

Peru's political establishment lines up behind unelected far-right government

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Amid a wave of mass protests against social inequality Peru's nominal opposition parties are doing everything possible to disarm and block any actions against recently installed President José Jerí's attempt to solidify a right-wing dictatorship.

Aside from scattered rhetorical protests, their actions fail to challenge the continuation of an illegitimate and repressive regime that took power through the overthrow of the elected President Pedro Castillo in December 2022. The installation of his vice president, Dina Boluarte, was accomplished through brutal repression and homicidal violence.

If one reviews the votes of the political parties in Congress, in many cases the opposition and the ruling party have voted together, including for regulations that restrict the powers of the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Peruvian National Police and the Judiciary. These provisions, known today as "pro-crime laws," have reduced the operational capacity of the state to face the new forms of violent organized crime that are expanding in the country.

For instance, legislators from across the political spectrum voted for Law 31990, which modifies article 473 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and restricts the effective collaboration procedure, a legal procedure used for dismantling criminal organizations. "Pro-crime" Law 32138, which raises the threshold for charging the crime of criminal organization (article 317 of the Criminal Code and article 2 of Law 30077), preventing the incrimination and prosecution of criminal networks operating in national territory.

Those parties that voted for it included: Alliance for Progress (APP), Honor and Democracy, Free Peru, Popular Force, Podemos Peru, Non-Grouped Parliamentarians, Popular Action, We Are Peru, Popular Renewal, Popular Democratic Bloc, Together for Peru, People's Voices, Avanza País, Social Integration Party, Magisterial Bloc and the Socialist Bloc.

All these forces voted for other laws perceived as protecting criminal networks and which exclude political parties from all criminal and administrative sanctions for

crimes committed through its party structure, consolidating a regime of privilege and political impunity.

Some parliamentarians used sick leave to avoid voting or abstained, but this has not been the rule. These votes reveal the deep turn to the right of the political establishment. In Congress, fugitives reign, involved in everything from salary theft of their assistants or "mochasuelos" to sex trafficking. Such political degeneration is a reflection of the total bankruptcy of Peru's capitalist democracy.

Peru has seen a wave of strikes driven by growing anger over the killing of transport workers (more than 180 so far this year) by extortionist and politically connected gangs demanding protection money. The transport unions, dominated by bus owners, have attempted to divert this anger into support for repressive legislation, including a so-called "urban terrorism" law, and a harsher police crackdown.

Outside the Congress there are a few critical voices, like the journalist César Hildebrandt or Glatzer Tuesta, lawyer of the NGO Ideele, who has a radio program. However, all their criticisms are framed as the defense of the Peruvian state and the model of capitalist democracy.

These forces promote a supra-classist and nationalist narrative: that the state belongs to everyone, and that some mafia or corrupt sectors of politics "have captured institutions" and now control key institutions. According to this discourse, new elections could be beneficial as long as the masses who reject capitalist politics and all of the current politicians, "learn to vote." However, none of the parties seek to impinge on the interests of the corrupt and blood-soaked ruling class.

The nominal left, both in the Peruvian Congress and outside it, has repeatedly defended private property and the sanctity of so-called capitalist democracy. The pseudo-leftist parties, including Together for Peru, People's Voices, New Peru, the Magisterial Bloc and Socialist Bloc, are dedicated to channeling the overwhelming rejection of millions of Peruvians back into the electoral swamp. It is this "left" that capital, both domestic and foreign, needs.

During the 2023-2024 session, there was an opportunistic alliance between pseudo-left and center parties, including Peru Libre, which managed to gather enough votes to compete for the presidency of the Congressional Board of Directors. For this, it offered guarantees to openly right-wing parties; however, the coalition failed to win control of Congress. The alliance with the right, however revealed not only opportunism, but also that these parties function to protect the power and stability of capitalist interests.

The deepening political crisis in Peru reflects widespread anger among the working population, driven by numerous intersecting factors that highlight the illegitimacy and corruption of the current regime. One key flashpoint has been the recently issued arbitrary ruling by the Constitutional Court, whose members were appointed by the current Congress. In a blatantly partisan decision, the court annulled the money laundering trial against Keiko Fujimori, leader of the dominant party in Congress, the far-right Popular Force, on the technical pretext that the illegal campaign contributions she received were not contemplated under current legislation. This ruling occurred at the height of the electoral season, sparing Fujimori from facing justice and provoking widespread repudiation across Peru.

The Constitutional Court's ruling ignited a backlash from reactionary forces, emboldening a counterattack that has even targeted the prosecutor who led the investigation.

Meanwhile, Congress exploited the political turmoil following the removal of President Boluarte by installing José Jerí Oré, a little-known political figure, as head of state and granting a vote of confidence to a new right-wing cabinet led by Prime Minister Ernesto Álvarez. This government openly seeks extraordinary powers to govern by decree on citizen security issues. Álvarez himself slandered protesters killed by undercover police provocateurs as “terrorists,” signaling the government's commitment to repress dissent. The initial security operations, including a night raid in the port city of Callao that involved notorious reactionary figures, have been widely condemned as a farce and provocation by Peruvian workers and popular sectors.

Perhaps the most ominous development has been the placing of Lima and Callao under a state of emergency on October 22, a political tool used to suspend fundamental constitutional rights and justify mass militarization and police repression.

Despite the deployment of thousands of police and military personnel, violence persists, undermining any claim that the state of emergency genuinely addresses insecurity. Instead, it clearly seeks to suppress the recent wave of mass protests not only against the current unelected government, but against the entire political setup. This measure signals a dangerous escalation, laying the groundwork for deploying

the military to suppress broad social opposition.

The state's pretexts of “transnational crime” and “organized gangs” mask the systemic political decay and corruption entangled with mafia interests. The former Prosecutor of the Nation, once heralded as a defender of anti-corruption efforts, was suspended amid attacks from the far-right, which has also targeted prosecutor Domingo Pérez.

Trade union bureaucracies in Peru have played a decisive role in weakening organized working class resistance. Federations, unions and their pseudo-leftist allies refuse to call strikes or organize protests, limiting themselves to symbolic gestures or legalistic rhetoric. This bureaucratic impotence facilitates the government's class assault and social repression, leaving workers without a genuine political vehicle for their struggles.

More than ever, the Peruvian working class must build independent organizations and leadership, rejecting the dead-end of pseudo-leftism and blind reliance on the existing political apparatus. Rank-and-file committees are essential to take democratic control at the community and workplace level, addressing urgent social rights such as food, housing, healthcare and education from below. These organizations offer the only credible path to defend working people from the government's escalating attacks. These committees must be coordinated through the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC).

Protests alone, no matter how massive or spontaneous, risk being co-opted by reformists or traditional parties who promote the 2026 elections as a panacea, despite the threat that they might not even take place. The urgent task is to develop a socialist program that exposes the capitalist state's authoritarian turn and links democratic rights to social and economic demands.

The wave of protests sweeping Peru is part of a broader international insurgency characterized by worsening economic polarization and social unrest impelled by capitalism's global crisis. The continued political instability in Peru, exemplified by the removal of Castillo and Boluarte and the imposition of Jerí's government, reflects the ruling elite's desperation.

The true opposition to Peru's crisis is not located in Congress or the traditional parties, but in the streets and workplaces. Only a determined and politically conscious working class movement can transform the current chaos into a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.



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