



FEMINIST WOMEN: POWERLESSNESS, PAIN, RAGE, ANXIETY, SADNESS AND HOPE WE LEARN FROM CONFLICT

Feminist women organized in the Honduran Women's Collective (CODEMUH) feel it is important to expose, both nationally and internationally, the situation that women maquila workers are experiencing in this country.

Workers are being forced to participate in so-called "Marches for Peace" [*pro-coup demonstrations*]. In some companies, workers are selected from high-producing work-groups, groups that achieve their quotas. Workers are not asked whether they want to participate or not, and in at least one case, the administrators of a cooperative are being forced to participate. Employers are also insulting the anti-coup demonstrators, saying they are trouble-makers who want to harm participants in the "Marches for Peace."

This is a perverse statement on the part of the manufacturing sector, since the demonstrations of resistance from the Honduran people include workers' family member and friends. The manufacturers' cynical intention is to be the protagonists of a conflict which will maintain the divisions between the impoverished people of Honduras. This in turn will increase violence between people, and increase the nearly-absolute power of the Honduran State.

We also want to clarify that male and female maquila workers who have been forced to participate in the "Marches for Peace" have not received a penny for their participation. In fact, there are companies that are forcing workers to make up the day on the Saturday after the march, and promising to pay them overtime on that day. That overtime pay never appears – so not only are these workers obliged to participate in marches for the bourgeoisie, but they have to work an extra day.

The workers living through this, just to keep their jobs, feel powerless and sad. They do not agree with these activities organized by the employers. We call on maquila workers to stop accepting when they are told they are "maquileras" but to call themselves "workers". We have to reclaim our class identity. As well, we call on maquila workers to resist being taken to the "Marches for Peace". Workers cannot be fired for refusing to participate. This is an abuse by manufacturers – you have not been hired to fight in the streets for their interests, but to work in their factories. Women are human beings, not machinery, and employers are using their patriarchal capitalist power to oppress the workers. Jobs yes, but with dignity!

Women want peace, but an inclusive peace where impoverished people enjoy the full respect of their rights at home, at work and in the street - without coup d'états, without unexpected electricity cuts, without censorship of television and radio channels sending out information to the people, without curfews, without the suspension of our fundamental human rights in the absence of any authority.

This conflict has really given us the opportunity to see the true colours of our leaders. Who votes on Election Day? Who elects our leaders? Isn't it enlightening to see their true colours and to remember the power we have?

WE ARE FOR TENDERNESS, BEAUTY, HOPE AND SISTERHOOD BETWEEN HUMAN BEINGS.

NO MORE VIOLENCE AGAINST THE WOMEN AND MEN OF THE HONDURAN PEOPLE

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