

# Trump readies Cuba invasion with phony indictment

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal and Aaron Mate discuss the Trump administration's indictment of Raul Castro and explain how it serves as a bogus legal pretext for military invading Cuba and replacing its government. ||| 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

We continue — the United States regime continues to collaborate and conspire with the mafia, with narco-traffickers in Latin America. They are the presidents of the right-wing Latin American countries like Ecuador and Honduras. Take a look at our latest piece, authored and produced by Oscar Leon, on "Honduras Gate," which is the biggest scandal the U.S. media isn't covering. And there are these new audio leaks obtained by an outlet called Diario Red, which show that the Trump administration is working with Juan Orlando Hernández, a convicted drug trafficker and former president of Honduras, who was convicted of smuggling 200 tons of cocaine into the United States and was pardoned by Donald Trump in December of last year.

They're working with him to establish a new media smear machine to attack the leftist governments of Colombia, Mexico, and Brazil, and to carry out death squad-like operations to crush the left in countries they control. And that's already been happening in Ecuador and Honduras. It's a major scandal — all the leaks are out there, with Hernández himself spelling it out and declaring, "We have to blindly obey Trump." And who put up the money? According to Hernández, Israeli sources. Israel's playing the middleman, so the U.S. continues to collaborate with the mafia here, just as the mafia worked to establish Israel.

Aaron Good, the researcher, calls it like—I forget what he calls it—but he has a really memorable term for this kind of global mafia, and he uses it to help explain the JFK assassination. But I think, you know, since I brought up Meyer Lansky, Lansky had a casino in Havana that he was developing, the Hotel Riviera. And he put all of his money into it. I actually drank a mojito at that bar. And Lansky was kicked out of Cuba. You can see this depicted in *\*The Godfather\**—Hyman Roth getting run out of Cuba as a populist revolution takes place. And that was pretty much the end of Lansky. And he sort of retired after that because he dumped so much money into the Riviera. It was a beautiful hotel, by the way, and the bar is made of mahogany wood.

The U.S. is trying to come back and bring the mafia back to Cuba by starving the Cuban population of energy and food. We published a report on Cuba. Danny Shaw went across the island, lived as Cubans did, and showed that there are probably excess deaths and depopulation. People cannot get from one town to the next because the U.S. has cut them off from fuel, preventing, obviously, Venezuela from shipping oil there. And I mean, it's almost like a genocidal policy. And now the State Department, Marco Rubio—Narco Rubio—who is at the helm of this policy, is telling Cuba, well, you cannot have humanitarian aid unless you abide by our regime change conditions. Then, strangely, John Ratcliffe, the CIA director, shows up in Havana. Some, I would say, disturbing images here, Aaron.

## **#Aaron Mate**

And the way they announced this—just tweeting “Havana, Cuba,” as if this is like... it's so obnoxious, because they're flaunting the fact that they're starving, suffocating the country. But then Cuba is forced to host the CIA director, the agency involved in trying to destroy the country for decades upon decades. So it's obnoxious, and they're showing that they're in charge, just as they like to do in Venezuela. There's a similar thing. I think Ratcliffe also went to Venezuela, right?

## **#Max**

Yeah, he did. I mean, he was one of the first to show up to meet Delcy Rodríguez.

## **#Aaron Mate**

So it's just a way to show that they're in charge. And, I mean, should we talk about the—I don't think it's happened yet, but there's been talk of an indictment of Raúl Castro.

## **#Max**

Yeah, I think it will happen. It needs to go to a federal jury, which will do whatever the DOJ wants. But this is CBS. Of course, CBS gets it because they're the legacy media network that was bought to be the—to propagate—the Trump administration slash Israel's message. But Jennifer Jacobs seems like one of their real reporters. The U.S. is taking steps to indict Raúl Castro, the 94-year-old former president of Cuba and brother of Fidel, in connection with the downing of planes 30 years ago. Those are the Brothers to the Rescue planes. The indictment's expected to focus on Cuba's 1996 shoot-down of planes operated by the quote-unquote humanitarian group Brothers to the Rescue. And I pointed out that Brothers to the Rescue was not a humanitarian group.

It was a mercenary, CIA-backed group that was involved with a terrorist network that had been carrying out terrorist crimes in Cuba for decades. Brothers to the Rescue was run under the watch of CANF, which was itself spun out of militant guerrilla organizations that had been involved in the Bay of Pigs operation and probably the JFK assassination. And what the CIA did was, when they got all

these terrorist exiles dumped in the U.S., in South Florida, they set up little aid organizations to give them something to do so there wouldn't be blowback—so they wouldn't start carrying out crimes inside the U.S. or attempting more terrorist attacks. But then the CIA, under George H.W. Bush, started actually authorizing terrorist attacks in Cuba, including bombings of hotels and Cuban resorts.

These terrorist groups wanted to stop tourism to Cuba, so they shot up beaches in Cuba. They killed many people. And then there was the most notorious act, the bombing of Cubana Flight 455 by Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch, both known, confirmed CIA assets. Seventy-three people were killed on that flight to Barbados. I... I missed the—there was a ceremony a couple of years ago in Barbados off the beach. The whole Barbadian government came out. I think Mia Mottley, the PM, was involved to observe the victims because they crashed right off the coast there. This is a huge tragedy for the whole Caribbean. I think the North Korean fencing team was on that flight. The bombs were placed in Venezuela. Bosch and Carriles got off on a technicality in Venezuela.

And then they went on to live the rest of their lives as free men in the United States, protected from justice by former CIA director George H.W. Bush, his son Jeb Bush, who was governor of Florida, and the Miami Mafia, the Gusano Industrial Complex. In 1983, the city of Miami, under its first Latino mayor, announced Orlando Bosch Day to honor one of those terrorists. And they died as old men in their South Florida homes. And now the CIA is charging Raul Castro for defending his country from this terrorist network, which was violating Cuban airspace and sovereignty and threatening its citizens. I mean, it's such a farce. And the terrorism continues. The blockade of Cuba is economic terrorism, which is killing untold numbers of people every day.

## **#Aaron Mate**

And going back to the downing of the Brothers to the Rescue jet, for which Castro might get indicted, I'm pretty sure that that then leads to Clinton signing Helms-Burton, right, which intensifies the U.S. embargo of Cuba. So, you know, provocatively flying in these planes, Cuba defends itself, and then the U.S. responds by increasing or intensifying an already sadistic blockade, embargo. And Trump, since he's taken power, has taken that to a new level. He's in fact enforced elements of Helms-Burton that previously were sort of sidelined because they were just too sadistic. But now they're taking it to a new level. And that's why the island is in such desperate shape. And so John Ratcliffe going to visit Cuba and flaunting it. You know, Trump's been talking increasingly about taking control of Cuba soon, and that seems to be his next move, whatever he does with Iran, however he tries to slink away from that one.

## **#Max**

Yeah, once the U.S. ends one war, it starts another. That's kind of the lesson. Ukraine was at peace in 2010, 2011. On Victory Day, Russian troops, Ukrainian troops, and Belarusian troops marched

together when Ukraine was neutral. That was the time of the Afghan surge. Afghanistan fails, the U.S. goes right into Ukraine. So they can justify the U.S. regime. The imperial regime can justify running our pockets as U.S. taxpayers for another war, another aid package of \$40 billion.

Ukraine starts to fail, or the campaign starts to wind down or enter a more frozen or protracted conflict, the U.S. moves to Iran. The U.S. fails in Iran in what Robert Kagan, veteran imperial planner, calls the worst defeat for the U.S. in history — a far worse defeat than Afghanistan or Vietnam. The U.S. moves on. And we are seeing intelligence overflights, surveillance flights over Cuba, the same kind of flights in the same manner that we saw over Venezuela before the U.S. military invaded Caracas and kidnapped now political prisoner and legitimate Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores. So there is a threat of Cuba being invaded. And I wonder what terms John Ratcliffe laid on the table and what threats he made. But I assume he was there to make the threats.

### **#Aaron Mate**

Absolutely. Absolutely. Why else would he be there? And yeah, that's why they took out Maduro — to pave the way for this, because Maduro was standing by Cuba. They took care of that. On to the next target. And as I said, I'm just amazed Cuba's held on for this long — this tiny island living right next to the world's top hegemon that's been devoted to destroying it for seventy-something years. And they've managed to keep their system under impossible conditions. Whatever happens, what they've already achieved is incredible. It's that they managed to preserve their system for this long. And really, I mean, how they've been able to do it should be studied, because it's a level of resilience and ingenuity that I can't even imagine.

### **#Max**

Yeah, I mean, Cuba has contributed a lot to humanity — breaking the back of South African apartheid. The Cuban doctors, the medical brigades, have done so much for people. They literally helped people who were effectively blind in Jamaica, providing them with ophthalmological care, eye care, for free. I remember I needed to get stitches in Nicaragua, and I went to a clinic there.

### **#Aaron Mate**

Sorry to interrupt, but Trump has forced most countries to kick out those doctors, Nicaragua being the exception because it's outside of U.S. control. But a lot of countries have been forced to kick out those Cuban doctors now.

### **#Max**

Yeah, they just kicked them out of Guatemala.

## **#Aaron Mate**

Yeah.

## **#Max**

I remember I needed stitches, and I got first-rate medical care — got patched right up at a clinic in Nicaragua. And I asked the nurse, where did you receive your medical training? She said, from Cuba. And I said, how much do I owe you? And she said, nothing. I just walked right out. That's the Cuban style. But there's nothing left. The revolution cannot deliver socialism as abundance for its people at this point. You have such a highly trained population, but there's nothing left in the tank — literally — because they've just run out again of fuel.

When they have fuel, they can — they can deliver. And so much of the population is being forced to leave. You're seeing migration crises. And what will become of Cuba if the U.S. achieves its goal? I think one thing you will see in conversations with Cuban officials, where I've asked them this question in recent months, is they've said they're very worried about this and that they do — despite the economic terror that the U.S. is leveling against them — cooperate actively with the U.S. on drug enforcement, that they're very worried about cartel penetration and cartel violence.

And while violence has increased and you see more petty crime in Cuba — there used to be just no crime — the kind of high-powered weaponry that you saw come in when the posses started taking over parts of Jamaica or El Salvador, when the gang members were repatriated from the U.S. and you started to see the rise of MS-13, that could be a consequence here of the opening up of Cuba, as well as just the unraveling of what was a first-class health care system and all the innovations and the medical development and the education. Everyone in Cuba you meet — like every other person is a professional. You meet so many scholars and artists there. You know, there was so much potential there. And the U.S. regime is just determined to crush that and crush it finally.