

Trump's Regime Change Efforts in Venezuela: Neomercantilism in Latin America

Part of Donald Trump's mass appeal in his 2024 Election bid was his promise to end regime change wars, avert World War III, and "clean house of all the warmongers." An end to regime change wars! Washington free of the warmongers! An end to the national security industrial complex! Less than a year into his term the Commander in Chief is making good on these campaign promises in striking presidential form and according to a time-honored American tradition: by preparing to launch a new regime change war against Venezuela, complete with comically transparent justifications about WMDs and a half-hearted revival of old-school anti-Communism.

The nominal (and paper-thin) justification for this war is that Venezuela is sponsoring the drug trade, which the Trump administration has rebranded as "narco-terrorism," to justify the importation of the precedents set in the War on Terror to Latin America (it seems that they thought it was a little too dubious to claim that suddenly Latin America had become "a hotbed of Islamic Terror").¹ However, at even a cursory glance, this narrative falls apart. The Trump administration, too stupid and disorganized to effectively manufacture consent for another regime change war, is muddling their way forward, hoping that the populace will eventually fall in line behind the latest installment of the War on Terror.

On both the left and the populist right, many have correctly noted the parallels between the present situation and the efforts to garner support for the invasion of Iraq with claims that Saddam had "WMDs," especially since Trump—perhaps blind to the irony—recently declared fentanyl a "WMD."² And yet, while these comparisons are accurate in one sense, in another regard, they miss the broader picture. Namely, that under the framework of "Hemispheric Defense"³—an updated form of the Monroe Doctrine adapted to the needs of modern imperialist power and in line with Neomercantilism—the U.S. hopes to topple a slew of governments in Central and South America and replace them, by one means or another, with pliant regimes acquiescent to the whims and demands of U.S. imperialism so as to better confront China in the battle for global imperialist dominance.

When this can be achieved through elections, like with Argentina's Milei or Chile's Kast, the imperialists will generally take that route, but with a series of vaguely "left"-populist governments in Latin America—which tend to be somewhat resistant to U.S. imperialism and which often maintain closer economic ties with Russia and China—a large section of the U.S. ruling class is consolidating around the need for a significant expansion of military actions in the region, including coups and regime change wars, to ensure that the so-called "backyard" of the U.S. (an absurd and chauvinist term that is ubiquitous in American politics) is under the relatively exclusive control of U.S. imperialism and, secondarily, their allied imperialist powers.

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- 1 This did not stop them from trying. Recently, Secretary of State Marco Rubio (who would drool at the prospect of drone-striking a kindergarten classroom if he heard it was socialist), recently stated that "where they [Iran and Hezbollah] have planted their flag in our hemisphere is on Venezuelan territory with the full and open cooperation of that regime." Similarly, a RAND Corporation report from this past Spring, titled *Hezbollah's Network on America's Southern Doorstep*, claimed that Hezbollah has established a "terror-crime nexus" in South America. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2025/04/hezbollahs-network-on-americas-southern-doorstep.html>
In an October Senate hearing on the topic, Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas), stated "This is not just about the Middle East anymore. It's about a terrorist organization embedding itself in the Western Hemisphere under the protection of a hostile regime." <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/gop-senator-predicts-trumps-next-move-venezuela-amid-hezbollahs-influence-long-past-due>
 - 2 <https://x.com/WhiteHouse/status/2000671104004682113>
 - 3 <https://www.hoover.org/research/hemispheric-defense-back>

The Trump Administration's 2025 *National Security Strategy* document brands this the "Trump Corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine.⁴ It is notable that the document not only opposes "hostile military incursion" in the Western Hemisphere (by which they mean military forces of powers hostile to the U.S. imperialists), but also opposes, in a move to secure U.S. supply chains, "ownership of key assets" by hostile powers. In short, what is outlined in the document, and what is clearly at play in the ratcheting up of tensions with Venezuela, is the aim to consolidate the Western Hemisphere as part of the U.S. Neomercantilist bloc, free from significant Chinese or Russian investment, influence, or control. The explicit logic is that foreign countries, if they oppose the U.S., cannot invest in, have ownership of, or influence over anything on half of the entire planet.

Secretary of War (and war criminal, though this is redundant) Pete Hegseth recently stated: "We will also deny adversaries' ability to position forces or other threatening capabilities in our hemisphere... The Monroe Doctrine is in effect, and it is stronger than ever."⁵ This comment, along with many others made in recent years by U.S. politicians and officials, reveals the basic framework of the imperialist chauvinism at play among the U.S. bourgeoisie, namely the idea that they own the whole Western Hemisphere.

Venezuela is seen by some, especially the more rabid anti-Communists in the U.S. ruling class, as the key domino to topple to expand and consolidate U.S. corporate and state influence in South America, and to secure the entire continent (and the broader region) from Chinese and Russian influence. Marshall Billingslea, a career bureaucrat who rose in the ranks of the Pentagon during the early years of the War on Terror, recently testified before Congress and spelled out the basic imperialist logic very clearly: "When you look at the regime that has sponsored the socialist plague that has spread across Latin America, it's the Venezuelans. It's corrupt dirty Venezuelan money that underwrote the Petro campaign. They funneled money in Mexico. They funneled money in Brazil. Once we have democracy restored in Venezuela, all of that subversion money, that has been underwriting the socialist campaigns around the region, dries up. So does [sic] the oil revenues to the Cuban regime. All of the support to the Nicaraguans [...] So the solution begins with Venezuela."⁶ This, perhaps more than any other comment from a U.S. official, spells out the logic at play in the looming U.S. war on Venezuela.

The most hawkish members of the Trump Administration, like Marco Rubio, believe that if they are able to topple the Venezuelan government, it will open the door to consolidating U.S. imperialism's vice-grip on the rest of Latin America so as to secure key resources and markets for geopolitical competition with China.⁷ In a recent press conference, Trump all but explicitly stated this. Speaking of the President of Colombia, Gustavo Petro, Trump noted, "he is going to have himself some big problems if he doesn't wise up [...] He better wise up, or he'll be next [after Maduro]. He'll be next too. I hope he's listening. He is going to be next."⁸ The "Isaac Accords," recently signed by Argentina and Israel, are a clear enunciation of the architecture for a future Latin American totally under the heel

4 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-National-Security-Strategy.pdf>

5 <https://x.com/DOWResponse/status/1997440537696071788> [embed]

6 https://x.com/UHN_Plus/status/1980751419473871001

7 Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, in a slip of honesty that he did not comprehend as he uttered it, effectively noted that the U.S. could well spend the next two decades fighting the "War on Narcoterrorism":

"Our generation spent the better part of two decades hunting Al Qaeda, hunting ISIS. As the president said, this is the ISIS, this is the Al Qaeda of the Western Hemisphere... our message to these foreign terrorist organizations is that we will treat you like we treated Al Qaeda... We will kill you." <https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/marco-rubio-secretary-state-push-venezuela-maduro-regime-change-boat-strikes>

8 <https://x.com/angeloinchina/status/1998885311934562559>

of Israel and the U.S.⁹ This will doubtless include more drone sales, surveillance technology, and phones and pagers rigged with explosives ready to blow up any dissidents or unruly local politicians.¹⁰

Given all this, it is necessary to examine, and expose, the various ways the Trump Administration has been trying to justify this war.

First, the supposed “narcoterrorists” the military has been drone striking have most likely just been fishermen.¹¹ Even if some of these boats were involved in some drug trade, the strikes have targeted small boats far from the shores of the U.S., and leaks indicate that the U.S. military’s own assessment is that the boats that were bombed did not have the fuel or motor capacity to reach the U.S.¹² Second, as even some members of Congress have noted, even if these are drug smugglers, and even if they are armed, and even if they are all trying to smuggle drugs into the U.S. (none of which the administration has provided any proof of) this in no way justifies assassinating them or treating them as enemy combatants.¹³ Third, the U.S. ruling class historically has shown no real interest in opposing the drug trade, and has, in fact, generally run it and profited from it immensely: from subjugating China through the opium trade (from which many U.S. capitalists got quite rich),¹⁴ to the heroin trade in Vietnam (which was also used to devastate ghettos in the U.S.),¹⁵ through the CIA’s role in the poppy fields during the Afghan War,¹⁶ not to mention the CIA’s creation and sponsorship of various drug cartels in Latin America.¹⁷ The Trump administration is no exception.

For example, Trump recently pardoned Juan Orlando Hernández,¹⁸ the former president of Honduras, just in time for him to come to the aid of Trump-administration backed candidate Tito Asfura’s ongoing presidential bid. Hernández came to power in Honduras in 2014 after a U.S. backed coup ousted José Manuel Zelaya. Once Hernández became president, he turned Honduras into a narco-client-state of the U.S., seemingly with the cooperation of the DEA.¹⁹ He was eventually convicted, in the U.S., on numerous counts of drug trafficking into the U.S. and, in 2024, he was sentenced to 45 years in prison. Trump released him after he had barely served one year.²⁰

In the case of Venezuela, the most obvious example of U.S. support for and involvement in the drug trade is the Cartel de los Soles. On November 24th the Trump Administration designated this cartel a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and claimed that Nicolas Maduro is its head, despite the fact that the Cartel de los Soles does not exist anymore and hasn’t for decades!²¹ The FTO designation (which

9 <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-876596>

10 <https://x.com/muhammadshehad2/status/1983517527939359116>

11 <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/13/world/americas/trump-drug-boat-strikes-colombian-fisherman.html> Available for reading without paywall: <https://archive.ph/2x07Y>

12 <https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/marco-rubio-secretary-state-push-venezuela-maduro-regime-change-boat-strikes>

13 <https://x.com/RandPaul/status/1996234469335003294> Of course, the framework these politicians use is, at best, nominal adherence to the principles of bourgeois democracy and the legal rules of military engagement in international law, both of which have been systematically violated by the U.S. over and over again. Still, it is important to take stock of the contradictions among the ruling class and to struggle for basic bourgeois democratic rights, while being clear of the limitations of these rights and this whole framework.

14 <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/american-old-money-opium-trade-fortunes/>

15 <https://bannedthought.net/USA/SocialProblemsInUS/Drugs/TheOpiumTrail-HeroinAndImperialism-1972.pdf>

16 <https://mcpuusa.wordpress.com/red-pages/issue-2/the-u-s-defeat-in-afghanistan/>

17 <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/special/cia.html>

18 <https://apnews.com/article/honduras-us-hernandez-trump-pardon-099332ff4b81bafa3a32c642368ca665>

19 <https://thegrayzone.com/2023/10/06/president-honduras-trafficking-drugs/>

20 <https://apnews.com/article/honduras-president-juan-orlando-hernandez-corruption-3f98be974c58bb8a1b492108c4a7f297>

21 <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20250828-us-targets-venezuela-over-soles-cartel-does-it-exist>

opens the door for the use of all the typical “War on Terror” tactics against Venezuela), specifically cites the Cartel de los Soles supposed ties to the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico, with which the DEA has a long history of direct collaboration.^{22 23} What is even more absurd, is that while now defunct, the Cartel de los Soles did at one point exist and was involved in the smuggling of drugs into the U.S., but it was created directly by the CIA and its operations were overseen by them.²⁴

So the very organization that the Trump administration claims to be fighting in Venezuela not only does not exist anymore but was, in fact, created by the U.S. government itself. Fitting for a ruling class that just recently welcomed their supposed former enemy—Abu Mohammad al-Julani, former leader in Al-Qaeda Syria and the Syrian branch of ISIS and current U.S.-Israel backed puppet leader of Syria—with open arms on a visit to the White House.²⁵

Then there is the argument that fentanyl is flowing from Venezuela into the U.S. It seems every time that a member of the Trump administration mentions drone striking Caribbean fishermen, they further inflate the number of possible overdoses these drone strikes have supposedly stopped. Either the administration officials have no idea of basic population and demographic statistics—a real possibility, as we recently saw when it was revealed that Ted Cruz, who almost daily calls for regime change in Iran, had no idea how many people live in the country or other basics facts about Iran²⁶—or they honestly believe that the people are so stupid that they don’t know these things.

For example, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem recently claimed that Trump has saved “hundreds of millions of lives” in the U.S. by drone striking fishing boats.²⁷ This echoes similar claims by Attorney General Pam Bondi that Trump saved “258 million lives” with fentanyl seizures even before the drone strikes began (though to be fair to her, most of her mental energy has been devoted to

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/12/us-venezuela-trump-maduro-drugs-regime-change>
<https://elpais.com/internacional/2025-09-07/el-cartel-de-los-soles-la-red-criminal-que-enfrenta-a-estados-unidos-y-venezuela.html>

- 22 <https://jacobin.com/2023/03/us-mexico-war-on-drugs-garcia-luna-calderon> Actually, the U.S. government and its various intelligence agencies have guided the whole development of the cartels in Mexico, even as various agencies and capital interest groups sponsor competing cartels that have ripped the country apart in a situation somewhat analogous to the Warlord Period in pre-Revolutionary China. From the beginning of the rise of the Guadalajara Cartel, the CIA was involved. Infamously CIA agent (and rabid anti-Communist Cuban ex-pat) Félix ‘El Gato’ Rodríguez worked with the Guadalajara Cartel to murder DEA agent “Kiki” Camarena in 1985. Rodríguez was also the CIA agent who captured, tortured, and killed Che Guevara in Bolivia. In his 1989 memoir, *Shadow Warrior: The CIA Hero of a Hundred Unknown Battles*, he compares himself to Ulysses.
<https://www.bustle.com/entertainment/wheres-felix-rodriguez-now-the-last-narc>
<https://progresoweekly.us/cuban-felix-el-gato-rodriguez-murdered-kiki-camarena-say-u-s-agents/>
- 23 More recently, former DEA deputy chief of financial operations Paul Campo was indicted (along with former CIA agent Robert Mario Sensi) were indicted on charges of aided the Mexican cartel Jalisco New Generation in money laundering, production of fentanyl, and procuring weaponized drones. <https://jackpoulson.substack.com/p/former-dea-officials-alleged-conspirator>
- 24 Even 60 Minutes reported on this in the 1990s: <https://x.com/MaxBlumenthal/status/1990223860235657271?s=20> Recently Jordan Goudreau, leader of the failed 2020 coup in Venezuela (Operation Gideon), spoke with the Gray Zone reporter Max Blumenthal and outlined how the CIA created Cartel de los Soles and used it for drug trafficking operations into the U.S. and around the world. <https://www.latintimes.com/former-green-beret-behind-failed-venezuelan-coup-claims-cia-engineered-cartel-de-los-soles-590696>
- 25 Trump went so far as to spray Jolani with cologne in a bizarre interaction in the Oval Office. And David Petraeus, former leader in the War on Terror, and ex-CIA Chief, said to Jolani “We wish you strength and wisdom in the difficult work ahead. We obviously hope for your success al-Sharaa, because at the end of the day, your success is our success.” Quite a telling formulation! <https://original.antiwar.com/scott/2025/09/28/strategic-treason-the-empire-fetes-man-who-killed-us-troops/>
- 26 <https://www.middleeasteye.net/trending/us-senator-ted-cruz-faces-backlash-for-not-knowing-basic-facts-iran>
- 27 <https://x.com/ggreenwald/status/1996289642778292612>

devising new ways prevent the disclosure of the Epstein List). Trump himself claimed that 300 million people died from drug overdoses last year.²⁸ It's possible that these politicians are so stupid that they are unaware that the population of the United States is around 340 million, and that around 80,000 people in this country actually died of drug overdoses last year,²⁹ but they're clearly dumb enough to think people will buy these extremely and ridiculously exaggerated figures and accept them as justification for the looming invasion of Venezuela. What's more, Trump's own DEA, in its 2025 National Drug Threat Assessment,³⁰ claims that most of the fentanyl in the U.S. comes from Mexico. Venezuela is barely mentioned in the report—and not at all in the section on fentanyl. Where it is mentioned, the Venezuela gang, Tren de Aragua, is noted to only carry out “small-scale drug trafficking activities.”³¹

It seems that the Trump Administration hopes that if they lie big enough, people will focus on the large numbers of lives supposedly saved, and not the absurdity of their claims. Though, perhaps their absurd bluffs and exaggerations are meant to cover over the more basic reality of their aims and intents. For example, they have blamed Tren de Aragua and the Maduro Government for the influx of Venezuelan refugees and migrants to the U.S. and not the crippling U.S. sanctions which devastated the Venezuelan economy or other related efforts to destabilize the country.

Likewise, on the drug-trafficking side of things, the Trump administration's bravado aims to cover over not only the longstanding history of the CIA's role in the international drug trade, but also the links of members of the cabinet itself. In particular, Marco Rubio's own brother-in-law, Orlando Cicilia, was a prolific cocaine dealer who ran a huge drug smuggling ring in South Florida. For a time, Rubio and his family lived with Cicilia in the house from which he ran his drug empire. Cicilia even stored and cut his cocaine at the house, including in the bedroom that Rubio stayed in.³² Rubio denies that he knew anything about his brother-in-law's role as drug kingpin, but still helped him get his real estate license shortly after his *very early* release from prison (a release which came just days after Rubio was elected).³³ The exact nature of Rubio's current connections to Miami drug rings is unknown, but as Malcolm X emphasized, there is only as much crime in the society as the state allows, and clearly some within the Trump administration are drooling over the prospect of turning Venezuela into a U.S.-backed narco-client-state, as they have historically done with other Latin American countries.

Their plan is to install newly-minted Nobel Peace Laureate³⁴ María Corina Machado as a U.S.-sponsored ruler in Venezuela, since Juan Guaidó proved incapable of garnering much popular support. Machado is a sycophantic Zionist, supports Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, and has said that “Israel's struggle is Venezuela's struggle.”³⁵ In 2018, she publicly called on Israel, and Netanyahu specifically, to help facilitate regime change in Venezuela,³⁶ and in 2020, her party, Vente Venezuela, signed an inter-party agreement with Netanyahu's Likud Party.³⁷ Needless to say, if she were to be installed in

28 <https://www.msn.com/en-us/general/general/300-million-people-died-last-year-trump-embarrasses-himself-claims-most-of-the-country-died-from-drugs-in-press-gaggle/vi-AA1RyXEK>

29 <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/releases/20250514.html>

30 <https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025NationalDrugThreatAssessment.pdf>

31 <https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025NationalDrugThreatAssessment.pdf>

32 <https://www.browardpalmbeach.com/news/marco-rubios-ties-to-a-drug-smuggling-brother-in-law-were-closer-than-advertised-8180394/>

33 <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/marco-rubios-brother-in-law-was-a-prolific-cocaine-trafficker-23618933/>

34 A title that lost any and all meaning after the prize was given to Obama, then recently-elected head of the U.S. empire.

35 <https://x.com/MariaCorinaYA/status/1129486995691069440>

36 <https://x.com/MariaCorinaYA/status/1070339692476940288>

37 <https://www.ventevenezuela.org/wp-inter/uploads/2020/07/Inter-Party-Agreement-Likud-Vente-Signed.pdf>

Venezuela as a Hamid Karzai-esque figure (even if she styles herself a female Pinochet), she would quickly join the Isaac accords and expand U.S. and Israeli influence across the region.

Machado openly supports U.S. plunder and piracy of Venezuela's resources,³⁸ which perhaps helps to explain why the Trump Administration reportedly declined Maduro's offer to turn over Venezuela's oil and other natural resources to U.S. control.³⁹ According to the *New York Times*, the Maduro government offered extremely favorable terms to the U.S., which would open the door for plunder of the country's resources and effectively reduce Venezuela to a U.S. neocolony: "Under a deal discussed between a senior U.S. official and Mr. Maduro's top aides, the Venezuelan strongman offered to open up all existing and future oil and gold projects to American companies, give preferential contracts to American businesses, reverse the flow of Venezuelan oil exports from China to the United States, and slash his country's energy and mining contracts with Chinese, Iranian and Russian firms."

The Trump administration refused this deal and cut off negotiations⁴⁰ seemingly because they believe that they can secure *even more favorable* terms for the plunder and domination of Venezuela by installing Machado after a regime change war. A similar drama played out in the lead up to the Iraq War. When it became clear that the U.S. planned to invade Iraq, Saddam offered up the whole country to the Bush Administration.⁴¹ He promised them control of Iraq's oil fields and basically everything else they wanted, as long as they didn't invade. However, the Bush administration refused. They believed, arrogantly, that they would easily be able to control the country via the installation of a more pliant puppet than Saddam.

However, there were other reasons for refusing Saddam's offer. For example, a huge number of U.S. companies stood to profit immensely from the war. Not only the weapons companies like Boeing and Lockheed Martin, but also all the industries which supply the military with various forms of equipment

38 <https://x.com/OrlvndoA/status/1999087000671191332>

39 <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/10/world/americas/maduro-venezuela-us-oil.html> Available without paywall: <https://archive.is/ZaRiB>

40 There is reason to be skeptical of the *Times*' reporting, given how they have historically acted a direct mouthpiece for CIA, Henry Kissinger, and various other imperialists. However, it is not unreasonable for an oppressed country, when faced with a potential invasion from an imperialist superpower, to open diplomatic channels and even enter into negotiations to head off a potential invasion. Of course, if the reporting is accurate, and if the Maduro government has offered Venezuela up to the U.S. on a silver platter, this is a betrayal of the people of Venezuela and utter cowardice, but this sort of cowardice would not be surprising from a social-democratic populist who has historically been eager to collaborate with foreign imperialist powers like Russia and China.

Other media besides the NYT have also reported on the collapse of these talks and noted that Maduro has been in touch with Alexander Lukashenko about possibly living in exile in Belarus: <https://theprint.in/world/belarus-lukashenko-meets-venezuela-envoy-again-as-trump-seeks-maduros-removal/2803625/>

41 <https://www.scotthortonshow.com/p/iraq-war-ii-part-4-surrender-denied>

As Scott Horton notes, 'Eight months after the war began, the *New York Times* published a story about how Saddam Hussein had offered to surrender on virtually "unconditional terms." Meeting with important neoconservative ringleader Richard Perle in London, Hussein's emissary, Lebanese-American businessman Imad Hage, revealed that the Iraqis were not even sure what the problem really was, so they offered to concede on every imaginable point. Perle was told that if the conflict is truly about weapons, the U.S. can send in the FBI to look wherever they want. If the problem was Iraq's role in the Israel-Palestine crisis, they offered "full support for any U.S. plan." If the dispute was about mineral rights, they offered to make oil concessions to U.S. companies. If Bush's motive was Hussein's dictatorship itself, they even promised to hold elections under international supervision. On top of all this, the Iraqis promised to work with the U.S. in fighting against al Qaeda. Instead, Perle told Hussein's representative to tell the dictator and his men, "we will see them in Baghdad." In a separate story, journalist Seymour Hersh reported that Perle had been approached with an Iraqi peace offer by a Saudi industrialist named Harb Zuhair. He ignored it. Attempts by Hussein's regime to negotiate "were all non-starters because they all involved Saddam staying in power," a senior administration official told Knight-Ridder newspapers. The Bush administration refused to accept victory without war.'

and supplies, as well as the construction companies that would be involved in rebuilding Iraq after the war. What's more, the U.S. empire had an incentive to topple Saddam's government to send a message to the people of the world that it could use the War on Terror as a justification to conduct military operations in any country at any time. As Karl Rove said at the time, "We're an empire now; when we act, we create our own reality." What Karl didn't foresee is that when the empire attempted to create its own reality ("shock and awe") it also created its opposite: decades of popular resistance to U.S. occupation. But the heads of empires rarely have the patience to consider the more nuanced consequences of their own actions.

With the Trump administration recently launching a full-scale naval blockade⁴² and with Trump claiming that Venezuela stole its own oil fields from the U.S.,⁴³ the imperialist logic of conquest and plunder is on full display. It is possibly that the Trump administration will "simply" try to strangle Venezuela economically (perhaps in the hopes of baiting them into attacking the U.S. naval blockade), but a full scale war seems more likely. Both courses of action are acts of extreme imperialist aggression that aim to subjugate Venezuela, using it as a stepping stone to further consolidate U.S. imperialist power in the regime.

Similarly, we can see in the Trump Administration's plans for regime change in Venezuela, a message to the governments and peoples of Latin America (but also the world): "Get in line with the U.S. Neomercantilist policy against our rival imperialist powers or you're next!" However, as the U.S. wars of aggression in Iraq and Afghanistan show, the empire is a powerful giant, but has feet of clay. Decades of popular resistance in these countries, even when under the leadership of various reactionary forces, hampered the U.S. imperialists' ability to secure their objectives and create pliant client states in these two countries. Eventually, in the case of Afghanistan, the empire fled like a dog with its tail between its legs, an almost literal repetition of its hasty and poorly executed decampment from Vietnam in the 1970s. If the Trump administration does launch a regime change war against Venezuela (which seems immanent), it will have to face a similar degree of popular resistance. Even if it appears to succeed in the short-term, the result will be, as Hegseth unwittingly admitted, a decades-long quagmire as the Venezuelan people courageously resist foreign occupation and subjugation.

42 <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/trump-orders-blockade-sanctioned-oil-tankers-leaving-entering-venezuela-2025-12-16/>

43 <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/115731908387416458>