

# Building a people's media: The antidote to imperialist disinformation

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At an international meeting in Havana, Cuba, Venezuelan

philosopher Miguel Angel Perez Pirela (left) speaks about building a people's media to fight Washington's disinformation campaigns conducted on behalf of the rich. On the right is Cuban journalist and academic Dr. Rosa Miriam Elizalde, who facilitated this discussion. SLL photo: Lev Koufax

On the second full day of the third annual International Meeting of Theoretical Publications of Left-wing Parties and Movements ([Encuentro Internacional de Publicaciones Teóricas de Partidos y Movimientos de Izquierda](#)) in Havana, the participants from over 40 countries broke into various political education workshops at the Nico Lopez University of the Communist Party of Cuba.

This session featured Dr. Rosa Miriam Elizalde facilitating and Miguel Angel Perez Pirela as the featured speaker. Miriam Elizalde is a Cuban journalist and editor with a doctorate in communications who teaches at the University of Havana. Perez Pirela is a Venezuelan philosopher and writer. He is also the coordinator of the Network in Defense of Humanity, an alliance of progressive writers, thinkers, artists, and social movements.

Perez Pirela opened the discussion with a framing of the current struggle between the Global South and the increasingly aggressive imperialist powers like the United States and Britain. There is no doubt Venezuela and Cuba face difficult times. Venezuela faces potential U.S. military action against its coast under the pretext of "narco-terrorism" and Cuba faces an increasingly tightening economic blockade.

The leading PSUV philosopher analyzed that literal, political, and economic battlefields are not the only places where this struggle is being fought. Information warfare through social media has become a crucial tool for the imperialist narrative. Algorithms for social media magnates like Meta, Twitter, and TikTok are used to disseminate right wing-propaganda and push false narratives about the enemies of

the U.S.

Perez Pierla analyzed that the key to information warfare isn't actually a battle of ideas, but a battle to gain attention in the first place. All western social media algorithms are designed so the imperialists can win this battle. According to Perez Pirela, Donald Trump is establishing a dictatorship of attention through social media and news media. All of Trump's bombast and sound bites transfer well to social media formats that promote short, snappy videos. Further, Trump has used military action against boats off the Venezuelan coast in recent weeks effectively in promoting his information war.

[Drone strikes](#) on innocent fisher people and migrants is not just about the literal military action but about communicating to the world how far the U.S. is willing to go. This is a form of communication meant to sow fear and dissuade resistance. Perez Pirela insists that destruction left in the wake of the U.S. military campaign in the Caribbean is not the end itself but a means to an end. Short social media clips of [exploding ships](#) draw tremendous amounts of attention, allowing Trump to shape his false narco-terrorist narrative.

Military strikes against Venezuela pose severe difficulties for the U.S. both in terms of logistics and public opinion. The U.S. public is exhausted of war and unlikely to support another pretext for invasion similar to the false accusations of "[weapons of mass destruction](#)" in Iraq. If the imperialists can't win through outright force, they push lies and sensationalism through social media in the hopes of fostering [regime change](#).

Due to this mounting aggression, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has had to embrace all forms of resistance. Not only has President Maduro and the PSUV mobilized the people in preparation for imperialist aggression, but the Venezuelan government has also promoted images and videos of this mass mobilization widely on social media. These images have even penetrated some corporate media like the

New York Times and BBC. This is also a form of communication, making the imperialists aware that any incursion or bombing campaign will be met with the fiercest resistance of the Venezuelan people.

Due to Venezuela's clear message of resistance, Donald Trump and his cohorts were forced to find validity in a formerly irrelevant fascist Venezuelan opposition leader, [Marina Machado](#). In Venezuela itself, Machado is viewed as a joke. She has no basis in the popular masses who openly supports U.S. intervention in Latin America while also being a cheerleader for the genocide in Gaza.

Machado's Nobel prize has backfired severely. The people of Venezuela are more resolved than ever that the U.S. does not have their best interests at heart – quite the opposite. If they genuinely cared about the Venezuelan people, the imperialists would not push a figure who would almost certainly open the country to imperialist pillaging and exploitation.

The PSUV philosopher outlined how the rest of the world has also seen through Machado's peace prize. Social Media algorithms that constantly push Machado's former statements and activities were meant to endear Venezuela and people around the world to the opposition. Because of her fascist ideology, the opposite has occurred. The Nobel Peace Prize has lost all validity and to some extent exposed Trump's pretext for intervention against Venezuela.

About halfway through the presentation, the facilitator and speaker paused for questions. A Struggle – La Lucha reporter, Lev Koufax, asked Perez Pirela to analyze how the information has evolved since the last serious regime change attempt in Venezuela in 2019. The Venezuelan analyzed the history and current situation in depth.

In 2019, right-wing Venezuelan opposition, with the backing of the U.S., attempted to supplant Nicholas Maduro and the PSUV with [Juan Guaido](#). There is no doubt that

Guaido was a U.S. puppet who would sell out his people for the interests of corporate America. In 2019, the media narrative was pushed to create a parallel government to the legitimate administration of Nicholas Maduro. At that time, social media began circulating content presenting Guaido's coup plotters as newly appointed government officials. This culminated in a fascist assault on the Venezuelan embassy in Washington, D.C. Ultimately, this attempt failed.

So, what has changed? Perez Pirela says that now, the U.S. isn't just trying to create a parallel Venezuelan government, but a parallel Venezuela. Under this narrative, the only "real" Venezuelans are the right wingers and ex-pats who live in the United States. The idea is to erase the genuine culture and people of Venezuela as to dehumanize the country and make easier justification for intervention. If the people who actually live in Venezuela are universally viewed as drones and monsters, the U.S. may have an easier time convincing the world to follow along their path of aggression.

Rounding into the last part of his lecture, Perez Pirela posed a question: Is all lost? His answer was absolutely not! It's true that the imperialists have the edge because they created and control the largest social media platforms. Venezuela doesn't even have control over the satellites that make social media available in their country. The U.S. completely tramples on Venezuela's digital and information sovereignty. However, Perez Pirela insists the Global South and all the working class can punch through their advantage using the ingenuity of people in countries like Cuba and Venezuela.

PSUV activists and the government of Venezuela are seriously studying social media algorithms to develop messaging, methods, and aesthetics that punch through slanted algorithms. Breaking through these algorithms allows progressive forces to redirect attention to socialist and anti-imperialist media and away from imperialist propaganda. Silicon Valley, Musk, and Zuckerberg are not going to do the work of

the Global South and the broader anti-imperialist movement. Those who would challenge U.S. hegemony must innovate to use Western social media to direct attention to other forms of media.

Perez Pirela continued that audio visual political content and high quality aesthetics have been very useful in breaking through U.S. propaganda in Venezuela itself. The goal now is to broaden that effort and connect with other progressive forces across the world. Perez Pirela finished his talk with a simple message: While the imperialists have more resources and control much of the digital world, what they don't have are the people of Venezuela and Cuba. The session ended with thunderous applause.

