

Kenyan Stalinist CPM-K attacks WSWS while praising Venezuela's Delcy Rodríguez ahead of CIA talks

Kipchumba Ochieng
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The US invasion of Venezuela and the abduction of President Nicolás Maduro are a criminal attempt to reimpose colonial domination not only in Venezuela, but across Latin America and beyond. The events have also exposed the Bolivarian regime in Venezuela. Its leaders are rapidly moving toward accommodation with US President Donald Trump at the expense of the working class, amid mounting popular anger at Trump's policy of plunder.

This explosive situation is exposing the bourgeois character of the Venezuelan regime and the reactionary role of those who glorify it. That includes Stalinist Communist Party Marxist-Kenya (CPM-K) General Secretary Booker Omole, who for years has promoted bourgeois nationalism and denounced the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS) for its principled criticisms of such regimes and the CPM-K's defence of capitalism.

The CPM-K leadership is publicly praising interim Venezuelan President Delcy Rodríguez, portraying her as an emblem of "anti-imperialist resistance," even as she holds direct talks with the Trump, meets with the CIA, and presides over arrangements placing Venezuela's oil revenues under US control. Omole's glorification of a regime ready to facilitate the imperialist subjugation and plunder of its country is laying bare the bankruptcy of bourgeois nationalism and Stalinism.

His promotion of forces trying to work out relations with the CIA flows from his Stalinist orientation to bourgeois nationalism and his vitriolic hostility to Trotskyism. His enthusiastic promotion of "Comrade Delcy" as she orients to Trump has gone hand-in-hand with denunciations of the WSWS and the International Committee of the Fourth International, the leadership of the world Trotskyist movement.

On January 3, in response to the abduction of Maduro, Omole hailed Venezuela's bourgeois-nationalist regime. The CPM-K issued a statement titled "Militant Solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and President Nicolás Maduro Moros Against United States Imperialist Aggression." In it, Omole declared CPM-K's

unshakeable solidarity to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, to its heroic working people, to its patriotic armed forces, and to the legitimate Bolivarian Government led by President Nicolás Maduro Moros, in the face of the criminal military aggression unleashed by United States imperialism.

Omole concluded a series of tweets predicting a Venezuelan military defeat of the United States by denouncing Trotskyism, writing: "Trots are a nuisance!" Only hours before, he had publicly denounced the WSWS for its exposure, published last October, of his promotion of pro-

imperialist Kenyan politician Raila Odinga following his death. Apparently, Omole had been seething over the article for months.

That WSWS article explained that by hailing Odinga's role in a supposed "bourgeois democratic struggle," the CPM-K legitimised a capitalist politician who for decades functioned as a political fixer for Kenyan and imperialist interests. Odinga channelled mass opposition into constitutional reforms, national unity governments and support for IMF austerity, police-state repression and imperialist military interventions in Somalia and West Africa.

What unites the CPM-K's defence of Odinga's reactionary legacy and its uncritical support for the Bolivarian regime is a defence of nationalism and capitalism against the independent interests of the working class. This perspective is exposed as bankrupt by the developments in Venezuela.

On January 9, Omole hailed Rodríguez as interim president in a tweet, posting a photo of himself with her holding the Stalinist magazine *Itikadi* some years before. That same day, Rodríguez's government announced it had "decided to initiate an exploratory diplomatic process with the government of the United States of America, aimed at re-establishing diplomatic missions in both countries." Rodríguez was signaling the government's eagerness to restore relations with Washington less than a week after the US military illegally invaded Venezuela, killed over 100 people, and kidnapped the country's president.

The next day, on January 10, PDVSA, the Venezuelan national oil company, hailed the US Navy's illegal seizure of a Russian tanker transporting Venezuelan oil in the Atlantic Ocean. It presented this US act of war against Russia as a great success of Venezuelan cooperation with Trump. The PDVSA, formerly run by Rodríguez, issued a communiqué declaring:

US and Venezuelan authorities have announced the success of the joint operations to force the return of the ship Minerva, which left port without paying for its oil and without the authorization of Venezuelan authorities. Thanks to this first, successful joint operation, the vessel is now steaming to return to Venezuelan waters to be taken back under control and for other pertinent actions.

Omole remained silent. But the political implications of his praise for Rodríguez were further exposed in the days that followed.

On January 12, Rodríguez announced that she had spoken directly with Trump. She fatuously boasted of a "long and courteous" telephone conversation conducted "in a spirit of mutual respect, during which we discussed a bilateral working agenda for the benefit of our peoples, as well

as outstanding issues between our governments."

The cynicism of Rodríguez's statement is staggering. What "mutual respect" can possibly exist when Trump has declared he will "run" Venezuela and control its oil? Rodríguez made no mention whatsoever of Maduro's kidnapping, the bloodshed inflicted by US forces, or the ongoing navy embargo. Trump also described the call, praising Rodríguez as a "terrific person", noting "tremendous progress" and promising a "spectacular" partnership on oil and national security.

On January 14, the CPM-K organised a protest outside the US embassy in Nairobi, which Kenyan police violently suppressed. The CPM-K tweeted: "Kenyan police, with instructions from Washington and CIA intelligence, blocked protestors who were showing solidarity with the people of Venezuela and against US imperialism."

But even as the CPM-K sought to tap into genuine mass hostility to US imperialism in Kenya, the party's leadership was working to channel it back into promoting bourgeois nationalism and the Bolivarian regime, which was seeking out ties with the same CIA the CPM-K blamed for repressing its supporters.

The next day, Rodríguez met directly with the agency. Such was Washington's confidence in the political reliability of the Venezuelan regime that it dispatched the Director of the CIA himself, John Ratcliffe, to Caracas. Trump had not the slightest concern that he might be detained to demand the release of the abducted president.

According to Ratcliffe, the talks focused on economic and security cooperation, and the view that Venezuela "can no longer be a safe haven for America's adversaries." That is, the goal of these talks was to realign the Venezuelan regime against Russia and China, in accordance with US imperialist strategy.

The Bolivarian regime is still hiding the precise workings of the plunder operation now unfolding. Beyond the limited outline provided in the US government's January 7 fact sheet and Trump's January 9 executive order, cynically titled "to protect Venezuelan oil revenues for the benefit of the American and Venezuelan peoples", little has been disclosed. Even these sparse revelations, however, establish the neocolonial character of the arrangement Trump and Rodríguez are trying to impose on Venezuela.

Press reports note that Washington has already begun selling Venezuelan oil and is exercising direct control over the revenues. The proceeds from these sales are being placed in accounts administered and overseen by the US government itself. Major energy trading multinationals—including Vitol and Trafigura—have been authorised, under the continuing sanctions regime, to market the tens of millions of barrels of Venezuelan crude that had accumulated in storage due to the US blockade, while tankers carrying millions of barrels have already departed Venezuelan ports.

The initial sales amount to hundreds of millions of dollars. These funds are reportedly being deposited in accounts under US control, including accounts held in Qatar.

This is an extraordinary act of plunder. Venezuela's oil is being taken under imperialist control, with the Bolivarian regime facilitating the theft of the country's national wealth.

Omole and the CPM-K have uttered not a word of opposition to this unfolding betrayal. Nor have they issued any call to Venezuelan workers to oppose the neocolonial policies of the Venezuelan president. These policies inevitably entail dismantling what remains of the limited social programmes instituted by the Bolivarian regime in a previous period and a renewed assault on workers' living standards, as Venezuela's dwindling oil revenues are handed over to Trump.

By defending and glorifying the Rodríguez regime, the CPM-K leadership is functioning as an accomplice in the subordination of the Venezuelan working class to US imperialism.

The trajectory of Rodríguez's regime confirms Leon Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution: In countries of belated capitalist development,

the bourgeoisie is incapable of waging a consistent struggle against imperialism. Bound by its class interests to global capital, it inevitably seeks accommodation with imperialism against the working class. Genuine opposition to war and imperialist domination therefore cannot proceed through the defence of bourgeois nationalism, but requires a struggle against capitalism itself, led by the working class, and a struggle for world socialist revolution.

The warnings issued by the WSWS—that binding workers to capitalist states under the banner of "anti-imperialist solidarity" serves only to disarm them and prepare new betrayals—have been decisively vindicated.

The Venezuelan operation is a warning not only to Latin America, but to the African masses as well. In a continent where there is deep popular hostility to imperialism, forged by centuries of colonial oppression, a social explosion against bankrupt, "post-colonial" capitalist states is brewing, already leading tens of millions to take the streets in recent years.

Amid an intensifying global crisis, imperialism is signaling that even the limited forms of sovereignty tolerated in the post-colonial period are over. Africa is being put on notice. Any government that resists the imperialist diktat over resources or military alignment faces the threat of invasion and military subjugation. The imperialist powers intend for the attack on Venezuela to establish a precedent for the eruption of neocolonial wars on a global scale.

Omole's intensification of his anti-Trotskyist slanders clearly reflects his fear of growing opposition on his left, from forces suspicious of his party's nationalist, pro-capitalist orientation, as the bourgeois nationalist forces he is promoting increasingly function as tools of imperialism. Indeed, the course of events in Venezuela vindicate the critiques made by the WSWS and the ICFI of the CPM-K's politics in statements like:

- *The CPM-K's "Letter to the Kenyan Left": An attempt to inherit Odinga's pro-capitalist legacy*, which explains the attempt to politically exploit Raila Odinga's death to rehabilitate his bourgeois legacy and assemble a new pseudo-left alliance aimed at containing mounting social opposition to Kenyan capitalism.

- *Stalinist leader of Communist Party Marxist – Kenya (CPM-K) slanders Trotskyism following WSWS exposure*, which clarifies the historical and programmatic differences between Trotskyism and Stalinism.

- *Stalinist Communist Party Marxist-Kenya seeks new political trap for rising discontent among workers, youth*, which exposes the CPM-K's pro-capitalist programme and its historical roots in Maoism that have for decades disoriented and betrayed the working class.

- *Kenya's Gen Z insurgency, the strike wave and the struggle for Permanent Revolution*, which shows that Kenya's liberation depends upon conquest of power by the working class based on Permanent Revolution.

The only progressive response to the eruption of US imperialism lies in the independent mobilisation of the working class as an international class, against all factions of the bourgeoisie and the capitalist system itself.

This requires a conscious rejection of nationalism and the building of genuinely revolutionary, Trotskyist parties in the working class, guided by socialist internationalism. The historic task posed today is the construction of sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International, uniting workers across Africa, Latin America, the US and globally in a common struggle against imperialist war and capitalist exploitation.



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