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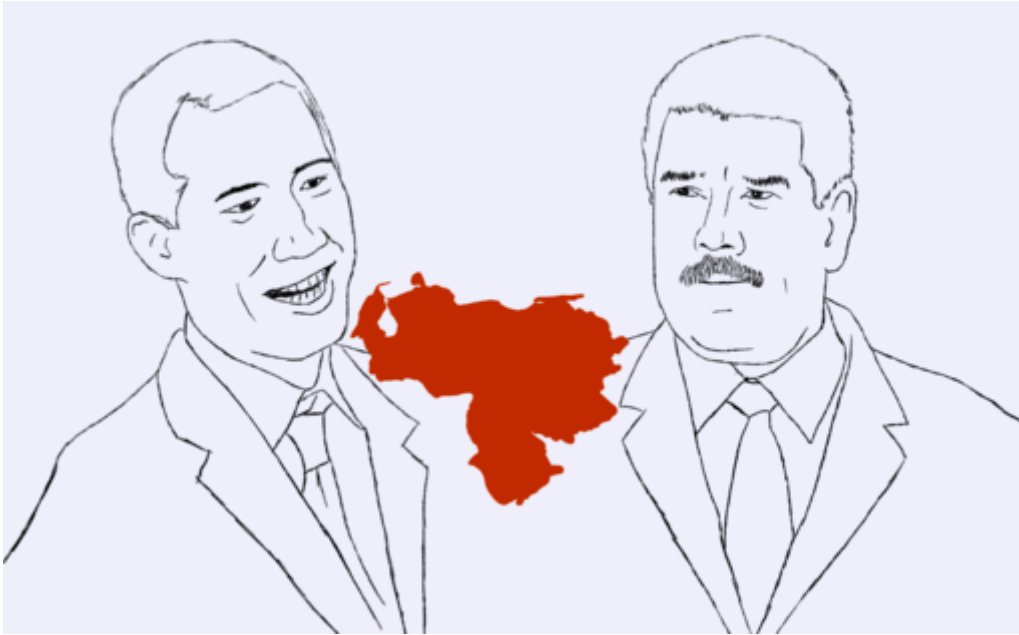
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by DAVE LINDORFF

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It Looks Like Another Failed US Coup in Venezuela



Drawing by Nathaniel St. Clair

The imperialist neocons infesting the Trump administration, and the orange-faced joke of a president himself, may think they can invent their own reality through propaganda, as Bush's "brain" Karl Rove used to claim about the Bush/Cheney administration, but when it comes to Latin America, they fail to realize how deeply the people of that continent loath and resent the US and its colonial-era Monroe Doctrine.

The failure of the latest coup plotted so carefully in the war rooms of the White House, Pentagon and CIA was pre-ordained as soon as it became clear that Washington's chosen puppet Juan Gerardo Guaidó Márquez was nothing more than a creation of theirs, meant to do the bidding of the plotters in DC.

By the time Guaidó appeared on a bridge in Caracas flanked by the opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, whom defecting Venezuelan soldiers had reportedly released from house arrest where he had been sentenced for fomenting violence, along with a handful of troops from one unit, many of whom, reportedly, had been tricked into showing up by their commanding officers, and who fled when they realized they were being asked to shoot at fellow soldiers of the Venezuelan military, Guaidó's attempt to create a coup by televising a staged one was already collapsing around him.

In short order, troops and officers who had supported Guaidó began entering foreign embassies like Brazil's and Chile's and Spain's, seeking asylum. Opposition leader Lopez, who clearly recognized the coup had failed, left Guaidó's side quickly and, with his family, sought asylum in the Chilean embassy, later moving with them to the nicer and perhaps safer quarters of the Spanish embassy.

The latest charade harks back to the 2002 coup, actually a much more serious attempt to kidnap and oust the popular elected president Hugo Chavez. That time, while many top generals backed the coup, the enlisted ranks backed Chavez and forced the generals to back down — but not before the Bush/Cheney administration had already hastily recognized the coup leaders as the new government, showing their hand as being behind that assault on Venezuelan democracy.

This time, the generals are backing Chavez's successor Nicolás Maduro Moros, as are most of the military rank and file. But the script is similar, with Washington planning the overthrow of the country's president and instantly throwing its support behind the puppet who stands up and declares himself to be the new presidente. And this time too, the people have rallied to their elected leader, massing at the Presidential Palace as before to defend their country's sovereignty and democracy.

As in 2002, the US corporate media have soiled themselves trumpeting the popularity of a coup that is actually widely loathed by the Venezuelan people. The US media also shamelessly pedaled fake news put out by Washington, suggesting that Russia had to prevent Maduro from fleeing to Cuba, that the Venezuelan military was abandoning Maduro, and that the coup was victorious. It is a shameful spectacle of corporate propaganda at work.

How this will all play out at this point is too early to tell. Will Guaidó end up being arrested and tried for treason for this latest move on his part? Will he be plucked to safety and spirited away to the US by some daring Navy Seal rescue? Will he hide out in the Brazilian or Colombian embassy? It's hard to say but after this disaster, his utility to his

Washington handlers is zero, so he'll likely be on his own at this point. If he's lucky he won't end up being denied asylum in the US by the Trump Immigration Office as just another Latin American moocher, which in his case would be a uniquely accurate characterization.

Kudos to the people of Venezuela for standing up for their sovereignty.

Maduro surely has his faults as a leader. But most of his problems have nothing to do with personal failings or lack of that charisma and human warmth that his mentor Chavez had in such abundance, but are the result of both the huge decline in oil prices that have left him unable to fund the programs that made Chavez's Bolivarian revolution so hugely popular among the Venezuelan masses, and of massive economic warfare being conducted by the US government against Venezuela, including the blocking of oil exports and the sanctioning of goods going into the country.

As with Cuba, long a target of American economic warfare, the people of Venezuela know who is making their lives miserable, and that it is the same imperial power across the Caribbean that just attempted to steal their elected government and impose one subservient to its own interests.

And it looks like they have once again foiled Washington's attempt to accomplish this.

If any foreign powers come out looking good in this farce of a coup it is Russia and Cuba, both of which stood by Venezuela despite threats from the US.

Those two countries certainly a lot better than the 50 governments — puppets all — that bowed to US pressure and recognized the pathetic unelected Guaidó as the “legitimate president” of Venezuela and that now look like fools and stooges.

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Dave Lindorff is a founding member of [ThisCantBeHappening!](#), an online newspaper collective, and is a contributor to [Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion](#) (AK Press).