

Chavez calls Secessionist State Center of CIA Activity

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Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has echoed a charge he has made for a number of years — that Venezuela's oil-rich Zulia state is a center of CIA activity in the nation designed to overthrow Chavez's government.

According to Venezuelan TV (VTV), Chavez leveled the charge at a campaign appearance last week for United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) Zulia gubernatorial candidate Gian Carlo Di Martino and other PSUV candidates in Lagunillas in Zulia state. The PSUV is Chavez's political party. Zulia's outgoing governor, Manuel Rosales, has been connected to CIA-sponsored secessionist activities in Zulia and attempts to overthrow Chavez. State gubernatorial and legislative and mayoral elections are scheduled throughout Venezuela on November 23.

On March 25, 2008, WMR reported: "In Venezuela, two successive U.S. ambassadors, Charles Shapiro and William Brownfield, poked a stick in President Hugo Chavez's eye by continuously involving themselves in Venezuela's domestic affairs. Brownfield was particularly involved in stirring up anti-Chavez separatist sentiment in oil-rich Zulia state . . . Beginning in 2001, U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela Shapiro hosted the 2002 anti-Chavez coup activities from the U.S. embassy in Caracas.

As reported by Project Censored in 2002, "The April 11, 2002, military coup in Venezuela was supported by the United States government. As early as last June, American military attaches had been in touch with members of the Venezuelan military to examine the possibility of a coup. During the coup, U.S. military were stationed at the Colombia-Venezuela border to provide support, and to evacuate U.S. citizens if there were problems. According to intelligence analyst, Wayne Madsen, the CIA actively organized the coup. 'The CIA provided Special Operations Group personnel, headed by a lieutenant colonel on loan from the U.S. Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to help organize the coup against Chavez,' he said."

Earlier this year Chavez expelled U.S. ambassador to Caracas Patrick Duddy and said, "Yankees, go to hell," adding that the United States was "full of shit."

Accusing Zulia governor Rosales of being in the pocket of the United States, Chavez told the PSUV rally: "You are out of here, you Mafioso (Manuel) Rosales. You are out of here, you corrupt thief Rosales. We are going to kick you out of here and you are going to go to jail, you amoral thief, mafioso!"

Chavez continued by accusing Rosales and the Zulia gubernatorial candidate of his party,

Pablo Perez, of being in league with Colombian paramilitaries, “they are looking for military officers to stage a coup. They are looking for paramilitaries in Colombia to infiltrate them here in Zulia and in Caracas as well, to try to destabilize Venezuela on 23 November. I want to warn the pseudo-Yankees: If they try to take us down the path of violence, we will respond with all the force of the people!”

Chavez thundered, “I ask God to illuminate the minds of the people of Zulia . . . free them of manipulation . . . never again can a mafioso rule in Zulia.” He said “Carlos Andres Perez [former President of Venezuela] is the political father of Manuel Rosales. My political father is Fidel Castro.”

Noting that he had never visited the Zulia governor’s office, Chavez said “Why should I be going to the Zulia governor’s office, if it is at the heart of plans to kill me? It is the center of operations for the CIA and anti-national forces. Di Martino, invite[d] me to have a coffee in the Zulia governor’s office.” Chavez summed up his remarks by stating: “the violence of paramilitaries, kidnapping, and mafias [are] supported by the Zulia governor’s office itself. That is the truth: the Zulia police are undermined; the Zulia Police undermined by drug traffickers, criminals, kidnapers. We have to clean Zulia of so many bad apples.”

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