyahu himself." The Clinton clan are personal friends of the Netanyahu family.

Bernie Sanders was the only candidate to skip the AIPAC meeting. He did not say he was doing so because of AIPAC's policies, but only because he was campaigning elsewhere. He did say, "It is absurd for elements within the Netanyahu government to suggest that building more settlements [in the West Bank] is the appropriate response to most recent violence. It is also not acceptable that the Netanyahu government decided to withhold hundreds of millions of shekels in tax revenue from the Palestinians, which it is supposed to collect on their behalf."

Even such mild criticism of Israel, which 20 years ago was U.S. official policy, has disappeared from mainstream politics.

In a recent debate, Clinton attacked Sanders for comments he made back in the 1980's, when he visited Nicaragua after the Sandinista revolution, that were positive concerning policies of the Sandinistas, and some policies of the Cuban government. Sanders replied that he was opposed to both the war the U.S. was backing against Nicaragua and hostile U.S. policies toward Cuba.

With this charge against Sanders Clinton was signaling to a section of the electorate that she endorsed the U.S.-backed "contra" war against the Nicaraguan revolution and the U.S. organized invasions of Cuba, assassination attempts against Castro and other forms of terrorism, and the economic blockade.

Clinton as a Senator before she became Obama's Secretary of State, and in that office in his first term, and after, has been a loyal supporter of all the U.S. wars, bombings, drone strikes, support of dictators, etc. When she was Secretary of State she was not only a spokesperson for these policies, she participated in forming them. Her record is a long one. Here I will mention just one item.

That was her role in the military coup in Honduras in 2009 which overthrew the democratically elected president Manuel Zelaya. Zelaya was opposed by the Obama administration because he was getting too close to Hugo Chavez and it feared another leftist government in Latin America.

The Honduran military and oligarchy had the same fear, and also thought Zelaya might take measures that favored the impoverished workers in Honduras.

Clinton made a trip to Honduras just weeks before the coup, which was likely organized with the help of the American military from its bases in the country. It was too well organized to have been carried out by the Honduran military alone.

A cable from the U.S. Embassy to Clinton exposed by Wikileaks showed that Clinton knew of the coup immediately. She initially backed the military's claim that Zelaya "fled in the middle of the night to avoid justice for his crimes." It soon came out that the military had seized him and took him to the U.S. base called SOUTHCOM Joint Task Force-Bravo for orders on what to do with him, and then sent him into exile.

The coup was condemned by the Organization of American States and the United Nations, both of which called for the immediate restoration of Zelaya as president. This demand was ignored by the

Obama administration.

Clinton became the point person for the administration. She orchestrated the holding in Honduras of “free and fair elections ... which would render the question of Zelaya moot,” she wrote in in her book *Hard Choices*.”

“Free and fair elections” under a military dictatorship established by a violent coup, to give the fig leaf of cover for the coup. Not much of a fig leaf since no one was fooled. The administration illegally continued to provide military and financial aid to the military government, in violation of the Foreign Assistance Act.

The result is the horror that is Honduras today, the murder capital of the world. Organizers of workers, peasants, indigenous people, Blacks, women, LGBT people, priests and intellectuals are murdered, tortured and disappeared. An article in the New York Times called Honduras “a mess made in the U.S.” It said that since the coup “the country is descending deeper into a human rights and security abyss.”

Clinton continues to praise Honduras as a shining example of democracy, and blames any problems on drug traffickers. It is true that under the dictatorship, in addition to the repression and butchery, the military has been involved financially to turn Honduras into a narco-state, with gang terror so bad it has forced many young people to make the desperate choice to make the arduous and dangerous trip to try to seek asylum in the U.S.

From backing Israeli apartheid to the Honduras coup, and much else, the Obama administration and its point person, Hillary Clinton, leave us with a legacy of imperialist exploitation inflicting great misery.

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P.S.

* “Clinton Backing of Netanyahu and Record on Honduras Illustrates Her Foreign Policy”.