

“Bold, audacious, stunning”: A servile US media hails Trump’s Venezuela war crime

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Major US corporate news media have responded to the US military invasion of Venezuela and kidnapping of Nicolás Maduro in unison. Celebrating the illegal act of imperialist aggression with words such as “bold,” “audacious,” “daring” and “stunning,” this response—derived from White House talking points—reveals the news media as a direct instrument of imperialist colonialism and war propaganda.

In the early hours of Saturday morning, US forces launched what was publicly described as a “large-scale assault” on Venezuela, culminating in the seizure and removal of Maduro from the country in an operation coordinated with US intelligence agencies. Multiple explosions were reported across Caracas as low-flying US aircraft struck targets in and around the capital, while elite special operations forces penetrated the presidential security perimeter under cover of an American-engineered blackout of the city.

According to the latest reports, as many as 80 people were killed during the operation, including civilians. The Cuban government has officially reported 32 Cuban military and intelligence personnel killed during the US assault.

The entire US media has repeated the talking points of fascist Senator Tom Cotton, who appeared on the Sunday talk shows as a surrogate for Trump to declare that Trump’s attack on Venezuela was “bold, audacious, direct action.”

The response by the *Washington Post*—owned by Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos—set the political and ideological tone for the entire corporate media. In its editorial, the *Post* hailed the invasion as a “stunning demonstration of American resolve” and a “bold, tactically flawless operation” that removed “a tyrant long allied with hostile powers.”

The *Post* praised Trump and the military high command for an operation of “audacious reach and surgical precision,” stressing that the action sent “an unmistakable message” to rival powers and to any government that “defies US security interests in the hemisphere.”

Not a single line in the *Post* editorial questioned the legitimacy of the action or raised the slightest concern that the United States had unilaterally violated the most fundamental norms of state sovereignty. Instead, the *Post* complained that the White House lacked a sufficiently elaborated “post-Maduro plan” to manage Venezuela’s transition under de facto US colonial control.

Throughout the broadcast and print media, the vocabulary used to describe the operation was strikingly uniform, revealing a

tightly coordinated propaganda campaign taking its line from CIA briefing documents.

- NPR called the operation “an audacious and surprising move” and “a daring middle-of-the-night raid.”

- ABC News described it as a “stunning capture.”

- CBS News reported on “a stunning, large-scale attack.”

- NBC News called it “the most audacious military operation” of Trump’s presidency.

- CNN described the military operation and Trump’s subsequent press conference as “extraordinary” and “remarkable.”

- The *National Review* called the operation “audacious” and “technically proficient,” arguing it “sends a powerful message” to adversaries.

- Bloomberg headlined its coverage, “Trump Reshapes World Order with Daring Venezuela Raid.”

- The *Atlantic* ran an article titled “Trump’s Audacious Success.”

- The *Los Angeles Times* reported that Trump said the US would “run Venezuela after capturing Maduro in audacious attack.”

Across this spectrum, the key adjectives—“bold,” “audacious,” “daring,” “stunning”—were endlessly recycled, while the language of law and references to colonialism and war crimes were completely absent. Not one of these outlets provided a historically or politically accurate description or referred to international law.

The coordination between the media and the military went beyond cheerleading. According to a report by Semafor, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, “learned of a secret US raid on Venezuela soon before it was scheduled to begin Friday night—but held off publishing what they knew to avoid endangering US troops.” That is, the media was actively involved in covering up a war crime, making it an accomplice.

The US assault on Venezuela violates the most basic provisions of the UN Charter governing the use of force. The UN Charter was ratified by the US Congress on July 28, 1945, and signed into law by Harry Truman on August 8, 1945. It is considered part of US law under the Constitution’s Supremacy Clause.

Article 2(4) of the Charter prohibits “the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state,” a formula written precisely to outlaw the kind of armed intervention carried out by Washington in Caracas. The kidnapping of a sitting head of state, the bombardment of the capital, and the declaration that the United States will “run Venezuela” for an indefinite transition period all constitute a

frontal attack on Venezuela's territorial integrity and political independence.

The Charter authorizes the use of force only in two narrowly defined circumstances: self-defense in response to an armed attack, or collective action sanctioned by the UN Security Council. Neither condition exists in this case. In legal terms, the US government has carried out an unprovoked act of aggression, the supreme crime under international law, encompassing within it all other war crimes, and for which the Nazis were prosecuted at the Nuremberg Trials following World War II.

Additionally, the US naval blockade of Venezuela constitutes an act of aggression under UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, which explicitly lists "the blockade of the ports or coasts of a State by the armed forces of another State" as aggression. The seizure of Venezuela's oil resources—which Trump openly declared as his objective—constitutes pillage under international humanitarian law.

None of these issues are broached in the coverage in the print media, nor in the television broadcast media of the major networks, which are staffed by toadies passing as "journalists." This is an expression of class interests.

First, the major networks and newspapers are owned and controlled by the same financial/corporate oligarchy that supports the Trump administration and its foreign policy.

These outlets do not "cover" imperialist operations from the outside; they are integrated into the state's ideological apparatus, briefed by the Pentagon and intelligence agencies and aligned with Wall Street's demand for control of Venezuela's vast oil and strategic resources.

Second, the propagandistic repetition of "bold," "audacious," "daring" and "stunning" serves a specific ideological function: to transform a crime into a spectacle of virtuosity. By saturating the public with admiration for the operation's "tactical success," the news media seek to preempt questions about its colonial character and legitimize the openly declared aim of placing Venezuela under US control.

The total absence of the phrase "war crime" from these reports is itself damning. Within the US corporate news outlets, legality is invoked only against the official enemies. When the US kidnaps a president and bombs a capital, the discussion shifts to a review of the "flawlessly executed" character of Operation Absolute Resolve.

The adulation of the media is also aimed at muffling the opposition of the American public. Before the invasion, a Quinnipiac University poll found that 63 percent of voters opposed US military action inside Venezuela, with only 25 percent in favor. Opposition was overwhelming among Democrats (89 percent) and strong among independents (68 percent), with a substantial share of Republicans rejecting the prospect of another US war in Latin America.

Subsequent polling highlighted by national outlets, including CBS/YouGov and CNN, also confirmed that a majority of Americans oppose the invasion and kidnapping, with skepticism toward the claim that such operations have anything to do with "democracy" or "fighting drugs." This chasm between public opinion and media propaganda proves that the corporate press does

not "reflect" public opinion but regurgitates the strategic interests of the state and the billionaire class it serves.

The opposition among millions of workers and youth toward the attack on Venezuela is the product of the past quarter century of imperialist wars that were all launched based on lies and "bad man" campaigns used to justify them. The 2003 invasion of Iraq was sold with fabricated stories about "weapons of mass destruction" and the demonization of Saddam Hussein; the destruction of Libya in 2011 was justified by lurid claims of impending massacres by Muammar Gaddafi.

In every case, the corporate media repeated the official narrative, only to quietly and partially acknowledge years later that the wars had been based on falsehoods and had produced catastrophes measured in hundreds of thousands of deaths and entire societies laid waste. These experiences have left a mark on the consciousness of the American and international working class.

A central lesson that must be drawn by workers and youth from the Venezuelan invasion and the media's reaction to it is that no opposition to war and dictatorship can be expected from the corporate press. The attempt to resurrect and extend the Monroe Doctrine—asserting US hegemony over the entire Western Hemisphere—necessarily means permanent war against the peoples of Latin America and escalating confrontation with rival powers, alongside an intensifying assault on the social and democratic rights of workers in the United States itself.

The media's fawning coverage of the kidnapping of Maduro is a warning that the ruling class is tossing aside all legal norms in pursuit of global domination. Opposition must come from below, through the independent political mobilization of the working class in the US, across the Americas and internationally against imperialism and the capitalist system that breeds war. This requires the building of new, revolutionary leadership rooted in the struggles of the working class, armed with the lessons of history and based on the struggle for socialism.



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