

# **Diego Sequera: Venezuela Is Just the Beginning**

Diego Sequera is a Venezuelan journalist and writer at Misión Verdad. Sequera discusses the US attack on Venezuela and how Trump intends to "run" Venezuela: <https://misionverdad.com/autores/diego-sequera> Follow Prof. Glenn Diesen: Substack: <https://glenndiesen.substack.com/> X/Twitter: [https://x.com/Glenn\\_Diesen](https://x.com/Glenn_Diesen) Patreon: <https://www.patreon.com/glenndiesen> Support the research by Prof. Glenn Diesen: PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/glenndiesen> Buy me a Coffee: <https://buymeacoffee.com/gdieseng> Go Fund Me: <https://gofund.me/09ea012f> Books by Prof. Glenn Diesen: <https://www.amazon.com/stores/author/B09FPQ4MDL>

## **#Glenn**

Welcome back to the program. We're here today with Diego Sequera, an outstanding journalist from Venezuela, to shed some light on what's going on with the U.S. push into Latin America. Thank you very much for coming back on the program.

## **#Diego Sequera**

Thank you, Glenn. Thanks for having me.

## **#Glenn**

So Trump said that America wants its oil back. It attacked Venezuela, killed a lot of people, and kidnapped the president and his wife. Then they were sent to a court in New York to stand trial, which is supposed to make it legal. And then Trump says the country will now be run by the U.S., and they'll get a lot of oil and money. This is very confusing on many levels. I think it's about the legality, but also the assumption that the U.S. already controls Venezuela because they killed some people and kidnapped the president. So there's a lot to unpack here. I thought perhaps we could start with the actual attack—what actually happened there? You're in Caracas now. What has happened there? How was the U.S. able to pull this off? We hear that people were bought off because they didn't shoot at any of the American choppers. Do you have any insights for us?

## **#Diego Sequera**

Yeah, I mean, regarding the last part of your question, I think in the coming days it's going to become clearer—who, what, when exactly—and what will explain the, yeah, let's call it the non-response, or the paralyzed response, if you will, during the assault at around two in the morning on January 3rd. Basically, you know, the narrative says it was a clean operation, that they just focused

on military targets—as is usually claimed—and that it was, yeah, one of the best operations ever. But I don't think that's the case. We now know that so far there have been about a hundred people killed and a roughly equal number wounded.

So far, according to our interior minister—these are numbers he gave yesterday—and that pretty much shows you it wasn't, as they usually claim, just collateral damage, to use their own parlance. It's a clear manifestation here. Among the targets they attacked—yes, I mean, they attacked one of the largest military complexes in Venezuela, Fuerte Tiuna—which also includes a lot of residential areas within its grounds. Those areas were also impacted. Not directly in this case, but of course, it doesn't have to be a direct hit to cause damage and destroy homes, which has been the case in many areas. This was one of the main targets.

The other one was, for example, the La Guaira port—the port that's near Caracas. It's about a half-hour drive from Caracas. They also said several sensitive military areas were attacked, but one of the targets was actually a storage facility for dialysis equipment. So this, once again, shows that it goes beyond the narrative of being just a military or clean-cut operation. They also bombed, for example, the Venezuelan Institute for Scientific Research, and the math center there was basically obliterated, along with other centers, including agroecology and physics. So we're not talking about targets with real military value.

Then, in Caracas, they also attacked an area called El Volcán—the volcano—which is in southeastern Caracas, where a major communications antenna is located. The blast wave was so strong it actually destroyed many houses in a municipality that, by the way, has never supported Maduro. It's a place Chavismo has never won. There are victims there—people wounded, many houses destroyed. Another of their targets was a nursery in Higuerote, which is in Miranda State. This is all central Venezuela, Glenn. That was the area, the sector that was attacked. They haven't focused on any other place in the country so far.

If there is a secondary wave, according to some of Trump's threats, I guess that would widen the target bank. And yes, with the outcome we already saw—which involved the kidnapping of our legitimately elected president and the first lady, Cilia Flores, now on trial—it's, you know, on a personal level, hard to even start to comment. I wasn't in Caracas, actually; I had to travel there from western Venezuela on a very long and, well, fascinating trip in its own way. But coming after it, coming to terms with the fact that now our city joins that club of bombed cities, and just, yeah, as a citizen, it's hard to comprehend that your city was bombed. People were hurt.

People were killed. It's just mesmerizing in that sense. You know, I... Last year I was in Tehran after the attacks, after the 12 days of Israeli aggression. So, in a sense, it's just shocking to see the homogenization of these kinds of things—how there's no big difference when you see one residential complex where all the walls came off, and you sit inside the houses and, luckily, yeah, people survived. But people were killed—civilians. I'm not talking about military targets. There were also, by the way, testimonies of young soldiers who fought back in one of the battalions, inside of what they

were doing, that actually repelled one of these attacks. So this also doesn't fit the U.S. narrative about how successful this was. And, of course, yes, it was overwhelming.

I mean, 150 strikers were flying around Venezuela—specifically Caracas—plus drones and electronic warfare. Many of the ships from the Armada based near our shores were put into action, and it was basically overwhelming. Even with all the speculation about what else happened, it was just too much for a country like Venezuela. That also has to be taken into account, regardless of the questions we still have at this point. I'm pretty sure more official answers will come in the next few days. It was just too hard to prevent. So that's basically the summary. They moved through cities, and I went to at least four or five cities in western Venezuela on my way here to Caracas.

And they moved basically the same. I mean, you've got the most politicized people basically rallying, and there have been meetings, gatherings, and demonstrations all these days—all of them. There's going to be another one today, by the way. And if you see the pictures, if you see the footage, there are very big numbers. And this, I'm sure, not only involves Chavismo; I'm pretty sure it also involves other citizens who are condemning the attacks, just like it happened, by the way, in Tehran during those days in June, because this is basically one of the most important stands. Then you have people who are still shocked and worried, concerned about the near future, but calm. In a sense, this is business as usual.

I mean, this hasn't changed dramatically. There's no unrest, no uprising, no, you know, military rumors of any kind—nothing like that up to this point. It's January 8th today, and that actually confirms that none of the outside speculation is happening right now. And this also proves one more thing: the steadfastness of Venezuelans. I'm not saying this in an ideological or flashy way; I'm saying it as a tough lesson that was learned a long time ago. Because yes, of course, it was massive and different from the previous ones, but the capability and the ability to just keep going, regardless of any major disruption, has already become a trademark of ours.

## #Glenn

Well, it seems to be a common theme for the United States to assume that others will see them as they see themselves. For example, when they bombed and destroyed Iraq, the assumption was that they would be welcomed as liberators. And then somehow, yeah, they were taken by surprise when they were greeted as imperialists. You and I met in Iran, and I thought the same thing later on with the Iranians—the assumption that the United States would start bombing their nuclear facilities, their civilian nuclear facilities, and somehow the Iranians would take to the streets cheering on the imperialist aggressors, then try to take down their own government for the country that bombed them. I think this is kind of strange, and I think it's the same assumption now—that, you know, we'll kidnap the president of Venezuela, show his wife beaten up in court, kill a lot of their people, and somehow people will rise up against their hated leader and greet us with flowers. It's a very strange thing. I think it goes back to the idea, as I said, that others will see you as you see yourselves. But obviously, you—

## #Diego Sequera

Yeah, absolutely.

## #Glenn

Despite any divisions within a country, if you start bombing it—even in the United States—well, a lot of people hate Trump. But if China began bombing Washington tomorrow to “save” Americans from Trump, you can be very sure the country would be unified shortly thereafter. It’s just an absurd notion, but they keep falling into the same logic time and time again.

## #Diego Sequera

Yeah, same solipsism, you know? It’s like the same solipsism, the same kind of, I don’t know, comfortable confirmation bias they always need to set up this kind of analysis and to sell these kinds of wars—to get them domestically approved in some way. And that wasn’t the case, by the way, if you look at the polls coming out of the U.S. and Venezuela. It was interesting to see that reflection between Venezuela and the U.S., both seeing through the narrative and not approving any kind of misadventure against the country. I mean, at least I know about three or four U.S. polls in that sense.

Basically, one, they said they saw through the lies. Two, they didn’t think this was going to be beneficial for them at all. And three, they didn’t believe the narrative. So yeah, exactly, I completely agree with you on that one. And that’s a very interesting point—a cultural, philosophical reflex that shows up there, not only, of course, in the United States, but I guess to some extent also in Western Europe, or Europe in general.

## #Glenn

Yeah, no, but it’s just that human beings tend to do this. We divide people into us and them, in-groups and out-groups, and we always present ourselves as good and the other as bad. But when it turns into ideology, it’s like we stand for liberty and freedom, and our opponents are always authoritarians. And then the assumption is that others will see it the same way. So even when the Americans say, “Well, we’re going to come, we want your oil, we’re going to take your oil, and you’re not allowed to trade with whoever you want—only us. You’re going to be an exclusive gas station for the United States, and we’re coming to your country to bomb you,” they still assume they’re the liberators. I mean, yeah, it goes beyond political science and into psychology, I think.

## #Diego Sequera

Psychology and psychiatry.

## #Glenn

A psychiatrist, yeah. But I did want to ask, though, because the United States is coming out of the White House saying that, from now on, they will run Venezuela until they find a new government. And then Trump said he would allow the acting president, Rodriguez, to continue in her position as long as she does what she's told. I keep wondering, though, to what extent the United States has assumed too much, because it looks as if they took the president and said, "Well, we won—Venezuela is ours now." But again, there's been some confusion, given that attack, that they might have had some people on the inside giving them information. You know, I think many people just assume that whatever Trump says might be correct—that now Venezuela is under control. I've seen newspaper articles saying, well, now they have to run Venezuela in a responsible way, they have to... you know. But I think we jumped a step here. Maybe they'll be able to do it later, I don't know. But certainly they're not in control of Venezuela, are they?

## #Diego Sequera

Yeah, exactly. I mean, the interesting thing here is that you've got two basic assessments. One of them is that you need to read between the lines, in the sense that, yeah, they're basically declaring—like I've been saying too—some sort of short-term, sugar-high victory. But it doesn't match with what's actually going on here, like I just told you a few minutes ago. And yet there's no such thing as a U.S. presence here now in Caracas or anywhere else in Venezuela calling the shots or anything like that. And, funny enough, reading between the lines one more time, there's also a recognition of something important here.

You can't—well, you won't be able to pull off a regime change, because that won't work to your benefit. You have to operate or improvise, which I think is what you've got here. And what you've got, that actually is a strong, coherent, functioning state, is the Chavista state. I mean, they've clearly said that several times in the last few days—whether it's Marco Rubio, Trump, or Hegseth, or anyone else—saying, well, María Corina is not the one who's going to be able to run the country. She's not respected enough, she's not supported enough. They just said so. So it's quite a weird, ambiguous moment in that sense. But the recognition that this is all you've got to work with is quite telling.

And the other one, on the same measure, is how clear it is now that, like you already framed it, they just see us as the gas station and the necessary stop to go further in the region—the first stop, yeah. And this is also, I mean, that's basically imperial metaphysics regarding what Venezuela means to all these people, and actually how far beyond the picture it is so far. Regarding the oil, for example, there's a clear communiqué from our state oil company saying that we are diversifying our economy. We've always had this kind of trade agreement, and it's going to be under the Chevron model.

As you know, Chevron has never really stopped operating—except for a short period. They've been active in Venezuela this whole time. I mean, I'm sure even last week, before everything happened, there were still Chevron tankers taking oil out, selling it, and feeding it into their own system, whatever that is. And that's basically what our interim president, Desi Rodriguez, said—that there's no real difference here. And if you go through the statements, even the recent ones, there's that interview with President Maduro driving his car with Ignacio Ramonet, the well-known French-Spanish journalist. He was saying the same thing.

I mean, of course, we are willing to trade and do business with the United States the same way we're going to do business with anyone else—but on the same level of equality. That's the main principle, of course, and it's something that has been stressed. Regarding the terms under which this oil is now being sold—beyond, of course, the spin and what's going to happen—I guess it's going to become clear in the coming days, once the income is properly managed. Because Trump has said one thing, and they say they're going to handle the money through the oil company and so on, but I don't know how much of that is actually going to happen. I don't know yet; we have to wait and see. This is also something that's still in progress, and I don't have the necessary information to get a more thorough picture of it all.

And also, from my point of view, personally, this is a way to do conflict management in a very complex and dangerous situation. It also relies on something the U.S. doesn't have in this case. One of them is the wits to manage these kinds of things. And the other one—funny enough, I was thinking about that famous Taliban quote that says, "You have the watches, but we have the time." I think this is one of those cases, especially when you realize that, if you look at Western media, there doesn't seem to be an actual plan yet—a coherent plan of what to do about Venezuela, other than bravado statements. So it's still something that's pretty dynamic right now, pretty fluid.

And we'll see what kind of shape it takes. Also, you saw—well, you saw a couple of days ago—Trump threatening President Rodríguez and Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello, saying that if they don't comply or cooperate, they could meet an even worse fate than President Maduro. So this also shows how much control there actually is, especially because the statements coming from both the interim president and the interior minister right now are quite consistent. They're in line with what's been common ever since the Chavista government has been in place. So it's quite interesting to see how this is going to develop in the coming days.

## #Glenn

Well, initially, when the Americans went in, many thought it was going to be something like an invasion—like Iraq—where they'd be able to put together a government themselves. But once it became evident that this wasn't the case, one has to ask how the Americans are planning on running Venezuela, in the language of Trump. But now it seems increasingly, as you suggested, that if the acting president, Rodríguez, doesn't do as he's told, he'll suffer a worse fate—you'll attack

again, and he'll wish he were Maduro, essentially. But where do you stand at the moment? Where do Venezuela and the U.S. stand? Because this would assume there have to be some pressure tactics or some negotiations. I don't know.

If I were advising Venezuela, on one hand, I'd say you don't want a war with the United States because that would be devastating. On the other hand, you can't be a colony of the United States either. But is there a common meeting point that could stave off the American aggressor? Because if it were only about giving energy access to the Americans, then it wouldn't be a problem. But Maduro, as I understand it, offered this as well. Yet it seems the Americans want, again, an exclusive sphere of influence. They don't want the Chinese or Russians doing business there—it has to be an exclusive gas station for America, essentially. But that's a bit too much, because once you buy into that deal, you're a colony. So, are they in talks at the moment, or do we know anything at all?

## #Diego Sequera

Well, yeah, that's actually the complexity we're dealing with, right? I mean, you frame it neatly, because I do think that's the kind of troubled waters we're navigating right now. I don't have any proper confirmation of, you know, contact between the parties, but it's hard not to imagine that there is. I mean, you have to have, at some point, at least for basic coordination, people on both sides. And I do think that must be happening. All I'm saying is I have no proof, so I have to be responsible about how far I can speculate on this part of things. And I'm sure we'll have a clearer picture—maybe today, maybe tomorrow, maybe the day after—but soon. Still, yeah, there must be some sort... there always is, you know?

There are always these kinds of channels in these kinds of situations. I think even in the Iraq war, back at that point, there were at least some very simple and functional lines of communication. I would have imagined that this is not the case now, but what's important here is precisely how to overcome this complex dilemma you're describing. I mean, yes, there's no sense in going into a full-blown war, and there's no sense either in just submitting and going for full colonial rule. Especially now, because I think this has also changed. I think that Miller is now the one who's going to be, let's say, the possible viceroy dealing with Venezuela. And of course, he's already demanded that Venezuela cut economic ties with Russia, China, Iran, and Cuba.

And these are very different, very hard demands to comply with, just because you're the U.S. and just because you're saying all of this. I don't think it works that simply, and I don't think it's going to happen that way. You saw when President Rodríguez was sworn in—the first three foreign delegations she greeted were basically Russia, China, and Iran. So language here also matters. And probably all three of them are quite aware that, within this complexity, things will be navigated differently. But I don't believe it's going to go so far as to make a full turnaround and just hand over the country to the United States, regardless of whether that's the ideological dream.

One more time, now that we're talking about this—you know, this neocon-ish mindset that we're facing here. But even in neocon terms, this is even more vain, more simple, more primary than that. And I think this is also, in a way, a service to the world. But as well, I think if you're actually looking at it with a clearer mind, with a cool mind too—and I'm not talking about now, I'm talking about the last ten years—it's been doing a big service to the world by showing how the empire operates and how clearly it's been stated. Because much of this candidness was also present during the first Trump administration. Now, what's a tragedy for me, Glenn, is that no one actually came to terms with it. This was it—there are no nuances.

There are not even nuances between the Democratic and Republican parties, insofar as it comes to Venezuela's strategic realignment with the United States' strategic interests. And so it's tragic to see how this liberal camp, and even progressives in Latin America who were once militant against Venezuela—I'm thinking now of Gabriel Boric, the Chilean president—are now walking back and issuing statements altogether, condemning what happened here and so on. There's no awareness of how much they contributed. I mean, it's hard not to think now how different it would have been if Brazil, back in 2024, hadn't boycotted Venezuela's joining BRICS as a partner—not as a member yet, but as a partner of BRICS. And this is the outcome.

This actually shows everything that's been done. And now, another thing I think is important to talk about—which you already mentioned—is how the U.S. really tried to stage some kind of Roman victory parade with Nicolás Maduro when he arrived in court and so on. Or even before that, when he was taken from Iwo Jima to the Cinex base and then to New York. But the footage you saw was actually quite different, and very Caracas, for someone from Caracas like Nicolás Maduro. The way he just said hi, greeted the press, and said, "Good night, happy New Year." That moment went viral among Chavismo supporters and others sympathetic to him—he was shackled, and he basically did this gesture to the camera.

And this is not the victory sign for us. This is *\*venceremos\**—*\*nosotros venceremos\**. So now we even see how he was able to manage the language in such a moment that should have been one of humiliation for him and for the First Lady. And then, you see, if you go through the impressions of the journalists who were covering the first day of the trial, they were also struck by how he was basically standing firm and saying what he said: "I'm not innocent, I'm not guilty, I'm a prisoner of war. I was kidnapped from my home, and I'm the legitimate president of Venezuela." And I think this is very important because it doesn't give away something the United States badly needed—on the narrative level.

And something they also—yeah—people like María Corina Machado and the extremist diaspora needed, as well as the supporters of this whole misadventure. I don't know if you realize, Glenn, but Argentina now—Milei's Argentina—the Attorney General was actually asking the U.S. to extradite Nicolás Maduro to Argentina to charge him with crimes against humanity. This is quite telling of the

role, because I already talked about the liberals and the lukewarm left to some extent. But this also shows the role of the vassal states in the region. Argentina, by far, is the most proactive one. Not only that—you could even say it's not just a vassal of the United States.

You could even say it's a vassal of Israel in this case, promoting the ISA Accords and so on. But this is also quite telling of the role everyone will play in these kinds of situations regarding what's most important here, Glenn—which is, yes, of course, this is not only about regime change, and it's not only about oil. And of course, now it's clear it's never been a matter of drugs. If you follow the indictment, this is about regional change—about reshaping the whole region through the lens of the new national security strategy and its definitions of allies, sovereignty, and so on.

## #Glenn

Because it's not even just about Venezuela. It didn't take long for Trump to point out that maybe Mexico is next, or Cuba, or Nicaragua, or Colombia. I mean, it's quite extraordinary that he can whip out this long list. And even the Europeans have become a bit uncomfortable—not to the extent that they're going to dissent—but you basically had the Europeans almost begging Trump to, you know, just give a justification, because the magical word is "democracy." If you just say, "Oh, we did it for democracy," then the Europeans can give full support, because that's what we've done over the past 30 years. As long as you say "democracy" or "human rights," then the war is legitimate and we'll give full support. But, you know, he didn't want this. Even in this, we missed Machado, who had been given the Nobel Peace Prize for wanting to attack her own country.

But anyway, it was extraordinary. Instead, he says, "We want the oil. Give us the oil. We're going to get rich now." I mean, this is absurd. This is really what alienates the Europeans, who were willing to, you know, look the other way when the United States destroyed their energy infrastructure. But now it's taking it a bit too far. I don't see why this would be in America's interest—to push the whole world, to bully it to such an extent. But I want to ask you about a specific tweet. Trump went out and said that Venezuela will now turn over 30 to 50 million barrels of oil, sold at market price, and the money will be controlled by Trump. So I'm not sure—well, this sounds like a very specific deal, but again, he tends to shoot off his mouth a bit. Is there an actual deal around this, or is that just him talking?

## #Diego Sequera

Yeah, exactly. I don't know how real or how true that part of the deal we're talking about actually is, or if it's really going to work that way. I honestly don't know. What I do know, based on a communiqué—like I told you earlier—from the state oil company, is that, yeah, I'm acknowledging there's going to be... See, this is part and parcel of the historical policy of the government and the state oil company regarding selling oil. And also, under—if you quote—well, I'm getting a bit technical here. I'm not an oil expert. I wish I were.

But I did hear, for example, that based on the oil quarantine—according to Marco Rubio—this actually helps the oil industry, in the sense that it's going to relieve a lot of deposits that need to be released and then filled again with the oil that's being pumped. So yeah, that's precisely what I was wondering a couple of questions back—how much, because I don't, other than the official approach... Yeah, and also, by the way, President Densi yesterday addressed this thoroughly, and she stressed the core of it, which is basically that there's no big contradiction here, because this has always been Venezuela's stance regarding its customers and partners in relation to oil.

So I do believe there are two levels operating here at this point. One is, of course, clearly pragmatic in that sense—from both sides, from both ends. And then there's Trump: Trump ranting, Trump saying stuff, Trump going crazy about whatever. Now that's a problem. He's also trying to deflect attention from two things. First, the recent ICE situation, I think in Minnesota—yeah, Minnesota. Then there's another sensitive post issued last night, the one regarding the military budget for next year. So, bye-bye MAGA stance completely. I mean, it's going to be hard to defend that one. And it's quite dangerous how many things are starting to unravel now after the attack against Venezuela.

I mean, precisely to talk about the budget. Also, him scolding the defense contractors and demanding they be more, you know, more responsible with the money and with the country itself—how to operate, and how those earnings have to be reinvested inside the country instead of, you know, making the executives in the middle of all this too rich. So yeah, I don't have a definitive answer, sadly, for this one. But again, we're going to see more details about it pretty soon, I'm sure. And it's quite—it's so fluid right now, it's hard to give definitive answers to many of these questions. But that's as far as I can get for now.

## **#Glenn**

The whole conflict is so bizarre. I think that's what's taken many by surprise. And also, for the Europeans, they thought, you know, we'll show our loyalty again, we won't criticize what Trump has done. And then it's not just Latin America—it turns against the Europeans, saying, "Oh, give us Greenland."

## **#Diego Sequera**

Well, yeah, but you know, Spain was part of that joint communiqué between Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, and Spain. So at least you have that. It's mild, I think—lukewarm. But in the current terms, in the current conditions, I think it's beyond the usual. The case of Spain, I mean. But that's it; it's not that far. And of course, Spain has big interests here, and it has the closest relationship with Latin America of all the European countries. It's actually the gateway for Europe into Latin America. So it's interesting, at least, to see that very mild fissure, I guess, in the zombie consensus in Europe right now. It's quite interesting to see.

## **#Glenn**

Let me just ask one last question about the legality of this. How is the United States—because here they arrested Maduro, which is kind of strange—it doesn't seem to have much of a legal foundation. If there's no legal foundation, then the courts are just like a kangaroo court. Otherwise, it's unclear what's going to happen. Are they going to find him not guilty? Are they going to say, "Oh, sorry, we murdered all those people and kidnapped the president—here, we'll send you back again"? I mean, that doesn't seem like a possibility. So how are they building this case? What's the evidence here?

## **#Diego Sequera**

Yeah, now, I mean, the outcome itself is hard to predict. But I'm even hopeful that one of the possibilities is them coming back at some point. Not now, of course—not in the coming days—but I wouldn't rule that out, just as an exercise of imagination. But it's funny, it's quite funny if you go through the indictment. First, I mean, we've seen it already: the Cartel de los Soles didn't hold. I mean, the whole Cartel de los Soles thing—it's just not a thing within the accusations now.

## **#Glenn**

Sorry to interrupt, but I think that's a very important point, because they even admitted this—I think it was the Washington Post—that, oh yes, you know, this big secret drug cartel we said was run by Maduro? Yeah, it doesn't exist.

## **#Diego Sequera**

Yeah, sorry, it doesn't exist. This is extraordinary.

## **#Glenn**

Yeah, sorry, go ahead.

## **#Diego Sequera**

No, no, no, please. But it's true. I mean, it is important. This is actually the center of the accusation against him—calling him a narco-terrorist and calling El Cartel de los Soles, once again, the so-called "SANS cartel," a narco-terrorist and terrorist organization—in order to procedurally justify everything they've done. And that also explains why they did it. It not only explains, it confirms it, because we already talked about this. I think even when we met last time, we discussed how easy it is—how much easier it is—within the nooks and crannies of the federal state to call this a police operation, a security matter, and so on, rather than a war, and not to bring about Wilsonian democracy.

It's not about that. And it's now clear if you pair this with the oil statements and the other resources as well—rare earths, gold, gas. I mean, you know, Venezuela is filled with them, has big deposits. It's the fourth-largest gold reserve in the world, it has the largest gas reserve in the hemisphere, and

so on and so on. So yeah, I mean, this is a crossing point. These are uncharted waters, and this is some very stupid and vain Rubicon that's been crossed in one way or another. And I don't think it's going to have the majesty of Julius Caesar. I'm thinking about people here just walking back and forth, just thinking about a crossing. There's a saying here: "Gold that looks back breaks its neck."

And I'm going to see a lot of necks broken in this kind of situation, if you ask me. Um, but yeah, I mean, this is something else, and this is also as nihilistic as it can get. There are many layers here, Glenn. You can think of, for example, how they talk about oil companies, but I've been stressing this a lot—I think this is all about Exxon, which already controls, illegally, the offshore wells and the disputed waters between Venezuela and Guyana. And they completely control Guyana right now, Venezuela's eastern neighbor. Just get inside their mind and think: I already control these new offshore sources, and now I might be able to control the largest oil reserves in the world. So that's Exxon's point of view. But Exxon also, by the way, funds a lot of Marco Rubio's PACs.

Marco Rubio also has his own personal interest here as the great regime changer, the favorite son of the Tony Montana faction of the GOP—the Neocon South Florida Yard Club—and being their prodigal child, the one who went the furthest from a group that's always been a liability to the U.S. government ever since Kennedy. And he's the one who made it here. He's also, of course, focused on two things: Cuba as the final prize for them, and the 2028 ticket—whether as vice president or president, who knows? That we'll have to wait and see. And he's trying to make the best of the situation, being in a place of power as he is. I mean, not since Kissinger was there an official who controlled so much at the same time.

The National Security Council, with all the Title 50 authorities and executive powers there. The State Department, and also the administrator of, well, USAID right now. So it's a massive amount of power. And he knows he could lose it at any time if something happens. He's also outmaneuvered all of Trump's special envoys—he outmaneuvered Witkoff in Gaza and in Ukraine, and the same with Venezuela. And then you have Trump himself, which is—well, there's no need to comment there. I mean, he's taken care of with his weird-ass stream of consciousness; he's already saying what he says. And then you have the larger aims of empire that are very much reflected in the national security strategy, where they realize—and this follows closely Elbridge Colby's rationale, since he was a major author of that document, a driving force behind it—that basically, look, we aren't able to face China directly.

It's our only real adversary. That's also why we're delegating other hot spots to other people. But first, we need to take this detour in our own hemisphere—expel all the, and I'm quoting here, "extra-hemispheric actors," the control assets, resources, and choke points—in order to, in the short or midterm, five years or so, be able to actually face China directly in a very mechanical way. Already, you know, Russia has been tamed in some way, or is too busy with the Europeans and all the partners—which has a very interesting definition there. All the allies are doing their bit and exposing

themselves in this weird scenario. So it's quite crazy how far this can go. And already, I don't think it's just a possibility, because this becomes a precedent if we go completely neutral about it. I mean, what now? Of course, that's a rhetorical question.

But what stops, for example, the Chinese government from basically going into Taipei, taking all the separatists, and declaring unification at once? Because already there's a precedent set by the United States or Russia. I mean, what I'm trying to say is that this is going to bring far more blowback than expected, and in a very short time. And yeah, regarding blowback in Venezuela—if this gets worse, I mean, another set of attacks, God willing it doesn't happen—this is not Iraq. This is not 10,000 miles away. This is very close to home, and the impact is going to be harder. It's also a self-destructive adventure for U.S. society as a whole.

I mean, you know, there was this guy in the 19th century, the Inca Dionisio Yúpanqui. He was a deputy of the colonies in the Cádiz courts, which was the first liberal attempt inside Spain to have, well, yeah, a different kind of ruling after Bonaparte and so on. And he basically said something that Marx quoted a lot, which is that a people who oppress other people are unable to be free. And like we've seen already in Gaza, it also carries the seed of their own destruction, as we're seeing with Israeli society right now. I don't think it's going to be different in the United States in that sense. And I think those words are as wise and as relevant now as they were 200 years ago.

## **#Glenn**

Yeah, no, there's something to that—that kind of oppression tears away at the soul of a nation. So, no, I think they're doing a lot of damage to themselves as well. Thank you for taking the time, and please stay safe. I hope there won't be more strikes on Caracas. Thanks again for taking the time.

## **#Diego Sequera**

Thank you, Glenn. Thank you so much. And yeah—no pasarán de aquí.