

Top commanders brief Trump on attack options against Venezuela

written by Gary Wilson

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14% of the U.S. Navy fleet is now operating in the Caribbean, Fox News reports.

On Nov. 12, senior U.S. military officials presented President Trump with updated options for direct military operations against Venezuela — including the possibility

of ground attacks, according to multiple sources familiar with the closed-door meetings at the White House. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, Joint Chiefs Chair Dan Caine, and other top commanders laid out potential plans for the coming days. No final decision has been announced, but Washington's trajectory is unmistakable.

U.S. intelligence agencies are feeding detailed targeting information into the process, while both the White House and Pentagon refused public comment. Notably absent from the high-level discussions were Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard and Secretary of State Marco Rubio — who was in Canada for a G7 foreign ministers' meeting — underscoring how tightly controlled and military-centered these deliberations have become.

The timing was no coincidence. Earlier this week, the USS Gerald R. Ford carrier strike group — the most advanced in the U.S. arsenal — entered the U.S. Southern Command theater, joining a flotilla of destroyers, warplanes, submarines, and special operations units already positioned throughout the Caribbean. SOUTHCOM is the Pentagon's primary combat command for operations in the Caribbean and South America, and its footprint is expanding rapidly.

For the past two months, U.S. forces in the region have already carried out lethal strikes on at least 21 boats, killing at least 80 people. Only two survived — one from Ecuador and one from Colombia. The Ecuadorian man was released after authorities admitted they had no evidence he had committed a crime. These deadly attacks, carried out under the false pretext of "counter-narcotics," now form the backdrop for open planning of a wider assault.

What is happening in the Caribbean is not about drugs. It is about Venezuela, Cuba, Colombia, Nicaragua — about forcing sovereign governments into submission and tightening U.S. control over resources, shipping routes, and political direction across the region. And behind every ship, jet, and missile stands a class of corporations poised to profit from the buildup.

A massive U.S. military presence across the Caribbean

Warships, submarines, drones, and aircraft have flooded the region in a manner not seen in decades. Guided-missile destroyers armed with the Aegis combat system — including the USS Gravely, USS Jason Dunham, and USS Stockdale — now patrol Caribbean waters. They are joined by the cruiser USS Gettysburg, the littoral combat ship USS Wichita, and the nuclear-powered attack submarine USS Newport News, capable of launching Tomahawk cruise missiles.

On November 11, the Gerald R. Ford carrier strike group — the Navy's newest and most technologically advanced aircraft carrier — steamed into the region with thousands of personnel and escort ships including the USS Bainbridge, USS Mahan, and the USS Winston Churchill. This brings the U.S. military footprint to roughly 14,000 troops, with more deployments under review.

Washington is expanding infrastructure at its former naval base in Puerto Rico and assessing additional forward-operating sites — signs that this is not a short-term move but preparation for a long-term imperialist operation.

The real targets: states that refuse U.S. domination

Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua have long been in Washington's crosshairs for maintaining sovereignty over their resources, political direction, and alliances. Colombia has also broken with U.S. directives on key issues — strengthening relations with its neighbors and resisting pressure to isolate Venezuela and Cuba.

For Wall Street and the Pentagon, these governments represent a challenge to U.S. control over the Caribbean Basin and northern South America. The buildup

reinforces the old imperialist doctrine: Any nation in the region that asserts independence will face U.S. pressure — political, economic, and military.

This is about regime change, containment of sovereign states, and securing access to oil, minerals, shipping lanes, and strategic chokepoints.

War profiteers help shape the buildup

Behind this escalation is a familiar class of war profiteers — not the authors of U.S. foreign policy, but deeply invested participants in shaping it. Through lobbying, revolving-door positions, campaign donations, and coordinated messaging from think tanks and consultants, weapons corporations help steer policy toward options that guarantee continued militarization.

They don't set the imperialist agenda — but they encourage, reinforce, and profit from it.

For these corporations, a militarized Caribbean isn't a crisis. It's an opportunity.

The weapons currently deployed are among the most expensive in the Pentagon's inventory:

- Arleigh-Burke destroyers: \$2.5 billion each
- AC-130J Ghostrider gunships: \$165 million each
- P-8 Poseidon surveillance aircraft: \$83 million each
- LCAC hovercraft: nearly \$90 million apiece

And war profiteers don't just profit from procurement. Roughly 70% of a weapons system's lifetime cost comes from maintenance and sustainment, which skyrocket during long deployments. Every additional ship in the Caribbean means millions more for contractors.

Drone and missile makers rush to cash in

In September, General Atomics received a \$14.1 billion contract to sustain MQ-9 Reaper drones — the same drones now flying strike and surveillance missions across the region. Lockheed Martin, the Pentagon's biggest contractor, is visible in nearly every part of the operation:

- F-35 fighter jets
- AC-130J Ghostrider gunships
- The Aegis system aboard U.S. warships (supported by a \$3.1 billion contract)
- Hellfire missiles used in recent strikes

Lockheed's \$50 million investment in Saildrone ensures unmanned naval surveillance remains embedded in U.S. operations.

Missile makers are also profiting. Ships in the region are estimated to carry nearly 200 Tomahawk missiles, each costing \$1.3 million. RTX — the Tomahawk's manufacturer — stands to rake in billions if the Pentagon replenishes its stocks. The Navy has already authorized the purchase of 837 upgraded Maritime Strike Tomahawks.

War profiteering reinforces U.S. policy

Stephen Semler of the Security Policy Reform Institute notes that the "Big Five" weapons corporations — Lockheed Martin, Boeing, RTX, Northrop Grumman, and General Dynamics — already capture one-third of all Pentagon weapons contracts. The possibility of confrontation with Venezuela or conflict involving Cuba, Nicaragua, or Colombia will trigger even more budget increases.

For weapons corporations, the Caribbean escalation isn't a crisis. It's a business plan.

A dangerous moment for the region

The Caribbean is being transformed into a launching pad for a new imperialist assault — one aimed at crushing sovereign governments, tightening U.S. control, and securing profits for Wall Street and the Pentagon. This buildup threatens tens of millions across the region, from Venezuela and Cuba to Puerto Rico and Colombia.

Working people — here and abroad — have nothing to gain from another U.S. war. Only the arms corporations, their lobbyists, and the policymakers who serve them stand to profit. One thing is certain: The war profiteers will collect their profits long before the first missile is launched. The task before us is clear: Expose this war drive and mobilize to stop it before more lives are taken.

