

# U.S. Backed Opposition In Venezuela Attempts To Usher In Monsanto

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Global Research, August 15, 2016

[Natural Blaze](#) 13 August 2016

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#)

*As the U.S. empire exhausts itself on wars in the Middle East and provocations in Asia and Eastern Europe, the “democracy” and “free market reforms” that are a hallmark of the Anglo-American system are becoming more and more apparent to the rest of the world.*

One hallmark of Western imperialism has been the spread and even the mandate of Big Ag GMO seeds where the Anglo-American empire cannot spread itself by corruption, bribes and covert means, militarily conquered nations are often forced to abandon traditional agriculture in favor of “biotechnology” particularly products that belong to multinational corporations like Monsanto. As a result, those nations who have some concept of the Anglo-American game plan, have moved to claw back agricultural rights and practices while others have wisely banned GMOs from within their borders completely.

Those nations, of course, have found themselves under complete attack. While Syria is perhaps the most well-known victim in 2016, Russia, also painted as a villain by the U.S. media, has been increasingly resistant to “free market reforms” and the promotion of GMOs having banned the production, and importation of GMOs earlier this year.

Much less publicized, however, is Venezuela, a country that has long been a thorn in the side to a trans-continental empire that desires world hegemony. From Chavez to Maduro, Venezuela has refused to comply with the dictates of the United States, both in terms of foreign and domestic policy. As a result of Venezuela’s determination not to be controlled by the United States, the country has paid a heavy price. Economic attacks, sanctions, subversion and color revolutions – even attempted assassinations have plagued the country even while it is in the throes of a horrific financial collapse.

But Venezuela has remained firm and just last year passed what is referred to [as the Seed Law](#). A law that banned GMO seeds from being imported or produced in the country. Yet now, in August 2016, the future of the law itself is in question. This is because “opposition representatives” who are now a majority of seats in the Venezuelan Congress are looking to repeal it.

This has many in Venezuela concerned, since the [Seed Law was widely popular amongst citizens](#), farmers, activists and nationalists. Eisamar Ochoa, spokesperson for Venezuela Free of Transgenics, told *RT*, “the new majority in the National Assembly serves the interests of the trans-nationals and the big monopolies of the agribusiness sector, this is why they have expressed their intention to repeal the bill.”

If the Seed Bill is repealed, [lawmakers] would be handing out the seeds, which

represent a strategic good for food sovereignty, to the agribusiness sector like Monsanto.

Ochoa is exactly right when she claims that the opposition representatives are in the pockets of Big Ag.

Although Venezuela and the United States are held together by [joint business interests](#) involving petroleum exports and imports, this fact has done nothing to soften the tension between the two governments. Venezuela is, after all, the biggest supplier of petroleum to the United States. In turn, the United States is Venezuela's biggest customer.

Nevertheless, both countries have been at constant diplomatic war since 2010 due to Chavez' rejection of the nomination of Larry Palmer by the Obama administration and Washington's subsequent dismissal of the Venezuelan ambassador in response. In February, 2014, President Maduro [expelled three American diplomats](#). Maduro had expelled U.S. diplomats back in October, 2013 over what he described as a "US plot." The plot was clear enough, as the US consular staff that was subsequently expelled had previously met with opposition forces and labor leaders in the southern state of Bolivar as well as the opposition Governor of Amazonas. On February 25, 2014, the United States announced that it was [expelling Venezuelan diplomats in](#) response.

Furthermore, the imperialist US sanctions regarding [countries](#), banks, businesses, [and individuals](#) that do business with Iran were applied to the Venezuelan state oil company, Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), in May 2011 after the US State Department claimed that PDVSA delivered two cargo shipments of refined petroleum products worth approximately \$50 million to Iran between the months of December and March 2010-2011.

In addition, [as NewsMax reports](#), "The U.S. also imposed penalties on Venezuela's Military Industries Co. for violating the Iran, North Korea and Syria Nonproliferation Act by selling or buying sensitive equipment and technology related to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missile systems."

Even more so, Chavez' government, in 2002, was briefly overthrown as a result of [a coup largely supported by the United States](#). This foreign-backed coup attempt involved the mobilization of large numbers of "swarming adolescents" as well as [snipers who fired](#) on the marches, which was subsequently blamed on Chavez, thus fanning the flames of chaos and outrage. This is the same method seen in the attempted destabilizations in [Syria](#) and [Ukraine](#). (see [here](#) also)

Although Chavez was able to regain control of the presidency and the government within a mere 48 hours, such an affront to Venezuelan sovereignty and personal power is not likely to be forgotten by the Venezuelan government. In turn, the fact that the United States is ready and willing to back opposition leaders capable of storming the capitol and taking power is not likely to be forgotten by individuals seeking to do so.

This was precisely the attempt made by the United States and Anglo-American networks during the last Presidential election when Chavez was still alive and campaigning for another term against Western agent Henrique Capriles Radonski who openly stated his favoritism toward dismantling many of the social programs developed by Chavez.

Whatever one may have thought about Chavez or the Venezuelan government, it was clear

enough that the Radonski campaign was a tentacle of Western intelligence and NGO networks.

[As Lee Brown of Venezuela Analysis wrote at the time,](#)

However there are obvious concerns that this fits neatly with the objectives of those within the right-wing opposition in Venezuela who are planning for the non-recognition of the coming elections if, as expected, Hugo Chavez wins. With the polls showing strong leads for Hugo Chavez, a campaign is already underway by sections of the right-wing opposition coalition to present any electoral defeat as being down to Chavez-led [fraud](#). This has seen baseless attacks on the independent National Electoral Council (CNE,) which has overseen all of Venezuelans' elections described as free and fair by a range of international observers. The opposition has announced plans to place tens of thousands of 'witnesses' at polling stations on election day and then, illegally to release its own results ahead of the official results in a clear bid to discredit them. These plans have sharpened fears that opposition-led disruptions and destabilisation will follow their defeat. This could easily meet Duddy's condition of 'an outbreak of violence and/or interruption of democracy'.

The "Duddy" that Brown makes mention of in his quote is a reference to Patrick Duddy, the former Ambassador to Venezuela, writing for the Council on Foreign Relations in a paper entitled "[Political Unrest in Venezuela](#)." In this paper, Duddy provided a clear list of possible military, financial, and political contingency measures to be taken after the October 7 elections were held, essentially giving voice to a variety of opportunities which could be seized upon in order to foment the appearance of a popular uprising in the event of a Radonski defeat. The paper, in short, was a manual of suggestions for the implementation of a coup against the wishes of the Venezuelan people.

In the end, Radonski was defeated and the immediate public rioting that Duddy and the Anglo-American networks hoped for did not take shape. However, the destabilization effort that Duddy and the CFR called for in Duddy's paper is beginning to take shape in Chavez' absence.

After Chavez's death and the subsequent campaign between Nicolás Maduro and Radonski, the vote count returned a [much smaller margin](#) of victory for Maduro than Chavez had enjoyed. Radonski, predictably, refused to concede defeat and claimed that the elections had been rigged.

Thus, while the internal debate surrounding the election results intensifies inside Venezuela, Radonski traveled to Colombia to meet President Juan Manuel Santos, a staunch ally of the United States. The visit was largely seen as an attempt to [shore up international support](#) for the planned coup.

Still, Radonski was quite confident that the Maduro government would fall and that he would be placed as leader. "I think this government, in the current conditions of illegitimacy added to a deep economic crisis it's showing no intention of addressing, is going to cave in," [Capriles said](#).

As a result, Maduro responded to Radonski with accusations that he was nothing more than a destabilization agent for "right wing" actors wishing to overthrow the leftist government. Tensions both inside and outside the country began to rise with diplomatic ties being "re-

examined” between Venezuela and Colombia as a result of the Radonski PR move as well as growing pro-Radonski supporters demonstrating in the streets. Violent clashes between protesters and the government during this time resulted in at least three deaths.

In early 2014, protests and demonstrations are once again took place all across [Venezuela with Radonski positioning himself to seize power](#).

With this in mind, it is important to note that Radonski was and still is seen as being much more “market-friendly” by Western banking circles. In fact, analysts from Credit Suisse, Casey Reckman and Igor Arsenin, [stated to Bloomberg News](#) in 2012 that, “A Capriles victory would be a good outcome from the market’s perspective, in our view, as he seems to be a more viable presidential candidate than the opposition has presented previously. He espouses a gradualist, inclusive, left-of-center but market friendly approach.”

Translating the above statement to layman’s terms, both Chavez and now Maduro represent a threat to the Anglo-American imperialist strategy because of their refusal to engage in unrestrained privatization. Radonski represented a much better option due to his support for, at the very least, privatization and “free market” tendencies.

### **The Patrick Duddy Paper**

As [mentioned above](#), member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Patrick Duddy, published a paper in the official CFR magazine, entitled “[Political Unrest In Venezuela](#),” in which he provided a clear list of possible military, financial, and political contingency measures to be taken after the elections of October 7, 2012.

Duddy cited the [repeated warnings](#) made by Radonski during the campaign regarding the possibility of chaos, destabilization, violence and even civil war if he fails to win the election in order to suggest that these conditions may arise out of Chavez’ sabotage of Venezuelan elections. However, the reality is that the violence and chaos that would have ensued over election results was much more likely to be a legitimate and organic reaction to the election of Radonski who is seen as much more favorable toward dismantling many of the social programs that Chavez heavily invested in. Even Duddy admits in his paper that a Chavez loss might result in riots by government workers “before Capriles can be inaugurated.”

In his paper, Duddy provided several instances that he believed were “Warning Indicators” of violence and political unrest as a result of the Venezuelan presidential elections. Among these indicators are those such as the following:

- Chavez dies or an announcement is made that his death is imminent.
- Violent crime is allowed to surge in the major cities before the election.
- Weapons are distributed to the militia.
- Basic food items disappear.
- Remaining independent media are closed and/or prominent journalists are detained.
- Sharp divisions within Chavismo surface publicly, suggesting insiders know Chavez is failing.
- A senior political figure close to either Chavez or Capriles is assassinated.
- Local supplies of gasoline are interrupted.

Although many of these conditions [have been predicted](#) or are quite possible inside the

United States in coming years, Duddy viewed their presence in Venezuela as the signal of apocalyptic social upheaval. More importantly, Duddy represented this upheaval as vital to the interests of the United States – particularly those involving the need of the U.S. “to promote democracy, increase regional cooperation, combat narcotics, and protect its economic interests in the region.”

For clarification purposes, one may translate these interests to mean “to install puppet regimes via destabilization programs, create U.S. regional hegemony, further the drug trade for intelligence purposes (while imprisoning members of the general public), and protecting private banking and corporate interests operating or wishing to operate in the region.”

A Radonski presidency would not have been the first time a prominent Venezuelan politician has cooperated with the Anglo-Americans. During the aforementioned coup against Chavez in 2002, Radonski, who was Mayor of Caracas’ Baruta district, was implicated in the [detention of Ramon Rodriguez Chacin](#), Venezuela’s Interior Minister. Although the [charges of fomenting violence](#) on the Cuban embassy during the coup attempt were [ultimately dropped](#), the suspicion surrounding [Radonski’s allegiances remain](#). After all, the [U.S. State Department was quick to go to bat](#) for Radonski when his trial was set to take place, claiming that his case was indicative of Venezuelan [Human Rights abuses](#).

With this in mind, Duddy went on to write that the possibility of violence in the event of a Chavez victory was very real. The question facing the United States, according to Duddy, then becomes “What can we do about it?” Inside the pages of “Political Unrest in Venezuela,” he attempted to answer this question or, more accurately put, how the United States could best take advantage of such a situation.

In the section of the paper entitled, “Mitigating Options,” Duddy lamented the fact that “The likelihood of success for unilateral U.S. efforts is low;” which itself suggests that, if support existed, unilateral U.S. action would be given serious consideration. However, it is important to point out that Duddy did not rule out unilateral action as much as he merely observed that support for it would be low.

Nevertheless, Duddy stated that “multilateral efforts that include other important regional players are far more likely to influence Venezuelan behavior.”

Thus, it is important to note that, among Duddy’s “Mitigating Options,” there falls the subcategories of diplomatic, economic and financial, and military options.

In terms of diplomacy, Duddy suggested that the U.S., “together with like-minded nations . . . demand that the OAS declare Venezuela in breach of its obligations as a signatory of the Inter-American Democratic Charter and encourage a secretary-general-led mission to Caracas.” He also proposes that the United States involve the United Nations, the European Union, and “other international partners,” in order to “to explicitly endorse regional efforts to restore democracy.”

Unfortunately, Duddy did not define what a “regional effort to restore democracy” would look like. However, considering the [recent history of Anglo-American interference](#), along [with other](#) international [“coalitions of the willing,”](#) we can only imagine that the results would bring little benefit to the Venezuelan people.

In terms of “Economic and Financial Options,” Duddy wrote that, in the event of violence or

“interruption of democracy,”

the United States could freeze individual bank accounts of key figures involved or responsible and seize assets in the United States. It could also arrange for the proceeds of Venezuelan government-owned corporate entities like CITGO to be held in escrow accounts until democracy is restored and encourage other important trading partners (i.e. Canada, Spain, France, Brazil) to do the same.

He also suggests that the “United States could block access to CITGO’s refining facilities in the United States and consider prohibiting PDVSA oil sales to the United States while the government’ status is uncertain.”

In other words, Duddy proposed that the United States seize, freeze, and otherwise sanction Venezuelan assets until the election results are established to the satisfaction of the Anglo-American oligarchy. Clearly, a Chavez government did not fit the accepted mold formed by the shadow government currently guiding world society.

With this in mind, the next section of Duddy’s paper, entitled “Military Options,” is much more concerning.

For instance, in this section, Duddy wrote that,

The United States could encourage other Latin American militaries, as well perhaps as the Spanish, to communicate to the Venezuelan military the importance of complying with constitutional mandates, respecting human rights, and preserving democracy. While Chavez loyalists dominate the Venezuelan high command, it is not clear to what extent they control the middle ranks. Nor is it clear to what extent the military’s loyalty to Chavez’s Bolivarian movement would trump other considerations. In the abortive coup of 2002 the military temporarily removed Chavez but also restored him to power.

In this short section, Duddy did more than simply hint that the United States, along with other Latin American client states should “encourage” the Venezuelan military to depose Hugo Chavez and install a different government. Notice that nowhere does Duddy suggest the possibility that Radonski might have been the culprit in contested elections and post-election violence. The reason for this is that Radonski was not the target of the Anglo-American destabilization efforts – Chavez was. It is also ironic because Radonski had himself been involved in the instigation of political violence in the past.

Indeed, Duddy’s interpretation of “encouragement,” taken in the context of recent NATO-related adventures, sounds dangerously close to “direction” and outright “involvement.”

Of course, the entire purpose of Duddy’s paper seems to have been a preparation at the academic level for a another coup attempt in Venezuela using “contested” elections as a justification. Much like the destabilizations taking place all over the world, particularly in Syria and Ukraine, the Anglo-Americans appear were posturing for political, financial, proxy, or even direct involvement in the domestic affairs of yet another sovereign nation using civil unrest as a justification. More interesting still is the fact that the civil and political unrest used to justify this involvement was fomented by the Anglo-American intelligence networks to begin with.

Eva Golinger, a well-respected Venezuelan-American researcher and staunch supporter of former President Chavez and the Bolivarian Revolution, recognized the foreign-backed nature of the protests which began taking place across Venezuela in late 2013, early 2014. In her article, "[Venezuela Beyond the Protests: The Revolution is Here to Stay](#)," Golinger writes,

Those protesting do not represent Venezuela's vast working-class majority that struggled to overcome the oppressive exclusion they were subjected to during administrations before Chavez. The youth taking to the streets today in Caracas and other cities throughout the country, hiding their faces behind masks and balaclavas, destroying public buildings, vehicles, burning garbage, violently blocking transit and throwing rocks and molotov cocktails at security forces are being driven by extremist right-wing interests from Venezuela's wealthiest sector. Led by hardline neo-conservatives, Leopoldo Lopez, Henrique Capriles and Maria Corina Machado — who come from three of the wealthiest families in Venezuela, the 1% of the 1% — the protesters seek not to revindicate their basic fundamental rights, or gain access to free health care or education, all of which are guaranteed by the state, thanks to Chavez, but rather are attempting to spiral the country into a state of ungovernability that would justify an international intervention leading to regime change.

[...]

Ironically, international media has been portraying these protesters as peaceful victims of state repression. Even celebrities, such as Cher and Paris Hilton have been drawn into a false hysteria, calling for freedom for Venezuelans from a "brutal dictatorship". The reality is quite different. While there is no doubt that a significant number of protesters in the larger marches that have taken place have demonstrated peacefully their legitimate concerns, the driving force behind those protests is a violent plan to overthrow a democratic government.

Golinger also points out that the three main leaders of the protests were the same individuals who were instrumental in leading the 2002 coup attempt against Chavez. She states,

Leading efforts to overthrow Chavez were the very same three who today call for their supporters to take to the streets to force President Nicolas Maduro from power. Leopoldo Lopez and Henrique Capriles were both mayors of two of Caracas' wealthiest municipalities during the 2002 coup — Chacao and Baruta, while Maria Corina Machado was a close ally of Pedro Carmona, the wealthy businessman who proclaimed himself dictator during Chavez's brief ouster. Lopez and Machado signed the infamous "Carmona Decree" dissolving Venezuela's democratic institutions, trashing the constitution. Both Capriles and Lopez were also responsible for persecuting and violently detaining members of Chavez's government during the coup, including allowing some of them to be publicly beaten, such as Ramon Rodriguez Chacin, former Minister of Interior in 2002.

All three have been major recipients of US funding and political support for their endeavors to overthrow Chavez, and now Maduro.

The US National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and its offshoots, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) provided start-up funds for Machado's NGO Sumate, and Capriles' and Lopez's right-wing party Primero Justicia.

When Lopez split from Primero Justicia in 2010 to form his own party, Voluntad Popular, it was bankrolled by US dollars.

Over the 10-year period, from 2000-2010, US agencies, including the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and its Office for Transition Initiatives (OTI), set up in Caracas in 2002, channeled more than \$100 million dollars to opposition groups in Venezuela. The overall objective was regime change.

Indeed, [USAID is quite active in Venezuela](#), much of its activity taking place through front groups like the Solidarity Center, a recipient of a number of USAID grants. The Solidarity Center, of course, is only one of the four main offices of the National Endowment for Democracy, a notorious agent of international destabilization. The Solidarity Center is also connected to the AFL-CIO, the largest American union currently in operation.

Gollinger provided more details regarding the recent historical underpinnings used as justification for the demonstrations as well as those individuals seen as “leaders.” Summarizing the recent events that led up to the 2014 protests, she writes,

In January 2014, as Venezuelans arrived back from their Christmas vacations, economic difficulties continued. Maduro began cracking down on businesses violating newly enacted laws on price controls and speculation. Towards the end of January, new measures were announced regarding access to foreign exchange that many perceived as a devaluing of the national currency, the bolivar.

Sentiment built among opposition groups rejecting the new measures and calls for Maduro’s resignation increased. By February, small pockets of protests popped up around the country, mainly confined to middle and upper-class neighborhoods.

During the celebration of National Youth Day on February 12, while thousands marched peacefully to commemorate the historic achievements of youth in the nation’s independence, another group sought a different agenda. Opposition youth and “students” led an aggressive march calling for Maduro’s resignation that ended in a violent confrontation with authorities after the protesters destroyed building façades, including the Attorney General’s office, threw objects at police and national guard and used molotov cocktails to burn property and block transit. The clashes caused three deaths and multiple injuries.

The leader of the violent protest, Leopoldo Lopez, went into hiding following the confrontation and a warrant was issued for his arrest due to his role in the deadly events and his public calls to oust the president. Days later, after a lengthy show including videos from a “clandestine” location, Lopez convened another march and used the event to publicly turn himself over to authorities. He was taken into custody and held for questioning, all his rights guaranteed by the state.

Lopez became the rallying point for the violent protests, which have continued to date, causing several additional deaths, dozens of injuries and the destruction of public property. Relatively small, violent groups of protesters have blocked transit in wealthier zones of Caracas, causing traffic delays and terrorising residents. Several deaths have resulted because protesters refused to let ambulances through to take patients to the emergency room.

Gollinger’s assertions are most certainly merited, that the United States was behind much of



the unrest and supported the so-called opposition in Venezuela both under Chavez and Maduro is without question. After all, what has been known for some time was recently revealed by a Wikileaks release of Hillary Clinton's emails, showing that the U.S. Secretary of State actually led a team designed to delegitimize and hamper Chavez and his Bolivarian Revolution. The emails revealed that Clinton via Madeleine Albright initiated Spain into the destabilization as an ally.

In addition, propaganda operations via outlets like Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia and Middle East broadcasting networks increased particularly against Venezuela. The State Department actively [courted Latin American countries](#) that were at odds with Venezuela and engaged in a massive spying operation via the National Security Administration. It's noteworthy to mention that when the U.S. funded "opposition" in Venezuela won majority seats in the Parliament in 2016, [Clinton responded](#), "we're winning."

With all this in mind, it is easy to see how three years of intense destabilization has led to the eventual [triumph of opposition forces](#) that are by definition a tentacle of a foreign country. While the attempt to oust Maduro has not been completed by a long shot, the majority enjoyed by the Western-backed opposition will play an important role in the months leading up to 2017 when the opposition is able to call for a referendum on Maduro himself. Without a doubt, the Venezuelan people have innumerable, legitimate complaints with the Venezuelan government. It is thus understandable why so many would be susceptible to foreign propaganda and destabilization campaigns.

Regardless, it is up to the [Venezuelan people to decide](#) whether or not they keep their president, oust him or do something else. These decisions should be made without U.S. propaganda outlets, U.S. funding and U.S. Intelligence Agencies manipulating situations and causing crises. It should also serve as a reminder to any nation that seeks to resist Anglo-American hegemony that it must not tolerate U.S. or Western NGOs that seek to destabilize their government and their society. These nations must immediately pass legislation [that requires these NGOs to fully disclose](#) the nature of their funding on all written and verbally declared statements as well as their relationship with foreign interests. Others such as the NDI, IRI, OSI and elements of U.S. AID should be banned entirely. If these nations do not begin to recognize the threat and act accordingly, then not only are destabilizations in their future, but Monsanto will be setting up shop as soon as the dust settles.

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