



INFORMATION BULLETIN

Círculo de Reflexión Política Siglo XXI



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THINK • ANALYZE • PROPOSE

Analysis, reflection and political debate aimed at strengthening democracy and national development.

HONDURAS COULD BE THE FIRST MILITARY TARGET OF THE AMERICAS SHIELD

- ✓ Honduras militarily occupies Conejo Island since 1982, despite the International Court of Justice not ruling on this islet.
- ✓ Every internal crisis revives the issue to divert attention and manipulate with artificial nationalism.
- ✓ Honduran military and government officials involved in drug trafficking could be the first military target of the Americas Shield.
- ✓ El Salvador will not fall for provocations or contribute to unnecessary escalation.

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Nayib Bukele, Donald Trump and 12 other Latin American states signed the Americas Shield to jointly organize militarily to combat drug trafficking.



Honduras in a sea of death, insecurity and corruption: the Conejo Islet

The islet is used as a symbolic gesture while the country suffers murders, massacres, corruption and gang control.

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Territorial nationalism as a distraction from Honduras' real problems

Governments recur to the old trick of nationalism to hide violence, drug trafficking and lack of governance.

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Nayib Bukele, Donald Trump and 12 other states are committed

To the Americas Shield to organize militarily together to combat drug trafficking.

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Asfura seeks to leave a clear path for drug trafficking...

The symbolic act on Conejo Island favors drug shipments, but they will be captured, even if transported by the military.

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Honduras' real challenges are in its own population

Not in an uninhabited islet, but in the needs of its people, neglected for too long by governments that use territorial nationalism as a diversion.

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“ Politics must be measured, above all, by its ability to improve people's lives. El Salvador moves forward because governing is to serve, not to ideologize. ”



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NEWSLETTER

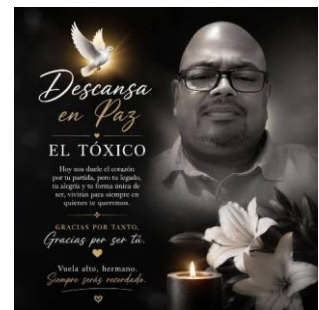
21st Century Political Reflection Circle

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Analysis, reflection and political debate aimed at strengthening democracy and national development.

The 21st Century Political Reflection Circle mourns the passing of Gilberto Martínez. We extend our deepest condolences to his family and friends. May he rest in peace. Dear Toxic Creature, we will continue fighting to defend your emperor's model.



Honduras Could Be the First Military Target of the Shield of the Americas





Every so often, when Honduras goes through political, economic, or security difficulties, an old topic returns to occupy headlines: sovereignty over Conejo Island (*Isla Conejo*). More than a simple territorial dispute, this microscopic islet of barely half a square kilometer in the Gulf of Fonseca becomes, in a recurring manner, a resource to awaken an artificial nationalism and divert attention from the true internal problems of that nation.

It is not the first time that something similar has occurred; in 1969, in the midst of a profound agrarian and social crisis, the military government of Oswaldo López Arellano promoted populist measures to Hondurans of granting them lands that had been bought and cultivated by Salvadorans who had established themselves in the neighboring country as a result of the first exodus of compatriots in the 20th Century, fleeing the massacres of dictator Maximiliano Hernández Martínez in 1932, which affected thousands of Salvadorans.

Thousands were stripped of the lands they cultivated, suffered aggressions, and had to return to El Salvador abandoning the fruit of decades of work. That tragedy culminated in the Hundred Hours' War, subsequently known in a simplistic and even ridiculous manner as the "Football War," a denomination popularized internationally by the Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński, which ended up reducing a complex human, social, and political drama to a simple sports rivalry. It is convenient to remember that in 1982, while El Salvador was facing the armed conflict fueled by the ideological confrontation of the Cold War and external support for the insurgency, the military of that era—in particular Sigifredo Ochoa Pérez, colonel, former deputy of ARENA, and former ambassador of El Salvador to Honduras—during the armed conflict, he handed over the island to the Hondurans for the purpose of having them help prevent in the Gulf of Fonseca the trafficking of weapons toward the FMLN coming from Nicaragua. The conflict ended; the military did not return the island and took ownership of it.

Honduras militarily occupied Conejo Island, a presence it maintains to this day. Years later, the International Court of Justice resolved the major part of the border dispute between both countries, but did not issue an express ruling on that islet, leaving the controversy open.

Since then, the topic resurfaces periodically; every demonstration of force or symbolic act around Conejo Island usually coincides with moments of internal difficulties in Honduras, converting that unproductive territory into a convenient instrument of pseudo-nationalist manipulation. Nasry Asfura reached the point of doing a symbolic act before El Salvador to leave the way clear for drug trafficking vessels, and they are very mistaken because they will be captured, even if the military themselves transport it.



Nayib Bukele, Donald Trump, and 12 more Latin American States committed with the signing of the Shield of the Americas to organize themselves militarily in a joint manner to combat drug trafficking. The Honduran military and government officials involved with drug trafficking could be the first military target of the Shield of the Americas.

Today the same script seems to repeat itself. While Honduras faces serious challenges in matters of security, criminal violence, drug trafficking, and governability, some of its leaders intend to once again place Conejo Island at the center of public debate. Faced with this, President Nayib Bukele has left clear that El Salvador will not fall for provocations nor contribute to an unnecessary escalation.

In the end, the true challenges of Honduras are not found on an uninhabited islet, but rather in the needs of its own population, for too long relegated by governments that, instead of solving national problems, seem to prefer resorting to the old wildcard of territorial nationalism.



Honduras in a Sea of Death, Insecurity, and Corruption: The Conejo Rock



In the dramatic Honduran reality, marked by murders, massacres, endemic corruption, and the territorial control of gangs, the recent reaffirmation of sovereignty over Conejo Rock (*Peñón de Conejo*)—with the raising of the flag and military presence—acquires a meaning that transcends the merely geopolitical. This uninhabited islet, turned into a symbol of national pride, appears as a gesture of force in the midst of a State weakened by violence and citizen distrust.

Honduras, for decades, has been the stage of a vicious cycle: organized crime that dominates entire neighborhoods, institutions corroded by corruption, and a citizenry trapped between fear and resignation.



In that context, the defense of a rocky crag seems more like an act of symbolic reaffirmation than a policy capable of transforming daily life. The fundamental question is inevitable: what does it mean to wave a flag on an islet when the streets of the country continue to be territories of death?

The comparison with El Salvador turns out to be inevitable. Before the arrival of President Nayib Bukele, the situation was similar: daily homicides, generalized extortions, collapsed hospitals, and an absent State. However, the application of the so-called “Bukele Model”—based on security, anti-corruption, and tangible results—transformed that reality. Today, El Salvador exhibits historic figures of violence reduction, modern hospitals, expanding road infrastructure, and a citizenry that perceives that the State functions. Political legitimacy was constructed not on ideological speeches, but on the concrete experience of safe streets and dignified public services.

The contrast is brutal: while in El Salvador security enables investment, tourism, and confidence, in Honduras insecurity paralyzes the economy and perpetuates corruption. While in San Salvador hospitals and highways are inaugurated, in Tegucigalpa denunciations of looting and clientelism multiply. While one State demonstrates that “the money is enough when nobody steals,” another remains trapped in the bleeding of diverted resources and unfinished projects.

Conejo Rock, then, becomes a metaphor for Honduran dissonance: a symbol of sovereignty at sea, but without real sovereignty on dry land. The true defense of the homeland is not measured in flags raised over uninhabited rocks, but rather in the capacity of the State to protect life, guarantee security, and manage public resources with honesty.

The Salvadoran lesson is clear: the deepest sovereignty is not exercised over an islet, but over the lives of citizens. In a sea of death and insecurity, the flag that really matters is the one that waves in every safe school, in every equipped hospital, and in every street free of gangs. To solve or not to solve, that is the Honduran dilemma.



Nasry Asfura creates an Imaginary War with El Salvador as a Smoke Screen to Hide His Incompetence

We have realized through different media the provocation speeches that this gentleman makes against the Salvadoran government, involving other characters as well who, given their ignorance, confuse which is the capital of their country. Things being as they are, the Salvadoran President stated his position regarding some allegations of a supposed invasion by the Salvadoran Armed Forces into the insular territory of Honduras, a product, among other things, of the 100 Hours' War where the Salvadoran Armed Forces of the era dealt very quickly with the aging Honduran army.

The reality that El Salvador is living is that as a country we are not here to accompany this type of provocations which have their root in the almost zero capacity that Mr. Asfura has, and it is where the Salvadoran president gives a masterclass on how to resolve the serious problems facing the population, which is equivalent to saying that El Salvador has nothing against the Honduran people; they are our brothers, we share history, culture, language, and almost the same problems.

El Salvador is a brother who has accompanied Hondurans at various moments with vaccines and medical supplies during the pandemic, with school packages for students with dual nationality in the former border pockets area (*ex bolsones*), this to mention specific cases; lately, they are even attended to at the new Rosales Hospital, where mayors of municipalities adjacent to the border area come with large numbers of Hondurans to receive medical care, and here they are attended to with quality and warmth, with humanism, and we know that bothers Asfura. Given his incapacity to govern, he resorts to exacerbating a false nationalism that only they believe; that is to say, they invent an imaginary war to try to boost his sagging image before the population political jealousy





Nayib Bukele Listens to the Population



Something that has characterized the two terms of President Nayib Bukele is his capacity and his fierce discipline for listening to the concerns, expectations, problems, and desires of the general population. While surveys are an ideal instrument to know citizen opinion at a precise moment (the ones that favor the president enormously), there are other techniques that he, without adhering to old formalisms, has used in silence, and one of these is: listening to what people converse about in public spaces. Even if it is not in person, Nayib Bukele listens to what people talk about in public places, within which we can include social networks. There is a fact that the president is absolutely clear about: when people know they are heard, they cease to be invisible.

The thing is, conversations in public spaces are elementary for the re-adaptation of political action, because by engaging in them in total freedom, they foster the union of large social groups, enhance the recognition of the interests of others, express what they truly think or expect, and, furthermore, are the foundation for the construction of democracy in its daily version—the one that is an ideal *habitus* of citizen participation.

Conversations in plazas, parks, public transport, or the streets (spaces that people feel belong to them) are the reflection of the interests, concerns, and dreams of the people, and the summation of all that emits an unappealable verdict: the



president's popularity is the result of his commitment to the population, which has as its payout: the almost unanimous trust of the citizens.

El Salvador, a country that has become the planetary social laboratory in which the concepts of political leadership, social utopia, public services, and popularity are being re-adapted. In the case of political popularity—insofar as citizen acceptance of governance—it is the direct reflection of the social motivation that stems from the conjunction between what is expected and what is received.

The political function that harmonizes popular expectations with the public works carried out—after knowing the content of the people's conversations in public spaces—potentiates the best human feelings, the principal one among them being: the shared hope that is vindicated by the leader of the historical process of reinventing the country, on the basis of a new socio-cultural identity as the support of the democratic political culture that constructs its own symbols, milestones, and narratives. The content of the new narratives is provided by public opinion (via surveys) and the non-intrusive monitoring of concerns and dreams (via listening to people conversing in public spaces).

Nayib Bukele, a president who listens to his citizens and who, for that reason, became the most listened-to president on the planet, without the need for our country to be a world power.



Coherence in the Work of Public Affairs



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Master J. Pierpoint Morgan expressed: “A man generally has two reasons for doing something. One that sounds good, and the real one.” This maxim is completely applicable to political work; since, when one is a public servant, one must busy oneself with the honesty of wanting the best for the Nation Project, and with that, for the greatest number of people. That is to say, incoherence must not exist between both categories.

In El Salvador, for decades, two ways of handling public affairs were visualized; one out of particular interests and the other facing the Salvadoran population. Certainly, that wore down traditional parties, leading them to the decline of their political force, to such an extent of turning into a small group without pull or political weight. For that reason, in personal life as in that of a country, integrity and honesty in the way of doing things must always be the key.

Hence, the population has observed with close attention in the new way of doing politics an efficacy without bureaucracy, which has created a bond between its governors and the governed, to such a point that a phenomenon within political sciences and doctrines has occurred—not seen before in the region—the maintenance and increase of acceptance for the president and his officials, setting a precedent in the political history of the country.



— SIGLO XXI —

Well then, among so many errors committed in the country's political past regarding the parties that held public affairs in their hands, there is that incapacity for coherence, for integrity in the work carried out in pursuit of the population; they ended up satisfying their desires for power and economy more, that they forgot the mandate given by the people, and the population made it known to them at its opportune moment, despising them with force.

In such a manner, the work performed through political power for a population of a given territory must be, above all, decorous and dignified, thereby allowing levels of improvement in the quality of life to be reached, and that very thing leads to greater plummets of legitimate acceptance toward its governors. Ethics cannot and should not be obviated in all of this, as it is the horizon to always follow in public grace.

Salvadorans Will Ratify the Continuity of the Country's Transformation Process



In El Salvador, the upcoming elections will mark one of the most decisive inflection points in the modern history of the Republic. The panorama is forceful and the citizen atmosphere is undeniable: surveys have never reflected such a categorical consensus, and optimism toward tomorrow reaches levels never before seen in the national territory. Salvadorans advance determined to ratify the continuity of the transformation process initiated in 2019, a route that has



positioned the nation on the world stage like never before, projecting abroad an image characterized by positive achievements and profound structural changes.

This upcoming election does not simply represent just another date on the democratic calendar; it will signify the beginning of consolidation and one of the firmest steps to ensure that the transformation of our society is irreversible. In this new scenario, the political contest changes scale: the main battle is no longer against the opposition nor against traditional detractor sectors, whose electoral irrelevance is evident. The true struggle will be against ourselves, with the objective of guaranteeing with maximum responsibility the mandate of the people and leading the country toward that destination of development that we all yearn to reach.

The path ahead demands a sustained effort. Once the homicidal violence that for decades plagued our communities has been neutralized, the most complex challenge we face is not limited to the economic sphere; the fundamental challenge lies in the mindset of the citizens themselves. It is in this terrain —the battle of all battles— where it will be tested whether we truly possess the collective maturity to never return to that past of blood and insecurity that we suffered, and whether we are ready to evolve toward the society we have desired so much: a prosperous, developed, cultured, and educated nation.

Reaching this goal requires the ethical commitment and conscious action of every Salvadoran. The construction of a better country does not depend solely on government policies, but on the willingness of the entire citizenry to raise their standards of coexistence, work, and civic responsibility. Let us all help to consolidate this irreversible process of transformation for the present and the future of our beloved El Salvador. May determination and joint effort guide the steps of our homeland toward this new era.

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