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## Washington's Dogs of War Are Snarling at Iran and Venezuela



Illustration by Nathaniel St. Clair

What constitutes the bulwark of our own liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling sea coasts, the guns of our war steamers, or the strength of our gallant and disciplined army . . . Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, every where. Destroy this spirit, and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors.

President Abraham Lincoln, September 11, 1858

At this moment the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln and a massive strike group of other war steamers (including the guided-missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf and four destroyers: the USS Bainbridge, Gonzalez, Mason and Nitze) are deploying to the Persian Gulf to join a newly-arrived B-52 nuclear-capable bomber group, adding to the already vast US military presence in that region.

According to National Security Adviser John Bolton, all these ships and airplanes and missiles are there “to send a clear and unmistakable message to the Iranian regime that any attack on United States interests or on those of our allies will be met with unrelenting force.”

There were a few — very few — warning voices, such as Senator Tim Kaine who said on May 7 he is “deeply worried that the Trump administration is leading us toward an unnecessary war with Iran” but many people and organizations such as the Brookings Institution (“Our Mission is to conduct in-depth research that leads to new ideas for solving problems facing society at the local, national and global level”) have different views.

One of Brookings’ luminaries, Michael O’Hanlon, declared, no doubt in-depth, that “I like the decision, to the extent I can understand the backdrop to it, because it tells Iran they won’t get away with doing something nasty by proxy. We are on to them. That may or may not suffice as deterrent, and we have to be careful about assuming that a carrier or bomber can stop a covert operative, but I still favor it – and I also favor reminding Iran that we aren’t really pivoting out of the Middle East too too dramatically, either.”

No : the US has not intention of “pivoting” away from any part of the world in which it persists in meddling, from the South China Sea via the Gulf, Black Sea, the Baltic, and, of course, South America, where Washington’s sights are on Venezuela.

On May 3 President Trump telephoned President Putin and the Washington Post reported him as saying “I thought it was a very positive conversation I had with President Putin on Venezuela.” This was in spite of the fact that when the wife of the US-backed anti-government rebel chief, Juan Guaido, was the guest of Trump in the Oval Office on 27 March he promised he would “fix” Venezuela and insisted that “Russia has to get out.”

On May 1 US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told Fox News that regarding Venezuela, Donald Trump “has been crystal clear and incredibly consistent. Military action is

possible. If that's what's required, that's what the United States will do." The same day, the "unmistakable message" man, John Bolton [said on CNN](#) that "The Russians like nothing better than putting a thumb in our eyes. They'd love to get effective control of a country in this hemisphere. . . . We've made it clear to the Russians . . . why we think that behavior is unacceptable to us." They were followed by Senator Lindsey Graham who [tweeted](#) "Cuba, Russia send troops to prop Maduro up in Venezuela while we talk sanction. Where is our aircraft carrier?"

Thanks to Washington's sanctions, the people of Venezuela are suffering grievously. Children are starving and medical care is in crisis because it's always ordinary folk who suffer when people like Trump's henchmen, Bolton and Pompeo, try to provoke revolution.

On April 30 Pompeo [tweeted](#) that "Today interim President Juan Guaido announced start of Operación Libertad. The US Government fully supports the Venezuelan people in their quest for freedom and democracy. Democracy cannot be defeated."

Yes it can. It is being defeated in many countries by the intrigues of the Washington War Machine which zooms, rolls and blasts its way from country to country, causing economic chaos and untold human misery along its blood-spattered route.

One of the latest coup-supporting allegations came from Bolton, a major [supporter](#) of the 2003 Iraq war fiasco, about which it might be remembered that four weeks before the US invaded Iraq the newspaper Haaretz [reported](#) that "US Undersecretary of State John Bolton said in meetings with Israeli officials on [17 February 2003] that he has no doubt America will attack Iraq, and that it will be necessary to deal with threats from Syria, Iran and North Korea afterwards." He didn't mention Venezuela at that time, but it has now appeared on his target screen, and on May 2 he [told the media](#) "We have been planning for what we call the day after — the day after Maduro — for quite some time. It's been very much on our mind that we can provide a lot of assistance to the Guaido government when he assumes power to try to get the Venezuelan [sic] out of the ditch that Maduro has put it in." Then he claimed that there are [25,000 Cuban troops](#) in Venezuela.

This prompted Sean Hannity of Fox News (greatly [admired by Trump](#)) to [announce](#) that "Maduro is backed by Russia. It [sic] is backed by Iran, Hezbollah. The terrorist group funded by Iran has been training government forces in Venezuela now for years. Cuba is providing 20,000 troops to protect Maduro from his own people."

Hannity didn't lose the opportunity to include Iran in his tirade because it is always important to make such links, as it prepares ordinary Americans for the day when the Pentagon takes military action against the Security State's target of the moment. Should Venezuela collapse under US pressure, the way will be open to get on with achieving the main mission — bombing, rocketing and destroying the Islamic Republic of Iran, whose very name is spine-shivering to all God-fearing Christian and Jewish people.

It looks as if it won't be long before this happens, because on May 1 (two days before telephoning President Putin) Trump [told Fox News](#) that Venezuela is “an incredible mess . . . The place is so bad and so dangerous . . . so something is going to have to be done.” When asked what Washington's options could be, he replied “Well, some of them I don't even like to mention to you because they are pretty tough. A lot of things will be going on over the next week and sooner than that. We will see what happens.”

So we can take it that no matter how resurgent President Maduro appeared, following the failed coup attempt by US-supported Juan Guaido, he is destined for overthrow and death. It could be another case of “[We came; We saw; He died](#)”, as when Libya's president was murdered in 2011 after eight months of aerial bombardment by the US and its allies.

Then it will be the turn of Iran where, as [pointed out](#) by Jacob Hornberger of the Future of Freedom Foundation, Washington “continues to use economic sanctions to target the Iranian people with impoverishment and death as a way of hopefully effecting another regime change within the country.”

During its regime-change fandangos, the Trump Security State unilaterally repealed the July 2015 arrangement with Iran, [the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action](#), which was aimed at ensuring that “Iran's nuclear program will be exclusively peaceful.” The accord lifted sanctions that affected almost every aspect of Iranian life. Iran, in turn, agreed that “under no circumstances will Iran ever seek, develop or acquire any nuclear weapons,” and approved a strict international monitoring system which permitted access by inspectors to any site that could possibly be associated with nuclear weapons-related activities.

Trump's SS ripped up the agreement, in spite of the fact that Iran was complying with it to the letter, as [made clear](#) by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which conducts inspections of Iranian facilities. It went so far as to state that “Timely and proactive cooperation by Iran in providing such access facilitates implementation of the

Additional Protocol and enhances confidence.” The IAEA’s report of [February 2019](#) says the Agency has had access to “all the sites and locations in Iran which it needed to visit” and its Director General, the admirable Yukiya Amano, [said on 4 March](#) that “Iran is implementing its nuclear commitments.”

But Washington has spurned Iran’s compliance, and intensified a savage sanctions regime with the aim of encouraging an uprising to overthrow the government.

At a White House media conference on May 3, Trump [declared](#) that “Getting along with countries is a good thing and we want to have good relations with everybody.” Everybody, that is, except those countries the Washington War Machine intends to target, ensuring that the world will suffer ever more suffering, death and destruction.

On May 8 Trump [signed](#) an executive order sanctioning Iran’s iron, steel, aluminium and copper industries, saying “We are successfully imposing the most powerful maximum pressure campaign ever witnessed, which today’s action will further strengthen.”

Trump, Bolton, Pompeo and their uniformed puppets are confronting, taunting and goading Iran in the hope that its government will react military, whereupon Washington will rejoice and let loose the dogs of war.

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