

# What the Media Are Hiding About Venezuela's Elections. Who is Edmundo Gonzalez?

By [Marc Vandepitte](#)

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Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

*During the recent presidential elections in Venezuela we saw an outstanding example of electoral warfare, in which the media played a major role. In this article, we list some striking elements the mainstream media covered up.*

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*If you believe the media, this election was between good and evil. The incumbent president Nicolas Maduro was portrayed as a devil incarnate, while the main rival candidate Edmundo Gonzalez was characterized as a good grandpa and Maria Corina Machado, the strong woman behind him, as a pop star.*

*The truth is a little more sinister. Between 1981 and 1983, González was the number two at the [Venezuelan embassy in El Salvador](#). He reported directly to Ambassador Leopoldo Castillo, who was educated at the infamous School of the Americas.[1]*

González was involved in Operation Condor, a CIA operation linked to the [assassination of religious leaders and other civilians](#) in El Salvador. [Documents](#) released by the CIA in 2009 show that he was recruited by the intelligence agency to form paramilitary groups and death squads, from his position as an official at the Venezuelan embassy in San Salvador.

From that embassy, these death squads were deployed against religious and social leaders. During the years that Castillo and González were in charge of the embassy in El Salvador, an estimated 13,194 civilians were murdered by death squads supported and guided by the US.

González was still active as [an adviser](#) to the CIA when six Jesuit priests and two university officials were murdered by death squads on November 16, 1989.

## Hip Pop Star

González is the puppet of Maria Corina Machado, the de facto figurehead and strong woman of the far-right opposition. The mainstream media portray Machado as a [trendy and popular pop star](#) who was denied the opportunity of running in the elections by the left-wing government.

However, the media do not explain [why she was not allowed](#) to participate in the elections. Like González, she signed a declaration in 2002 that approved the coup against the democratically elected president Hugo Chávez. Unlike other opposition candidates, Machado has openly received money from the NED, a CIA front organization.

She has also consistently defended the economic blockade against Venezuela and repeatedly called for [military intervention](#) against her home country.

In 2014, [Machado led a campaign](#) of violent street protests and road blockades (*guarimbas*) targeting infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, universities and the metro, killing 43 civilians and members of the security services.

In recent years, Machado has been partly responsible for the corruption scheme in which self-proclaimed interim president Juan Guáido participated, which led to the divestment of state-owned companies abroad worth no less than 34 billion dollars.

No European country would tolerate this and someone with a track record like that would very probably be behind bars in western countries.



George W. Bush welcoming Machado to the Oval Office on 31 May 2005. (From the Public Domain)

Another thing the media conspicuously conceal is that Machado was personally received by President Bush Jr. at the White House in 2005, and that two days after the recent election, the far-right opposition [met with a top Biden adviser](#) to map out the strategy for the near future. Nor does the media mention that Machado called on Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in 2018 for [military intervention](#) in Venezuela.

These are reports that expose Machado's true nature and do not fit the mainstream media's framing. And so, they are omitted.

## Nice People

A [striking contrast](#): the loudest voices from abroad in defense of democracy in Venezuela advocated coups elsewhere in the past or are of a questionable character. Annoying, and that is why they are not referred to in the mainstream media. A few examples.

One of the most active defenders of Machado and Co is Elon Musk, the personification of the

financial and technological aristocracy that dominates the world. He is the man who actively supports Donald Trump's presidential campaign and who [fanned the flames](#) of the far-right anti-immigrant riots in the UK.

Through X, which he owns, Musk accused the Maduro government of "major electoral fraud." Musk himself did so by using fake news.[2] It was Musk who supported the [far-right coup](#) against Bolivia's democratically elected president, Evo Morales, in 2019. He later wrote through X: "We will coup whoever we want! Deal with it."

It is telling that this coup instigator wants to "save democracy" in Venezuela.

Musk was in good company. Another coup lover who felt the need to denounce the "[mega-election fraud](#)" was none other than Pedro Carmona. That name may not ring a bell, but it was Carmona who was appointed interim president in Venezuela by the military after the 2002 coup.

The mainstream media reported that Mireya Moscoso, former president of Panama, called for Edmundo González Urrutia to be [recognized as the elected president](#) of Venezuela. What the media failed to mention is that at the end of her term she [pardoned](#) Luis Posada Carriles, the Osama Bin Laden of Latin America. Carriles was responsible for, among other things, shooting down a [Cuban passenger plane](#).

A little investigative journalism reveals that none of what took place before, during and after the elections was coincidental or happening out of the blue. The maneuvers of the far-right opposition followed a carefully [drafted script from the US](#), the most important parts of which were even [published](#) online in advance. The script was written by a US expert in regime change and disinformation.

This script indicates, among other things, that the economic sanctions must be used in a skillful way. That the opposition must be united under the impetus of the US. That an attempt must be made to infiltrate the national electoral council. That the opposition itself must come up with results before the electoral council announces the official result. That the pressure on Venezuela is best done by countries in the region instead of the US. The script further assumes, or suggests, that there will (or should) be riots and that in that case the army should be put under pressure.

None of that is reflected in the mainstream media. According to their reporting, the elections took place without foreign interference and the actions and activities of the opposition before and after July 28 were spontaneous.

They 'forget' to mention that the US has been [trying to manipulate](#) electoral processes in 'unruly' countries for decades, often successfully, through covert CIA organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). It is apparently not necessary to mention that.

## Polls

In the run-up to the elections, polls by Datanálisis, Delphos, Consultores 21 and ORC Consultores gave the far-right opposition candidate a lead over Maduro of 20 to 30 percentage points. These polls were eagerly taken up by the mainstream media. These reports had [already convinced](#) Venezuelans and citizens in other countries that Maduro

could not win unless he committed fraud.

What the media failed to mention is that these polling agencies are often nothing more than camouflaged [ideological war machines](#) and that [links to the CIA](#) or its front organizations are never far away. The same media failed to mention that polls from other agencies such as Hinterlaces, Paramétrica and Ámbito gave Maduro an advantage over the rival candidate González.

The same goes for the exit polls. The [Edison Research](#) poll was eagerly mentioned. It foretold opposition candidate González 65 percent and Maduro 31 percent of the vote. The media failed to mention that this agency is [linked to the CIA](#) and they were silent about the exit polls of the prestigious [Hinterlaces](#) agency, which at noon had Maduro at 54.6 percent and González at 42.8 percent (very close to the official result).

☐ Elecciones Presidenciales 28 de Julio ☐☐

HINTERLACES  
EXIT POLL / 12:00 mediodía

☐ Participación proyectada: 61,5%

☐ Nicolás Maduro: 54,57%  
☐ Edmundo González: 42,82%  
○ Otros: 2,61% [pic.twitter.com/PEtFijomsD](https://pic.twitter.com/PEtFijomsD)

— Hinterlaces (@Hinterlaces) [July 28, 2024](#)

## Destabilization Attempts

Another ‘forgotten’ aspect of the recent elections is the destabilization attempts from abroad. Two days before the elections, an [armed commando](#) attempted to sabotage a large power station. The attack was thwarted, but if it had succeeded, seven provinces in the west of the country would have been without electricity for days. As a result, electronic voting would not have been possible in those provinces.

In addition, on election day there was a [massive cyberattack](#) from [Colombia and the US](#) against government institutions, including the National Electoral Council. This attack delayed the counting of votes for hours and gave the opposition the opportunity to come up with their own results before the official results were available.

In a ‘friendly’ country, such sabotage of an electoral procedure would be front-page news. In a country like Venezuela, they are not even mentioned.

## ‘Peaceful’ Protest

The day after the elections, civil protests (*cacerolas*) took place in many cities in Venezuela. These protests were heavily covered by the mainstream media, which kept ‘forgetting’ to mention that the protests were quickly overshadowed by a wave of violence, which was apparently [well-organized](#) and, as we saw above, were part of a pre-established script.

[Across the country](#), 12 universities, 28 schools, 37 health centers, 11 metro stations, 10

Maduro party secretariats, two city halls, a ministry, and 10 National Electoral Council buildings were attacked. 38 buses were set on fire and 27 monuments and statues were destroyed, as well as a sewage treatment plant. Two soldiers were killed and 141 soldiers and police officers were wounded in the attacks.

Not a word about all this in the mainstream media. Anyone who knows a little bit about recent Venezuelan history knows that this was essentially a repeat of the violent *guarimbas* of 2014 and 2017, with the intention of causing a general uprising. That obvious observation apparently escaped the media completely. And that brings us to the next point.

## Context and History

Western media generally ignore context or history. The dominant analyses in the mainstream media reduce the recent elections in Venezuela to a battle between the incumbent Maduro government and the opposition. They fail to mention that Venezuela has been in Washington's line of fire for 25 years.

They are silent about the fact that the US has pulled out all the stops to sabotage this leftist project. This includes two coups, an assassination attempt on the president, murderous street blockades, a lockout of the oil bosses, diplomatic isolation and the recognition of an unelected president. All examples of hybrid warfare.

The media also 'forget' to mention that all countries in the region taking a leftist course over the past twenty years have faced attempts at destabilization and regime change, ranging from military coups, lawfare, institutional coups to attempted color revolutions.

What the media also ignore is that the US has been trying to strangle Venezuela economically for years. According to the [Washington Post](#), the amount of more than 900 sanctions against the country has contributed to an economic contraction three times larger than the contraction caused by the Great Depression in the United States.

With these sanctions, Washington is trying to exhaust the population and thereby blackmail the citizens electorally. It is hoped that Venezuelans will turn away from the current government expecting that the US will stop its economic strangulation if Maduro is no longer president.

In other words, Venezuela is not a 'normal' country, it is a country at war, without bombs falling. In such a context, it is particularly difficult to hold elections in a sovereign manner. If you leave out that war context, you distort the true nature of the whole event and arrive at simplistic conclusions

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The mainstream media's coverage of the presidential election was biased and anything but subtle. Even before the election, the Western mainstream media and Venezuelan commercial media had unconditionally sided with the far-right opposition. After the election, this was no different, of course.

If you zoom out a little, you will see that these presidential elections are about the *clash* between, on the one hand, a left-wing social project that, through trial and error, strives for better living conditions for the lower classes of the population, and, on the other hand, the Venezuelan oligarchy and upper-class, represented by the far right and supported and

coached by the US and far-right and reactionary forces in the region.

The reporting on the recent election shows which side our mainstream media is on. When you look at who owns this media, this should come as no surprise.

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#### Notes

[1] The School of the Americas was a US-run training school for Latin American military personnel. The school became notorious for training and educating torturers, dictators, and organizing massacres in the Western Hemisphere.

[2] For example, he sent around [a tweet](#) of a supposed selfie of CNE officials showing computer screens showing that the opposition had won. In reality, these were employees of Mercal Aragua, an institution that has nothing to do with the elections. He also sent around a photo of supposed theft of ballots, while it was actually theft of air conditioning units.

*Featured image is from Twitter*

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