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This deal comes even as a former Honduran congressman Juan Antonio Hernández goes on trial next week in Manhattan, charged with conspiring to import cocaine into the United States.

His older brother, President of Honduras, **Juan Orlando Hernández**, with his younger brother, "**Tony**" and other politicians and law enforcement officers were all part of a "**broader criminal plan**" to use drug trafficking "**to help assert power and control in Honduras,**" the prosecutors wrote in an August 2nd filing in Federal District Court.

They said that the president used drug money to help win elections in 2013 and 2017, and that he offered protection to drug traffickers who supported him. They said President Hernández also considered eliminating a Honduran law that allowed for the extradition of traffickers - a law that he had himself pushed through Congress when he led that body - because he feared the United States would try to extradite his brother, the court filing shows.

President Hernández has not been charged in the case, and prosecutors do not use his name in court papers, labeling him only as Co-Conspirator No. 4. But they leave no doubt about his identity: "**CC-4 was elected President of Honduras in late 2013,**" the prosecutors wrote.

Prosecutors, in their recent filing, said President Hernández, his brother and other co-conspirators "**relied on drug proceeds to fund National Party campaigns and other political operations, to control large swaths of the Honduran government, to bribe officials who helped ensure safe passage for their cocaine, and with an effort to protect themselves from law enforcement scrutiny in Honduras and elsewhere.**"

President Hernández, like his predecessor, Porfirio Lobo, "was elected president based at least in part on the proceeds of drug trafficking," the prosecutors wrote. Mr. Lobo has not been charged.

It is not known if the Trump administration took this prosecution into account when Department of Homeland Security Secretary McAleenan called **Hernández** a great partner, praising his actions, in spite of these serious allegations.

Based on an **National Public Radio** interview with **Clara Long**

Senior Researcher with Human Rights Watch
with Mary Louise Kelly
& **nytimes.com**



SAUDI'S Continued from Front Page

When the Saudi gaze turned to Gaza in April, the first arrests of Hamas supporters took place, including the detention of Dr Mohammed al-Khodary, who had been responsible for bilateral relations for over 20 years. This was followed by a clear shift in Saudi rhetoric on social and traditional media. In **May**, Saudi newspaper Mecca published a list of 40 Islamic figures around the world who it characterized as terrorists influenced by **Muslim Brotherhood** ideas. Then, during the Israeli offensive against Gaza in the same month, **Saudi activists and bloggers wrote solidarity tweets with Israel and attacked Hamas, accusing it of working for Iran and Turkey and demanding that Israel counter what they called the "terrorism" of "murderous" Hamas.** The comments were widely welcomed by Israel.

Apart from trying to satisfy the American desire to put pressure on the movement and dry up its sources of funding, **the Saudi campaign against Hamas is also seeking to curb its rapprochement with Iran. Hamas's decision to go public about the Saudi campaign against its members makes it clear that it refuses to pursue better relations with Saudi Arabia by cutting off relations with Iran. In the past, it has maintained a balanced relationship with both countries and it wants this to continue.**

Hamas's resistance to Saudi pressure could push them to intensify its campaign against the group. The demonization of Hamas by Saudi media will likely continue, and so will efforts to **cut its funding** channels. The kingdom might also exert political and economic pressure on other Arab countries to tighten the screws on Hamas and it might lobby for the Arab League to designate it as a terrorist organization, as it did with Hezbollah in 2016.

For now, **Hamas seems eager not to sever its relationship with Saudi Arabia completely, despite the current tensions.** It will try to weather to storm in the hope that the political situation in the kingdom and in the region would change and lead to an eventual thaw in relations. In the context of increasing Arab alignment with the US and Saudi positions, **this crisis is seen by Palestinians as yet another indication that they have been largely abandoned by Arab governments to the mercy of their occupier and its Western supporters.** The Palestinian people, as usual, will be the ones who pay, as living conditions and economic disaster **continue to worsen** in the Gaza Strip.

Dr Adnan Abu Amer Head of the Political Science Department at the University of the Ummah in Gaza.

Yucca Mountain: Not A Thing...

A \$49 billion spending bill for the Department of Energy was unanimously approved by a Senate committee last month without money to revive the licensing process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository in Nevada.

The Senate followed the House in dismissing the Trump administration's request for \$130 million to restart licensing on the nuclear repository.

Included in the bill is a pilot program for consolidated nuclear waste storage, and some funding to allow the Energy Department to store nuclear waste at private facilities licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. But the bill contained no funding sought by the Trump administration to jumpstart the licensing process that must be completed in order to begin construction on Yucca Mountain, located 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

Licensing began during the George W. Bush administration, but was stopped by the Obama administration, which pulled funding and halted ongoing hearings to determine if the Nevada site was safe for storing 77,000 metric tons of radioactive waste from power plants.

Earlier this year, the House Appropriations Committee voted narrowly to block money for licensing on Yucca Mountain. The loss showed the strength of a young Nevada congressional delegation and their support from House leaders.

Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Nev., the only Nevada lawmaker on the panel, voted against Yucca Mountain spending, while Democratic Reps. Dina Titus, Steven Horsford and Susie Lee lobbied colleagues on the panel to oppose the spending measure.

Likewise, Nevada's two Democratic senators, both in their first term, have lobbied Feinstein, the ranking

Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy, and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., against reviving the waste project in Nevada.

"The Senate committee advanced their spending bill without any Yucca funding. Even those who desperately want to revitalize the dangerous Yucca Mountain project are beginning to acknowledge the strength of our efforts to block it," said Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev., who has fought the project during her tenure in the U.S. House and state legislature.

Yucca Mountain was designated by Congress in 1987 as the nation's sole site for nuclear waste storage from power plants and Navy vessels.

The failure to open Yucca Mountain has left radioactive waste temporarily stored at **121 sites in 39 states with a cost to the government of \$2 million per day.**

Lawmakers where private power plants that produce nuclear waste are frustrated with the federal government's failure to take control of the waste and safely store it, as was promised in the 1987 legislation that designated Yucca Mountain as the national repository.

But local opposition in Nevada has increased, with business leaders, environmentalists, tribal leaders, recent governors, the congressional delegation and the state legislature joining forces.

This week, the Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, was holding its annual lobbying trip in Washington, where in addition to transportation funding, business leaders were urging lawmakers to oppose Yucca Mountain development as a nuclear waste repository.

"We couldn't be happier," said Mary Beth Sewald, the chief executive officer of the Las Vegas chamber. "We have been against it since Day 1."

"The potential dangers outweigh the potential benefits," Sewald said.

Gary Martin
reviewjournal.com

Brand New Ancients

In the old days,
the myths were the stories we used to explain ourselves

but how can we explain
the way we hate ourselves?

The things we've made ourselves into,
the way we break ourselves in two,
the way we overcomplicate ourselves?

But we are still mythical.
We are still permanently trapped
somewhere between the heroic and the pitiful.

We are still Godly,
that's what's made us so monstrous.
It just feels like we've forgotten
that we're much more
than the sum of the things that belong to us.

Every single person has a purpose in them burning.
Look again.
Allow yourself to see them.

Millions of characters
Each with their own epic narratives
Singing, 'it's hard to be an angel
Until you've been a demon'.

We are perfect because of our imperfections,
We must stay hopeful,
We must be patient;

When they excavate the modern day
They'll find us,
The Brand New Ancients.

All that we have here
Is all that we've always had.

We have jealousy,
tenderness,
curses and gifts.

But the plight of a people who have forgotten their myths
and imagine that somehow
now is all that there is –
is a sorry plight

all isolation and worry
but the life in your veins
it is Godly, heroic.
You were born for greatness.
Believe it,
know it –
take it from the tears of the poets.

there's always been heroes,
there's always been villains,
the stakes may have changed
but really there's no difference.

there's always been greed
and heartbreak and ambition.
jealousy, love,
trespass and contrition,

we're the same beings that began,
still living,
in all of our fury and foulness and friction.
Everyday odysseys.
Dreams vs decisions.
The stories are there if you listen.

The stories are here.

The stories are you
and your fear and your hope is as old
as the language of smoke,
the language of blood,
the language of languishing love,

the Gods are all here.
Because the Gods are in us.

Kate Tempest

