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by DANIEL KOVALIK

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## US Press Reaches All-Time Low on Venezuela Coverage



Drawing by Nathaniel St. Clair

As famed Latin American author Eduardo Galeano once wrote, “every time the US ‘saves’ a country, it converts it into either an insane asylum or a cemetery.” Of course, as we look over the wreckage left by the US in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, Syria, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, we see that this statement is demonstrably true. And yet, now that the US is poised for another intervention, this time in Venezuela, the press is right there again to cheer it along.

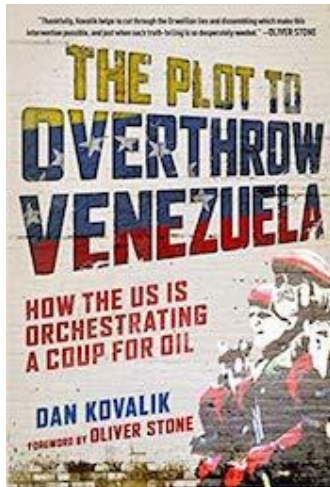
Analyzing 76 total press articles of the “elite” press from January 15 to April 15, 2019, Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR) could find not one voice that opposed Trump’s regime plans in Venezuela. Meanwhile, 54 percent openly supported these plans. Of course, this should not be all too surprising given the press’s usual complicity in past US

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war efforts — e.g., by pushing such war lies as the Gulf of Tonkin, the killing of babies in Kuwait, the WMDS of Iraq and the alleged Viagra-fueled rapes in Libya. The current war lies are coming fast and furious from such outlets as CNN which lied about seeing Maduro forces lighting aid containers on fire at the Colombian border (it was in fact opposition forces which did so as the NYT admitted two weeks later), and which claimed that US puppet Juan Guaido actually won the presidential election against Nicolas Maduro when in fact Guaido never even ran for president.

What is quite stunning, however, is the total unanimity of the press in uncritically covering and supporting the ongoing coup in Venezuela. This is baffling because the same press outlets which have been rightly critical of Trump for all of his stupidity, lying and meanness, have suddenly found him brilliant, true and benevolent when it comes to Venezuela. This is particularly remarkable given that his partners in this crime are Neo-Con John Bolton; former CIA Director Mike Pompeo who recently joked that the CIA's true motto is "We lied, We Cheated, We Stole"; and convicted liar Elliott Abrams. As for Abrams, he is infamous for his role in the illegal funding of the Nicaraguan Contras; his covering up of the El Mazote massacre in El Salvador in which around



1000 civilians, mostly women and children, were killed by US-backed forces; and his aiding and abetting the US-backed genocide in Guatemala.

And yet, somehow, we are to believe from our “free” press that this band of rogues is going to deliver democracy and human rights to Venezuela. Never mind the fact that Trump himself is President after losing to Hillary Clinton by nearly 3 million votes, and that the US, in the words of former President Jimmy Carter, no longer has a functioning democracy. As for Venezuela, on the other hand, Carter has said that its electoral system is “the best in the world.”

Meanwhile, this same captive press incessantly tells of us of all the deprivations and travails in Venezuela while refusing to explain how, as UN Expert Dr. Alfred de Zayas has concluded, this state of affairs is largely the result of brutal US sanctions. Recently, respected economist Jeffrey Sachs co-authored a report showing that, since August of 2017, over 40,000 Venezuelans have died due to the US sanctions which have deprived Venezuela of food and life-saving medicines. But few would know any of this because the voices of de Zayas and Sachs are never heard in the mainstream press.

Also unheard are any of the 6 million Venezuelans who voted for Nicolas Maduro in May of 2018, many of whom turn out for massive pro-government demonstrations. Instead, the press gives ink and air time only to mostly white, well-off and English-speaking individuals who support the opposition, giving the false impression that Maduro has no support.

Moreover, in Orwellian fashion, the press refuses to call the current push for a military uprising in Venezuela a “coup,” while the same time referring to Maduro invariably as “repressive” and as a “dictator,” and his government as a “regime.”

In short, instead of giving two sides of the story, the press gives us one, ignores crucial facts and tells us how we should be viewing the situation in Venezuela. This is not journalism at all, but naked propaganda, and it is shameful.

The fact that, despite all of the US pressure and threats, and despite all of the lies, the Venezuelan people have not risen up en masse in support of Juan Guaido – a man 80 percent of Venezuelans never heard of until he declared himself president with the US’s urging – should tell one that things are not as we are being led to believe. What we are seeing in Venezuela is but another attempted coup made in the USA, and it is the same type as the ones that brought such scoundrels as General Pinochet to power in Chile. But one would never know this from our trusted press which has decided that it is the mouthpiece for the State Department instead of a check on a President and a nation run amok.

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