

Venezuela: Regime Change, Destabilization and the Hidden Hands of U.S. Capitalism

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The U.S. thinks it has found a formula for regime change, beginning with destabilization from within. Venezuela's democratically elected government has long been a target. "Over the last decade or so we have seen this strategy attempted in Zimbabwe, Libya, Iran, and Syria.

The political plan for Venezuela took stage in the streets of Washington DC [February 15, 2014](#). Passers-by on Georgetown's 30th Street on a freezing Saturday were perplexed at the standoff between two groups assuming opposite sides of the street. One ethnically mixed group of mostly Latino, Black, and White had taken the side of the street in front of the Venezuelan Embassy to show solidarity with Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution. The group on the other side was the all white, privileged youth of the Venezuelan elite residing in the U.S. who want to see their country's return to the days when they dominated the economic and political process.

The latter are hoping that the recent unrest in their country signals the end of the Bolivarian process and the overthrow of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, successor to the late President Hugo Chavez. The protest they staged at the Embassy was to help this become so.

The current situation started in Venezuela February 12, 2014 with violence perpetrated against the democratically elected government and civilians resulting in three deaths, 61 persons wounded and 69 detained. This followed what were, for the most part, peaceful marches marking the 200th anniversary of the battle of La Victoria, in which students played a critical role in a victory against royalist forces during Venezuela's war of independence. Some student groups marched in celebration of the Day of the Student but violent anti-government demonstrators used the occasion to protest episodic shortages of some basic goods, persistent crime, and to demand the release of students who had been arrested in earlier demonstrations.

"In Merida... opposition students and youth, some armed, marched through the city centre and protested outside the state government building, and another small march was held in the nearby town of Ejido. Marchers chanted 'Maduro resign now!'"

"Observers told [Venezuelanalysis.com](#) that they witnessed opposition protestors firing live ammunition indiscriminately into buildings, throwing rocks and attempting to storm a communal house in the city centre."

While the Obama Administration and capitalist news media want everyone to believe a

repressive Venezuelan government is attacking peaceful protests, there are videos of protestors using [fire](#) and [rocks](#) against the police. The Merida state governor, Alexis Ramirez released [a photo on twitter](#) showing one of the armed protestors. "The governor also [alleged](#) that one student who had been arrested claimed that he had been paid 150 bolivars by far right opposition leader, Villca Fernandez to protest. Almost all students protesting wore balaclavas."

This is the general blueprint used for essentially the same brand of regime change in Libya adapted for Venezuela. Particulars between the two countries may be different but this general strategy of U.S. imperialism is the same. Imperialism uses hidden hands to instigate incidents in countries that take anti-imperialist stands. Then it uses its media and official spokespersons to make things look to the rest of the world as if they are other than they are, demonizing the actual victims.

State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said at a [February 14th press briefing](#), "So we are deeply concerned by rising tensions, by the violence surrounding these February 12th protests, and by the issuance of a warrant for the arrest of opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez. We join the Secretary General of the OAS in condemning the violence and calling on authorities to investigate and bring to justice those responsible for the deaths of peaceful protestors. We also call on the Venezuelan Government to release the 19 detained protestors and urge all parties to work to restore calm and refrain from violence."

To claim in the same statement that they are concerned for opposition leader Lopez and 19 detained protestors, yet call on the Venezuela Government to bring to justice those responsible shows that the U.S. is up to its same old covert shenanigans. The public is not suppose to consider that bringing those responsible for the violence to justice likely means arresting Leopoldo Lopez, the ultra-right wing leader of the Voluntad Popular party who played a role in [the short-lived coup](#) against former President Hugo Chavez in 2002 and who now has been calling for intensified demonstrations and the "exit" of Maduro from the government.

Before going into hiding Lopez insisted that his intention is to lead peaceful protests. President Maduro has accused Lopez of trying to instigate violence in a bid to mount a coup.

Don DeBar of Community Progressive Radio in New York reported "Maduro and other senior government officials said the violence was centered with small groups operating according to a plan which was being managed by Lopez with the assistance of a handful of other opposition figures. According to a report from *Informativa Pacifica*, the plan was organized in Mexico and included a current mayor of a Venezuelan city, who is also a close friend of former Colombian president Alvaro Uribe Velez.

A recording of a telephone conversation surfaced that appears to show two former right wing officials discussing or planning the implementation of the violence Wednesday, a day before it began. The two former officials - Fernando Gerbasi and Mario Carratu Molina - compared what was to come to April 11, a reference to the beginning of the 2002 coup attempt against former President Hugo Chavez, that was ultimately defeated by a massive popular uprising in defense of the socialist government."

The day things kicked off I was asked by a couple people, "What's going on in Venezuela?" One added "Twitter ablaze with reports of protests, military crackdown, deaths, etc in

Venezuela...anyone know what's going on?" It is important to know and understand the machinations of imperialism so we are never caught off guard or fooled by its modus operandi or its propaganda.

It has perfected this regime change strategy of causing unrest in places to get the target government in question to react with violent repression. Then fanning social media and news media reports that accuse and depict said government of being the aggressor in the hope it can maneuver things toward their ultimate goal. Over the last decade or so we have seen this strategy attempted in Zimbabwe, Libya, Iran, and Syria.

So, "what is going on in Venezuela" is the typical attempts by neo-colonial, imperialist backed forces inside a country to seize power by destabilizing the country away from its revolutionary path and if possible create a pretext for more direct imperialist intervention. We see it over and over again in countries taking an anti-imperialist stand and asserting their sovereign right to national self-determination. Countries like Zimbabwe have so far been able to fend off such assaults. Others like Libya were not successful.

Had counter demonstrators not been [in Washington](#) standing in solidarity with Venezuela's Bolivarian Government, surely the media spin of what took place would have been different. It would have been one of a traumatized Venezuelan exile community desperately seeking justice and the restraint of the needlessly violent government.

Instead the coddled class of Venezuelans showed their true selves and how much of the disposition they share in common with those of them back home who can't civilly accept the progressive course democratically chosen by the masses in their country.

Switching between Spanish and English but speaking most times in Spanish, that day they yelled racist insults at the demonstrators, raised middle fingers at us, and implied that we were homeless people getting paid to be there. "Go back to your shelter!" and "How much are they paying you? Come over to our side and we'll pay you double."

To them it is difficult to understand that there can be any other reason for so many people who were not Venezuelan to be there without the more selfish and superficial interests that motivate them. They are unable to understand the selflessness of revolutionary and humanist convictions. And they also called us "comunistas" with the same fanatical contempt that a racist would call someone the "N" word. Evidently the Bolivarian revolution evokes from them the same crude regard and understanding of communism as propagated during the "Cold War" era.

This right-wing is now planning another protest at the Organization of American States for Wednesday, February 19, 2014, the other part of an inside-outside strategy. The success of their strategy depends largely on the public swallowing their hype and lies.

When we think for ourselves about Venezuela what is obvious is that, "It stretches the bounds of credibility to argue that the government would seek to destabilize itself when it has come out the winner in two important elections (presidential and municipal), has made reducing violence and crime a top priority, has recently met with opposition mayors to find ground on which to cooperate, and seeks a peaceful implementation of the government's six year plan (Plan de la Patria)."

This is not to mention the popularity the government has earned from providing universal

healthcare, education, and processes of participatory democracy not seen in most parts of the world.

There is a real chance to make sure Venezuela does not go the way of Libya by thinking for ourselves, equipping others with the information to do the same, then taking a stand against U.S. imperialism against Venezuela.

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