



U.S. sets up war on Venezuela

By Cheryl LaBash
Washington, D.C.

U.S. imperialism is preparing a new flashpoint in its political and economic war against Bolivarian Venezuela for Feb. 23. Self-appointed but U.S.-anointed pretender Juan Guaidó announced on Feb. 12 intentions to directly confront Venezuelan sovereignty with what he says will be “humanitarian aid” caravans crossing from neighboring Colombia.

The [statement of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba](#), reported at Granma on Feb. 13, called on the international community to mobilize to prevent the U.S. military adventure against Venezuela.

Cuba’s statement noted: “Between Feb. 6 and 10 of 2019, several military transport aircraft have flown to the Rafael Miranda Airport in Puerto Rico, the San Isidro Air Base in the Dominican Republic and other strategically located Caribbean islands, most certainly without the knowledge of the governments of those nations. These flights took off from U.S. military facilities where Special Operation Troops and U.S. Marine Corps units operate. These units have been used for covert operations, even against leaders of other countries. ...

“It is obvious that the United States is paving the way to forcibly establish a humanitarian corridor under international supervision, invoke the obligation to protect civilians and take all necessary steps.

“It is worth recalling that similar behaviors and pretexts were used by the U.S. during the prelude to wars it launched against Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya, which resulted in tremendous human losses and caused enormous suffering.”

On Feb. 9, [Stars and Stripes](#), a U.S. Defense Department-approved publication, reprinted the Miami Herald’s report focusing on denials about a small weapons shipment on a charter air cargo shipper’s plane from Miami intercepted by Venezuela’s Bolivarian National Guard outside Valencia, at Venezuela’s largest airport.

Although all articles are attributed to the Tribune News Service, the version published on Feb. 8 by the [South China Morning Post](#) revealed more details. For example, the equipment included 90 military-grade radio antennas. A flight tracking service exposed that the use of the aircraft



Los Angeles forum Feb. 9 heard from Jesús Rodríguez-Espinoza, former consul general of Venezuela. Read more at [Struggle-La-Lucha.org](#).

SLL PHOTO: SCOTT SCHEFFER

changed on Jan. 11 from domestic to international flights from Miami International Airport to Colombia and Venezuela.

The Air America playbook

During dozens of flights, the plane often returned to Miami for only a few hours before flying again to South America. The article reported, “In many cases, the flights would head on to Bogotá or Medellín before returning to Miami.

“If a U.S. entity was trying to provide arms to a Venezuelan resistance movement, it would be taking a familiar page from the history books. The CIA operated a dummy airline, known as Air America, from the early 1950s until the mid 1970s for air operations in Southeast Asia, including airdropping weapons to friendly forces.

“More than a decade later, Sandinista soldiers shot down a cargo plane taking weapons to the U.S.-backed Contra rebels fighting the Nicaraguan government. A U.S. Marine veteran, Eugene Hasenfus, survived the 1986 crash and told reporters he was working for the CIA, paving the way for his release and return to the United States.

“Curiously, one of the figures in the Ronald Reagan administration instrumental in delivering support to the Contras, former assistant secretary of state Elliott Abrams, was named by President Donald Trump late last month as his special envoy overseeing policy towards Venezuela.”

On Feb. 13, first-term Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar bravely confronted Abrams in the House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing titled “Venezuela at a Crossroads.” The public hearing featured Abrams with representatives of the U.S. State Department Bureau of Energy Resources and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The hearing was disrupted

by protesters three times as Abrams began speaking.

Committee members spoke against U.S. military intervention in Venezuela, but bought the manufactured imperialist narrative, even displaying pictures of the bridge supposedly closed by the Maduro government to prevent humanitarian aid — a bridge that had never been open.

However, it is important to remember how anti-intervention public and congressional sentiment has been turned around. Opposition to the invasion of Iraq in 1990-1991 was overcome by false [claims of atrocities](#) by Iraqi soldiers in Kuwait.

Opposition growing

On Feb. 14, Puerto Rican activists demonstrated their solidarity with President Nicolás Maduro, protesting the use of their nation to attack Bolivarian Venezuela at the Federal Court in Old San Juan. Former political prisoner [Oscar López Rivera](#) joined the action.

Significantly, [demonstrations in Colombia](#) have supported Venezuelan sovereignty.

Meetings and protests worldwide and throughout the U.S. continue, with coordinated demonstrations planned on Feb. 23, a national protest in Washington, D.C., on March 16, followed by the No to NATO action on March 30, which will also focus on the threat to Venezuela.

Although the U.S. claims 50 countries line up with its aggression, there are 193 countries in the U.N., meaning 143 do not. India has declared it will continue to buy oil from Venezuela. China and Russia have spoken out against U.S. aggression.

Monroe Doctrine, 1823 and 2019

In 1823, U.S. President James Monroe declared the Americas and the Caribbean to be the U.S. sphere of influence. Monroe recognized existing European colonies, but declared that any new European attempt to colonize or control would be considered hostility against the U.S. It ignored the struggles for independence from Spain being waged by Simón Bolívar or the great Haitian revolution.

Since the 1960s, formerly colonized countries in Africa, Latin America and East and West Asia (also known as the Middle East) have fought for independence and control of their resources, allying in, for example, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

While Trump’s planned “wall” against migrants at the border with Mexico is a racist act against people seeking refuge, the renewal of the Monroe Doctrine that the Americas are the U.S. backyard is an act of hostility against a world yearning to develop independently of U.S. imperialism.

Remember the Maine, the Lusitania, the Gulf of Tonkin — and prepare to resist the current false narrative and any dramatic incident used as a pretext for intervention. [📧](#)

INSIDE

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GLOBAL



HAITI Protests are expanding

The wave of demonstrations against Haiti’s President Jovenel Moïse has left a seventh protester dead in the Caribbean nation.

According to [AFP](#), a young man died near the presidential palace in Port-au-Prince and a Haitian journalist was wounded by police gunshots.

“Chaos reigns in Haiti for a seventh straight day as its masses continue to rise up nationwide to drive President Jovenel Moïse from power for his corruption, arrogance, false promises and straight-faced lies,” writes Kim Ives in Haiti Liberté. “But the crisis won’t be solved by Moïse’s departure, which appears imminent. Today’s revolution shows all signs of being as profound and unstoppable as that of 33 years ago.”

Read more at [tinyurl.com/y4m468ab](#)

IRAN

U.S. threatens war

Speaking at an anti-Iran summit convened by the U.S. in Warsaw, Poland, Vice President Mike Pence almost declared war, saying that the U.S. will be “confronting Iran.”

Speaking of Iran, Pence said, “There are malign influences in Lebanon, Yemen, Syria and Iraq. ... The three H’s: the Houthis, Hamas and Hezbollah.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Twitter that the Warsaw summit was called to discuss war on Iran. Later, Netanyahu withdrew his tweet, saying that it had been “mistranslated.”

So far, the European Union has rejected this call to war.

CHINA

U.S. destroyers in South China Sea

The U.S. sent two warships close by China’s islands in the South China Sea on Feb. 11, as Washington’s negotiators arrived in Beijing for talks aimed at resolving Trump’s trade war against that country.

A spokesperson for the U.S. 7th Fleet told The Japan Times that the guided missile destroyers USS Spruance and USS Preble had “conducted freedom of navigation operations (FONOPS) in the South China Sea,” with the two vessels sailing “within 12 nautical miles” (22 km) of the Spratly Islands.

The talks over the U.S. trade war have a March 1 deadline, when U.S. tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports are scheduled to increase from 10 percent to 25 percent. [📧](#)

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The border is still crossing us

Troops, family separation and barriers threaten people, environment

By M. Tiahui

According to a statement released by the Defense Department, an additional 3,750 U.S. troops will head to the U.S./Mexico border for 90 days to aid in placing razor wire as well as with mobile surveillance operations.

This increased militarization of the border with troops, Border Patrol and other agents is not just a publicity stunt by the Trump administration, as some media are styling it. The military presence is a threat to the thousands of refugees who seek to enter the U.S. and to people in the U.S. who want to open the borders and support the refugees.

The troop increase also comes at a time when the labor struggle has intensified in the maquiladoras (factories in Mexico run by foreign companies, many of them from the U.S.) in cities just over the border such as Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez and Matamoros in northern Mexico.

Maquiladoras employ over a million workers, often in sweatshop conditions. In Matamoros, 25,000 striking workers from 48 plants recently won their demands for “20/32,” receiving a 20 percent pay raise and a bonus of 32,000 pesos. Workers elsewhere in the region are also walking out to demand higher wages.

The governors of New Mexico and California have both publicly stated that they will not let National Guard troops from their states participate in the border buildup, but many other states are collaborating.

While the Democrats are talking a big game about how they refused to capitulate to Trump’s border funding demands, they have in fact aligned themselves with the agenda of keeping Brown and Black people from entering the country through the southern border.

The congressional “compromise” agreement reached in mid-February in hopes of preventing another partial government shutdown includes \$1.375 billion in new fencing along the border, including 55 additional miles of barriers. The “smart barrier” proposal will fill the pockets of high-tech and military contractors. Both capitalist parties have also agreed to an increase in the number of detention beds.



Trump administration admitted that it is not keeping track of all the children, that they may not be reunited with their families, that there are thousands more than they had estimated, and that they are continuing to separate families.



Protest at Texas border, left. Washington is violating Indigenous sovereignty and waiving dozens of laws to build destructive barriers.

Some Democrats hypocritically supported this while simultaneously touting the “Green New Deal” plan. Yet the federal government is waiving dozens of laws protecting the air, habitat and wildlife in order to build these destructive barriers.

On Feb. 14, the White House announced that Trump would sign the compromise package, then issue an executive order declaring a “national emergency” to bypass Congress and fund a border wall anyway.

U.S. continues to kidnap refugee children

Meanwhile, refugee families entering the U.S. continue to be separated and imprisoned every day.

The federal government does not know how many children are in custody. Earlier this month, the Trump administration admitted that it is not keeping track of all the children, that they may not be reunited with their families, that there are thousands more than they had originally estimated, and that they are continuing to separate families. Attorneys involved in lawsuits over this crime estimate that more than 10,000 children have been separated from their families.

Some in the media and government point to the admission of not keeping sufficient track of the children as incompetence on the part of the Trump administration and their hired hands who enforce these policies. But if anyone actually wanted to do so, it would be relatively easy to keep track of the children and families in this age of computerized databases.

The Trump administration and its henchmen may very well be intentionally choosing not to keep track of the children. In a particularly vicious display of their imperial power, they are traumatizing and terrorizing the families as a “deterrent” to their crossing the border. Children are moved around like chess pieces, sometimes thousands of miles away from family members.

Will some of the children never be returned to their families? That is quite plausible. Jonathan White, who is supposedly leading the Health and Human Services Department’s efforts to reunite migrant children with their parents, papered over the fact that some children are not being reunited with their families by saying that removing children from “sponsor” homes to rejoin their parents would further traumatize them. This is a cover to rationalize keeping the children in foster homes or putting them up for adoption.

The majority of the refugee families are Indigenous. This theft of In-

igenous children to “save” them is reminiscent of longstanding government policies that forced Indigenous children in the U.S. and Canada into adoptions and residential schools and that continue to feed them into the foster care system.

With international adoptions in Guatemala and some other countries largely off-limits to U.S. prospective adoptive parents due to a history of coercion and other issues, concerns grow that adoption mills such as Bethany Christian Services — an international agency with close ties to the family of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos — are seeking to profit from this new pool of refugee children, enabled by the supposed inability of authorities and agencies to keep track of the whereabouts of refugee families.



Border resistance continues

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainees themselves are doing what they can to resist the nightmare in which they find themselves, including the “El Paso 9,” hunger-striking Sikh men detained by ICE who have been placed in solitary confinement and are being brutally force-fed.

In Texas on Feb. 4, excavating equipment rolled into the area of the National Butterfly Center in preparation for construction of a border barrier there. The Butterfly Center is seeking a restraining order since any barrier will be highly destructive to butterflies and many other species of life.

In the same area, Carrizo Comecrudo Indigenous people and allies marched in protest on the Rio Grande levee where the wall will be built. “We’ve had enough. They are digging up our people and any time that you dig anybody up and you put them somewhere else, that’s just ethnic cleansing all over again ... genocide,” according to tribal chairman Juan Mancias.

The Carrizo Comecrudo and allies are currently establishing camps on the riverbanks near several ancestral areas, including a graveyard in danger of destruction. Local police and the FBI are reportedly trying to undermine this peaceful resistance.

The Indigenous Tohono O’odham nation continues to oppose any plans for border walls or other barriers. Their reservation is roughly the size of Connecticut and straddles the colonial border. Around 2,000 of their tribal members live on the Mexican side. The increased Border Patrol and military presence has made simple things such as visiting relatives and friends much more difficult. □

LABOR



AMAZON

‘This is a union town’

Amazon is fleeing from New York City. The world’s second most valuable corporation canceled plans to build a second headquarters there. Amazon has zero unionized workers in the U.S. In response to the plan to put a base in Queens, N.Y., workers announced plans to build a union, citing inadequate pay, 12-hour shifts and impossible performance quotas. The company immediately responded that it would crush any union effort.

The union plan had won immediate mass support across the city, with one City Council member telling Amazon representatives, “This is a union town.” There are more than a million union members in New York City and 25 percent of the workforce is in a labor union.

Opposition to Amazon’s move to set up a headquarters in NYC was also fueled by the company’s ties to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Amazon’s Rekognition, a racist facial recognition technology, is used by ICE for its gestapo-like operations.



Teachers win 12% raise

After a three-day strike, Denver teachers won an average 11.7 percent pay raise and annual cost of living increases, according to the Denver Classroom Teachers Association, a labor union representing more than 5,000 educators in Denver public schools. It will also include raises for school support staff. Bus drivers and cafeteria workers are also to get a raise, but that’s not part of the official agreement with the teachers’ union.

AUTOWORKERS

Walkout to save GM plant

Union workers at a Canadian car seat plant walked off the job on Feb. 8 to protest General Motors’ planned closure of an Ontario manufacturing facility.

About 220 workers at the Lear plant in Whitby, Ontario, walked off the job at the start of the day shift. The action by Local 222 of Unifor, Canada’s auto workers’ union, is in solidarity with the union’s efforts to save the General Motors assembly plant in nearby Oshawa, Ontario. □



Shedding light on AIPAC, Israel and imperialism Hands off Rep. Ilhan Omar!

By Scott Scheffer

Newly elected U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota is under attack by members of both the Democratic and Republican parties because she has called out a pro-Israel lobbying organization, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Omar is a Somali-American woman, and along with Rep. Rashida Tlaib, is one of the first two Muslim women elected to the U.S. Congress.

The fury unleashed against Omar brings to mind the struggle of Rep. Adam Clayton Powell Jr., a strong ally of the Civil Rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. Like Omar's critique of AIPAC, Powell's fight against racism was unacceptable in the halls of Congress.

After a long and valiant struggle, Powell was forced out of his congressional seat. But in the process, he was embraced by anti-racist and progressive activists, not only in his congressional district in Harlem, but nationwide. The progressive movement of today needs to be ready to stand with Rep. Omar against this current racist and reactionary campaign.

AIPAC is the lobbying group whose mission it is to keep U.S. elected officials paying no mind to Israel's bloody repression of the Palestinian liberation struggle. It's considered one of the most influential lobbying organizations in Washington.

AIPAC facilitates frequent, large campaign contributions to candi-



Rep. Ilhan Omar confronted convicted Iran-Contra criminal Elliott Abrams, now Trump's 'special envoy' on Venezuela.

dates, passes out all-expense-paid trips to Israel for politicians and their families and probably does much more that will never be revealed publicly. In doing so, AIPAC buys congressional silence about the illegal settlements that displace Palestinian families, the murders of Palestinian children by the Israeli "Defense" Forces (IDF), the blockade and constant military attacks against Gaza, the racist treatment of African immigrants and much more.

For years the U.S. political establishment, college administrations and corporate media have been trafficking the idea that any criticism of Israeli apartheid is anti-Semitic. This propaganda war has been ratcheted up as the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) has grown on college campuses across the country and awareness of Israeli apartheid has gained ground. The reaction has been swift and merciless. Journalist Marc Lamont Hill was fired by CNN in November 2018 for his solidarity with the Palestinian struggle.

Omar vs. war criminal Abrams

It isn't only Omar's criticism of AIPAC — which is simply not done in Congress — that has prompted the

reaction against her. She also went after death merchant and newly appointed Special Envoy to Venezuela Elliott Abrams in a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on Feb. 13 for his historic, murderous role in Latin America and his conviction in the Iran-Contra scandal during the Reagan administration.

It's no surprise that the howls of condemnation have been erupting from right-wingers in Congress and even from Trump — who has called for Omar's resignation. But the list of Democrats attacking her is also a long one, and includes prominent figures like House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Chelsea Clinton and a host of lesser-known Democrats hoping to make a name for themselves by defending Israeli repression of the Palestinian people. It points to the bipartisan nature of support for Israel.

AIPAC is funded by right-wing, pro-Israeli forces in the U.S. and is a useful tool for Israel as it fights for any of its own interests that may from time to time come in conflict with its sponsor: U.S. imperialism. And the millions of dollars that flow in and out of AIPAC have fueled the false notion that Israel controls U.S. foreign policy.



The U.S. treasury funds the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the bloody repression against the Palestinian people.

But those millions that AIPAC spends are overshadowed by the billions of dollars dispensed from the U.S. treasury to fund the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the bloody repression against the Palestinian people carried out to maintain it.

Israel: military outpost of U.S. imperialism

Reuters reported on Jan. 29 that Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham and Democratic Sen. Chris Coons, after returning from one of the previously mentioned all-expenses-paid trips to Israel, called for the \$38 billion in military aid already guaranteed to Israel over the next 10 years to be considered only "a floor."

Perhaps the bribery of the trip helped them to feel good about their work, but this funding has been a constant of U.S. imperialism for decades and few have ever even hinted at an interruption of the funding — even in the aftermath of some of the worst atrocities committed by the IDF.

Israel is a military outpost for the interests of U.S. imperialism as it seeks to extend its control over oil resources and strategic military advantage throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The historic theft of Palestine, a bloody land-grab much like the genocidal campaign against Indigenous people in the Americas, was and remains central to the interests of U.S. imperialism.

The struggle against U.S.-backed and U.S.-funded Israeli apartheid cannot be won in Congress. The anti-war and anti-racist movements need to defend Rep. Omar and extend support for the Palestinian people in the streets.

Hands off Ilhan Omar!
Palestine will never die! 🇵🇸

PHILIPPINES

Workers demand return of union leaders



After the Pulido Apparel Company closed its factories in December, citing losses, it began rehiring some of the workers but banned union leaders and any workers who had supported the union.

Since Jan. 21, as many as 350 workers at Pulido Apparel have been demanding that the company, which supplies global brands such as Timberland, UGG, The North Face and J-Crew, increase the minimum wages and reinstate the union members. The strikers also demanded that management remove restrictions on activists who have participated in the ongoing protests.

Read more at tinyurl.com/yycs8hla



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Charges dropped against Black Lives leader

By John Parker
Los Angeles

A tremendous victory occurred Feb. 7 at the Los Angeles County Criminal Justice Courthouse when City Attorney Mike Feuer was forced to drop all charges against the leading coordinator of Los Angeles Black Lives Matter, Dr. Melina Abdullah.

Abdullah was facing criminal charges that could have meant significant jail time for protesting at Police Commission hearings. The agreement to drop the charges, reached after months of protests, petitions and packed courtrooms, also struck down the justification for her arrest, making protesting at the commission hearings easier to continue.

At a press conference outside of the courthouse immediately following

the victory, Abdullah thanked the attorneys who worked pro bono and folks representing the legacy of Black liberation struggles in this country. She praised a member of the San Francisco 8 — Black Panther mem-

bers who were tortured by the state — and the Nation of Islam for providing security for her after she received violent threats, and the many activists of every ethnicity that refused to give up the fight. 🇵🇸



All charges against the leading coordinator of Los Angeles Black Lives Matter, Dr. Melina Abdullah, were dropped after months of protests, petitions and packed courtrooms.

PHOTO BY JEREMY WHITE

NICOLÁS MADURO:

Open letter to people of the United States Una carta al pueblo de los Estados Unidos

Si algo sé es de pueblos, porque tal como ustedes soy un hombre de pueblo. Nací y crecí en un barrio pobre de Caracas. Me forjé al calor de las luchas populares y sindicales en una Venezuela sumida en la exclusión y la desigualdad. No soy un magnate, soy un trabajador de razón y de corazón, que hoy tengo el gran privilegio de presidir la nueva Venezuela, arraigada en un modelo de desarrollo inclusivo y de igualdad social, que forjó el Comandante Hugo Chávez desde 1998 inspirado en el legado bolivariano.

Vivimos hoy un trance histórico. Corren días que definirán el futuro de nuestros países entre la guerra y la paz. Vuestros representantes nacionales de Washington quieren traer a sus fronteras el mismo odio que sembraron en Vietnam. Quieren invadir e intervenir Venezuela –ellos dicen, como lo dijeron entonces– en nombre de la democracia y de la libertad. Pero no es así. La historia de la usurpación del poder en Venezuela es tan falsa como las armas de destrucción masiva en Irak. Es un caso falso pero que puede tener consecuencias dramáticas para nuestra región entera.

Venezuela es un país que por obra de su Constitución de 1999 ha expandido ampliamente la democracia participativa y protagónica del pueblo, y que de forma inédita es hoy uno de los países con mayor número de procesos electorales en sus últimos 20 años. Podrá no gustar nuestra ideología, o nuestro aspecto, pero existimos y somos millones.

Dirijo estas palabras al pueblo de los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica para alertar lo de la gravedad y peligrosidad que pretenden unos sectores en la Casa Blanca de invadir Venezuela, con consecuencias impredecibles para mi Patria y para toda la región americana. El Presidente Donald Trump pretende además perturbar nobles iniciativas de diálogo impulsadas por Uruguay y México con el apoyo del CARICOM para una solución pacífica y dialogada a favor de Venezuela. Sabemos que por el bien de Venezuela tenemos que sentarnos y dialogar, porque negarse a dialogar es elegir la fuerza como camino. Tengamos presente las palabras de John F. Kennedy: “Nunca negociemos por miedo. Pero nunca tengamos miedo a negociar”. ¿Tendrán miedo a la verdad los que no quieren dialogar?

La intolerancia política hacia el modelo bolivariano venezolano y las apetencias por nuestros inmensos recursos petroleros, minerales y otras grandes riquezas, ha impulsado una coalición internacional encabezada por el gobierno de los EEUU para cometer la grave locura de agredir militarmente a Venezuela bajo la falsa excusa de una crisis humanitaria inexistente.

El pueblo de Venezuela ha sufrido dolorosamente heridas sociales causadas por un criminal bloqueo comercial y financiero, que ha sido agravada por el despojo y robo de nuestros recursos financieros y activos en países alineados con esta demencial embestida. Y sin embargo, gracias a un novedoso sistema de protección social, de atención directa a sectores más vulnerables, con orgullo seguimos siendo un país con índice de desarrollo humano alto y menor desigualdad en América.

El pueblo estadounidense debe saber que esta compleja agresión multiforme se ejecuta con total impunidad y en franca violación a la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, que expresamente proscribía la amenaza o el uso de la fuerza, entre otros principios y propósitos en aras de la paz y las relaciones de amistad entre las Naciones.

Queremos seguir siendo socios comerciales del pueblo de Estados Unidos, como lo hemos sido a lo largo de nuestra historia. Sus políticos en Washington, en cambio, están dispuestos a enviar a sus hijos e hijas a morir en una guerra absurda, en lugar de respetar el derecho sagrado del pueblo venezolano a la autodeterminación y al resguardo de su soberanía.

Como ustedes, pueblo estadounidense, los venezolanos y venezolanas somos patriotas. Y defenderemos lo nuestro con todos los trozos de nuestra alma. Hoy Venezuela está unida en un solo clamor: exigimos el cese de la agresión que busca asfixiar nuestra economía y sofocar socialmente a nuestro pueblo, así como el cese de las graves y peligrosas amenazas de intervención militar contra Venezuela. Apelamos al alma buena de la sociedad estadounidense, víctima de sus propios gobernantes, para que se unan a nuestro llamado por la paz, seamos un solo pueblo contra el belicismo y la guerra.

¡Que vivan los pueblos de América!

Nicolás Maduro

Presidente de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela

If I know anything, it is about people such as you; I am a man of the people. I was born and raised in a poor neighborhood of Caracas. I forged myself in the heat of popular and union struggles in a Venezuela submerged in exclusion and inequality. I am not a tycoon, I am a worker in reason and heart. Today I have the great privilege of presiding over the new Venezuela, rooted in a model of inclusive development and social equality, which was forged by Commander Hugo Chávez since 1998, inspired by the Bolivarian legacy.

We live today at a historical crossroad. These are days that will define the future of our countries between war and peace. Your national representatives in Washington want to bring to our borders the same hatred that they planted in Vietnam. They want to invade and intervene in Venezuela – they say, as they said then – in the name of democracy and freedom. But it's not like that. The story of the usurpation of power in Venezuela is as false as the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. It is a false case, but it can have dramatic consequences for our entire region.

Venezuela is a country that, by virtue of its 1999 Constitution, has broadly expanded the participatory and active democracy of the people, and that is unprecedented today, as one of the countries with the largest number of electoral processes in its last 20 years. You might not like our ideology or our appearance, but we exist and we are millions.

I address these words to the people of the United States of America to warn of the gravity and danger intended by some sectors in the White House to invade Venezuela with unpredictable consequences for my country and for the entire American region. President Donald Trump also intends to disrupt the noble dialogue initiatives promoted by Uruguay and Mexico, with the support of CARICOM, for a peaceful solution and dialogue in favor of Venezuela. We know that for the good of Venezuela we have to sit down and talk, because to refuse to dialogue is to choose force as a way. Keep in mind the words of John F. Kennedy: “Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.” Are those who do not want dialogue afraid of the truth?

The political intolerance towards the Venezuelan Bolivarian model and the desires for our immense oil resources, minerals, and other great riches, has prompted an international coalition headed by the U.S. government to commit the serious insanity of militarily attacking Venezuela under the false excuse of a non-existent humanitarian crisis.

The people of Venezuela have suffered painful social wounds caused by a criminal commercial and financial blockade, which has been aggravated by the dispossession and robbery of our financial resources and assets in countries aligned with this demented onslaught.

And yet, thanks to a new system of social protection, of direct attention to the most vulnerable sectors, we proudly continue to be a country with a high human development index and lower inequality in the Americas.

The people in the U.S. must know that this complex, multiform aggression is carried out with total impunity and in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations, which expressly outlaws the threat or use of force, among other principles and purposes, for the sake of peace and the friendly relations between nations.

We want to continue being business partners of the people of the United States, as we have been throughout our history. Their politicians in Washington, on the other hand, are willing to send their sons and daughters to die in an absurd war, instead of respecting the sacred right of the Venezuelan people to self-determination and safeguarding their sovereignty.

Like you, people of the United States, we Venezuelans are patriots. And we shall defend our homeland with every piece of our soul. Today Venezuela is united in a single outcry: we demand the cessation of the aggression that seeks to suffocate our economy and socially suffocate our people, as well as

the cessation of the serious and dangerous threats of military intervention against Venezuela. We appeal to the good soul of American society, a victim of its own leaders, to join our call for peace. Let us all be one people against warmongering and war.

Long live the peoples of America!

Nicolás Maduro

President of the Bolivarian
Republic of Venezuela



Feb. 9 protest in Los Angeles

SLL PHOTO

STRUGGLE ★ **LA LUCHA**
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