

Trump's plan to 'run' Venezuela is 'wish-casting'

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal and Anya Parampil discuss the nakedly colonial vow of Donald Trump to "run" Venezuela by controlling its oil and resources through a remote occupation following his kidnapping of President Nicolas Maduro. ||| The Grayzone ||| Find more reporting at <https://thegrayzone.com> Support our original journalism at Patreon: <https://patreon.com/grayzone> Facebook: <https://facebook.com/thegrayzone> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/thegrayzonenews> Instagram: <https://instagram.com/thegrayzonenews> Minds: <https://minds.com/thegrayzone> Mastodon: <https://mastodon.social/@thegrayzone> #TheGrayzone

#Max

This was Maduro's last public appearance, just hours before he was kidnapped. He was meeting with a special envoy from China, sent by Xi.

#Unknown

You bring me very good memories. This year—this year? The year of the horse, right? The year of the horse. I'm a tiger. You? How long ago? I met him when he was very young.

#Max

So, I mean, this is effectively a meeting with envoys. He's meeting with envoys for Xi. The U.S. is planning to bomb around Miraflores Palace, risking the lives of Xi's envoys. And they're going to target the man who's there in the middle of that room. Did China have any idea this was going to happen? And if not, how will they respond? This isn't about—I don't see this as about—multipolarity, where the U.S. just gets to control the Western Hemisphere and they're asserting the Monroe Doctrine, as Donald Trump said. This is aimed not just at Venezuela; it's aimed at the entire Latin American left, including the center-left, like Lula in Brazil. And it's also aimed at China, and obviously at Iran. And Russia. And Russia. And there, I mean, Reuters says four sources report that Delcy Rodríguez was in Moscow.

#Anya

I think the plane was tracked there.

#Max

I honestly don't know.

#Anya

Yeah, there's no way. Well, she was in Venezuela as of today—as of this morning, or a few hours, a few minutes ago—when she was giving that press conference. So...

#Max

Indirect attack on China and Russia. Do China and Russia respond by saying, "All right, well, your boy Zelensky and Budanov—they're toast—and we're gonna go ahead and take Taiwan too if you're gonna be doing this, because we had serious economic and political interests in Venezuela, which posed no threat to you militarily, and you're putting advanced weapons systems on our immediate frontier, including a new—something like a \$10 billion shipment of weapons to Taiwan, including ATACMS missiles. Like, we're done with that." Where do Russia and China fit in here?

#Anya

It's a big question mark. Again, it's just speculation. We don't know what they know. But definitely—I would say—I saw Alexander Dugin tweet that this isn't about Venezuela; this is about World War III. And I agree, because I write in my book about how Venezuelan oil supplied the Allies—the British—during World War II. Initially 40%, and then 80% of their oil imports literally fueled the British military during World War II. I remember being in Caracas in 2019 for the Non-Aligned Movement meeting and meeting a Venezuelan diplomat who told me that whoever controls Venezuela going forward will have a great oil prize for World War III. He basically said, "They need to control us, because if there's going to be a major global war, they need our oil."

And so, if this is about sparking something with China and Russia, or heating up the situation—the tension—with either of those countries, it's also about having the fuel to fight them, or the fuel to fight Iran. You've already seen someone like billionaire Bill Ackman tweet that by the end of the year, or soon enough, Iran will be free because of what just happened in Venezuela. Naftali Bennett, the Israeli official, said something similar—basically that Iran is next. So why are these Zionist influencers saying this? The day after Netanyahu was with Trump, right before this happened. I mean, they're not really trying to hide it at this point.

#Max

And then also—by the way, sorry to interrupt—Maduro was kidnapped on the anniversary of Qasem Soleimani's assassination. Right. There have been thousands and thousands of Iranians in Soleimani's hometown of Kerman today, paying their respects to him. So it's a symbolic date in—right.

#Anya

That's why I'm saying there must be someone out there who can tell us what the significance of January 3rd is.

#Max

You mean astrologers?

#Anya

Well, there are people who do other kinds of analysis of dates—right—and how they get manipulated.

#Max

But I'm not going to ask a D.C. neocon or a Zionist billionaire to divine that for me. Bill Ackman isn't alone in celebrating.

#Anya

No, Nat—I think it's Nat. I was just looking it up. Yeah, Nat Rothschild also tweeted "#FreeVenezuela" or "Venezuela Libre." Great job, USA.

#Max

Well, not to get into Rothschild conspiracies, but Emmanuel Macron, the French president, has also celebrated the kidnapping of the Venezuelan president. Who is Emmanuel Macron? What's his background?

#Anya

Before he was president, he was basically a lifelong Rothschild banker.

#Max

Billionaire banker. They want Venezuela's resources, and they want the crude. Sorry, I just want to make this quick point about Iran. Iran's ace card is closing the Strait of Hormuz if it's attacked by the U.S. and Israel. The U.S. may want to steal Venezuela's crude as a kind of insurance, in case Iran does that—to deprive it of that ace card. But you were saying—

#Anya

Well, not to go back to the Rothschild conspiracies—but just for a minute. The Bank of England also stole all of Venezuela's gold and likely doesn't have it in their actual physical coffers. So you have to wonder where all of it went.

#Max

Can you just quickly tell us about the theft of Venezuela's gold?

#Any

I feel like we've talked about that so many times.

#Max

In two sentences.

#Any

Before the initial coup attempt that Trump made in 2019, Venezuela had asked to repatriate what was then maybe less than a billion dollars' worth of gold bars from the Bank of England—its own physical gold stored there. When England and the United States recognized Guaidó just a few months later, that repatriation request was put in jeopardy, allowing the Bank of England to basically say, "We're keeping the gold indefinitely." That is, if they even have it. They were experiencing a gold shortage in London at the time, and since then the gold has gone up so much in value that it's worth maybe even upwards of \$2 billion now. So yeah, good gamble for the Bank of England there.

#Max

The U.S. stole Venezuela's gold. They just went in and took it. Venezuela made the mistake of keeping it in the Bank of England.

#Any

Probably a long time ago.

#Max

Some time ago, the United States under Biden stole one of Nicolás Maduro's transport planes. The Trump administration had been seizing Venezuelan oil tankers and intends to keep doing so. And I think, you know, this leads into Trump announcing that he'll take control of all of Venezuela's oil

reserves. Wait—that's the wrong one. In his press conference today, standing beside Marco Rubio, he said, essentially, "We're going to take Venezuela's oil and we're going to make a lot of money," which is what María Corina Machado, the abandoned opposition leader, had been promising.

#Trump

So take care.

#Any

President, does the U.S. running the country mean U.S. troops will be on the ground? How would that work?

#Trump

Well, you know, they always say "boots on the ground." We're not afraid of boots on the ground if we have to. We had boots on the ground last night—at a very high level, actually. We're not afraid of it; we don't mind saying it. But we're going to make sure that country is run properly. We're not doing this in vain. This isn't a dangerous attack—it's an attack that could have gone very, very badly. Whatever that means. We couldn't let them get away with it. You know, they stole our oil. We built that whole industry there, and they just took it over like we were nothing. And we had a president who decided not to do anything about it. So we did something about it. We were late, but we did something about it.

#Max

Yeah, please. We don't know what it means that Donald Trump is going to essentially absorb Venezuela into the United States and take ownership of Venezuela and its resources. I've seen top U.S.-backed Venezuelan opposition figures like Pedro Burelli, who's been an adviser to Juan Guaidó, actually question what Trump was even talking about there and call it a politically bizarre plan. And Trump reiterates something he and Stephen Miller have been saying—that Venezuela actually stole our oil from us, and that the United States built the oil infrastructure in Venezuela. Therefore, the United States is simply retaking what was rightfully theirs. What is the history of the U.S. oil industry in Venezuela, especially ExxonMobil? And did Venezuela under Chávez really just steal oil that belonged to the United States?

#Any

No, especially not if you just look at the fact that it's in their territory—it's their sovereign territory. There's no argument to be made there. But beyond that, Royal Dutch Shell discovered Venezuelan oil about a hundred years ago, and that company was actually responsible for building much of the initial infrastructure. I saw Francisco Rodriguez, the professor at the University of Colorado—he's a

Venezuelan economist and also a good friend—do a pretty good debunking of that on X, just explaining that claiming the U.S. built Venezuela's oil industry is absurd.

But beyond that, the fact is that Chávez wasn't the only figure to begin the process of taking some sovereign control over the oil industry—that actually began under Carlos Andrés Pérez, when he nationalized the oil industry. But of course, foreign actors still maintained control, particularly Exxon. Chávez did eventually kick them out of the country and seize their operations. But again, how would Americans feel about a foreign company coming in and pumping oil or controlling every aspect of their sovereign energy supply? I think it's only a matter of time.

We should realize that by 2026, countries aren't going to just accept that anymore. So this argument that it somehow belongs to us just falls apart. And again, it's not like—Trump is talking as if we already control Venezuela, but we don't. We're not just going to march in there now and get the oil. We're not going to be able to seize control of the oil fields that easily. So I don't really think he has a plan there. I think it might be wish-casting—hoping that there's going to be so much instability in the coming weeks that they can somehow exploit the situation.

#Max

Yeah. I mean, going as far back as Harry Truman—after Venezuela supplied the U.S. military with oil for its navy and actually provoked German Nazi naval ships to carry out sabotage operations off its coast—Truman oversaw a coup in Venezuela. And Venezuela saw the installation of its first real pro-U.S. dictator, Pérez Jiménez. Following that, there have been historical efforts by the U.S. to prevent Venezuela from benefiting from its own natural resources, the ones it gained control of under Simón Bolívar. So this is just a continuation of that process. The U.S. media is legitimizing the idea of American ownership over Venezuela. You see almost no outrage in U.S. media about what just took place.

#Speaker 05

...a population of 30 million people, and now that's owned by the United States. Just to think about it in such simple, black-and-white terms like that—it's staggering. Wow, Erin.

#Max

Just watch her face—watch her expression. She's so cheerful about the idea of the U.S. We didn't learn anything from what was originally supposed to be called Operation Iraqi Liberation, or OIL. Just watch her face.

#Speaker 05

That's a population of 30 million people, and now that's owned by the United States. Just to think about it in such simple, black-and-white terms—it's staggering.

#Max

Wow, it's just remarkable—we own them.

#Any

We don't know how. Erin doesn't usually work Saturdays, by the way. When I clicked on CNN, it was supposed to be Fredricka Whitfield, and then suddenly it was Wolf Blitzer and Erin Burnett.

#Max

Then it was—yeah, Wolf Blitzer was just in there for a second. I guess he lost steam because it wasn't about Israel. Here's Donald Trump on the Monroe Doctrine, which he's tried to claim as his own. Erin Burnett said that was when the U.S. took control of Latin America.

#Any

That was the policy that gave the U.S. control.

#Max

Oh yeah, remember those?

#Any

Like some higher authority granted the United States control over it.

#Max

No, it was a treaty—like the Louisiana Purchase. Here we go.

#Trump

...potentially in league with the cartels operating along our border. All of these actions were in gross violation of the core principles of American foreign policy, dating back more than two centuries. And not anymore. All the way back—it dated to the Monroe Doctrine. And the Monroe Doctrine is a big deal. But we've superseded it by a lot, by a real lot. They now call it the Donro Doctrine—I don't know. It's the Monroe Doctrine. We sort of forgot about it. It was very important, but we forgot about it. We don't forget about it anymore. Under...

#Max

Very articulate statement by Trump—profound articulation of the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine, or “Donro Doctrine.” He didn’t really explain what it meant. It just meant a lot, and it was a really big deal. I can’t do it—Trump.

#Anya

He also called the events of last night an attack on sovereignty—those were his actual words, which I thought was funny. Not in that clip, but during the press conference as a whole. Another point I wanted to make was that Trump basically talked about nation-building in Venezuela during his press conference, which is... America First. Yeah, totally not America First. He basically said we have to go in there and rebuild their entire infrastructure.

#Max

Well, that’s because his cronies want the contracts to do all of that.

#Anya

Yeah, after we destroyed it—after we sanctioned and tanked their industry. So, I don't see how that's viable. I think they're calling it Operation Absolute Resolve, which is very similar to Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq. So that's a sign of how successful our policy will be for Venezuela, I guess. I guess they're just letting us know with their titles how confident they are.

#Max

That's a great point. Donald Trump is rehashing George W. Bush's neocon nation-building exercise in Iraq, where Heritage Foundation staffers were sent to run an entire fake neoliberal government out of the Green Zone in Baghdad—a complete disaster. The U.S. was running hospital clinics and building firehouses in Baghdad while firehouses were disappearing across the U.S. And that's what's happening under Trump, except Trump ran against that. He personally humiliated and destroyed Jeb Bush on the debate stage—and Marco Rubio—in 2015, because they were the neocon nation builders. And now Marco Rubio has his hand up Donald Trump's ass.

Trump is his marionette. He's Adelson, and everybody below him—Rubio, yes. It's the second coming of George W. Bush's first term, maybe the third coming, because the first Donald Trump term was essentially the deep state taking over as well. Donald Trump made some comments about Cuba during this press conference. As I've been saying, this is not just about Venezuela; this is about taking out the “troika of resistance” in Latin America—Cuba, where Marco Rubio wants to, you know, march in on the back of a thousand OnlyFans influencers and cartel motorcycles to trashify Cuba and destroy the Cuban revolution.

And they want to take out the Sandinista government immediately in Nicaragua. But Donald Trump has also directly threatened Claudia Sheinbaum, the popular and elected president of Mexico, who's sort of a center-left figure, holding her responsible for the cartels. He threatened her today. He also threatened Gustavo Petro, who is a social democrat and actually publicly called for a transition for Maduro to leave. He wasn't exactly a close Maduro ally in Colombia. Trump blamed Petro, essentially calling him a narco-trafficker. Gustavo Petro has done more—more than any Colombian leader in recent years—definitely more than Álvaro Uribe, who is actually on the DEA's list of top 100 narco-traffickers.

#Any

DEIA.

#Max

DIA—Defense Intelligence Agency. Good point, you know your stuff. And his stooge, Iván Duque. So this is just ridiculous rhetoric. It's all about taking out the Latin American left. It's all about geopolitics. It's about installing local compradors who allow the U.S. to exploit and even imprison people.

#Any

It's about—you know, it's not even just about the left. It's about the government in Iran, again the government in Russia, any country that's opposed to the U.S. hegemonic order that was established. Basically, anyone who's opposed to the IMF-world, rules-based international order that came out of World War Two. You'd think we're fighting for something new now, but it seems like they're just consolidating and consolidating their power.

#Max

Consolidating through gangsterism—the law of the jungle, brute force, mass death. Brute force, mass death. And this is a signal of what's to come. Here's Trump, when asked about Cuba, and Marco Rubio jumps in.

#Trump

Please, go ahead. Is there a message here for Cuba? Well, Cuba is an interesting case. Cuba is, you know, not doing very well right now. That system hasn't been a very good one for Cuba. The people there have suffered for many, many years.

#Max

I wonder why.

#Trump

I think Cuba is going to be something we'll end up talking about, because Cuba is a failing nation right now—a very badly failing nation. And we want to help the people. It's very similar in the sense that we want to help the people in Cuba, but we also want to help the people who were forced out of Cuba and are living in this country. Do you want to say something about that, Marco, please?

#Speaker 06

Yeah, Marco, this is your thing. A few minutes ago, you said when the president speaks, you should take him seriously. Suffice it to say, Cuba is a disaster. It's run by incompetent, senile men—and then what did he just say while standing next to Trump? It's run by Díaz-Canel, who's much younger than Donald Trump and, I think, a lot less senile. In some cases, not senile, but incompetent nonetheless. It has no economy; it's in total collapse. And that would be him—you know, all the guards that helped protect Maduro, this is well known—the whole spy agency, all of that, was full of Cubans. I mean, basically, it's amazing. This poor country took over Venezuela in some cases. One of the biggest problems the Venezuelans have is they have to declare independence from Cuba. They basically tried to colonize it from a security standpoint. So yeah, look, if I lived in Havana and I was in the government, I'd be concerned at least a little bit.

#Max

A little bit? I don't know. You'd be concerned? So, you know, what will they designate next? They've already designated Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism. Venezuela's government was designated as a terrorist organization. So will they just escalate Cuba's designation? Will Trump attack Mexico next? He's attacked Nigeria. He's constantly attacking Somalia. He's threatening Colombia. It's just an all-out regime-change assault with no real political rationale or plan for—there is no plan for the day after. No.