

Hailing Stalin, Kenyan Stalinists defend Venezuelan regime's growing ties to Trump

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2 February 2026

The handover of Venezuela's oil reserves to US imperialism by its Bolivarian regime is unmasking anti-Trotskyist forces internationally, including the Communist Party Marxist–Kenya (CPM-K). Its general secretary, Booker Omole, has responded hysterically to the WSWWS' exposure of his support for the Venezuelan regime, in its January 19 article "Kenyan Stalinist CPM-K attacks WSWWS while praising Venezuela's Delcy Rodríguez ahead of CIA talks."

Omole's reaction constitutes a devastating political self-indictment. Even as US workers enter into mounting struggles against the Trump administration, such as the mass strike in Minneapolis, Omole is doubling down on defence of Rodríguez's collaboration with Trump. He tries to justify this by hailing Stalin and Stalin's 1939 alliance with Nazi Germany in the Stalin-Hitler Pact as a model of political "realism" which he applauds the Bolivarian regime for following.

Within hours of the WSWWS article's publication, Omole erupted into a frenzied campaign of on X/Twitter, claiming that "Trotskyists of WSWWS are peddling slander." Defending his support for Venezuelan interim President Delcy Rodríguez, he asserted that "to praise resistance to US aggression is not CIA collaboration. It is anti-imperialism." But it is Omole, not the WSWWS, that builds an argument on slanders. The regime he is defending is collaborating with the CIA to subjugate Venezuela to imperialism.

After US forces invaded Venezuela and kidnapped its President Nicolas Maduro, interim President Delcy Rodríguez announced an "exploratory diplomatic process" reaching out to Washington. The Bolivarian regime worked with the US Navy to seize shipments of Venezuelan oil purchased by China that were being transported on a Russian tanker. Trump praised Rodríguez as a "terrific person" and promised a "spectacular" partnership centered on oil, aiming to exclude Russia and China. Rodríguez agreed to place Venezuelan oil revenues in a Qatari bank account administered by Washington.

On January 14, the CPM-K organised a protest outside the

US embassy in Nairobi that was violently suppressed by Kenyan police. Seeking to posture as an opponent of imperialism, the party tweeted that the police had acted "with instructions from Washington and CIA intelligence." Barely had the ink dried, however, when Rodríguez met directly with the CIA Director John Ratcliffe himself in Caracas for talks.

Omole then took the WSWWS to task for opposing Rodríguez, arguing that imperialist coercion means that free choice does not exist. The WSWWS, Omole tweeted, "admits the US invaded Venezuela, kidnapped its president, imposed sanctions and naval force. Then they pretend Venezuela acts freely. Coercion and free choice cannot coexist."

Omole's utterly demoralised and false argument endorsed the bourgeois nationalists' capitulation to imperialist attack as "realism." Effectively, he was telling Venezuelan workers facing attempts by Trump and Rodríguez to loot their resources that there is no alternative, and that they must accept the imperialist plundering of natural resources and the resulting dismantling of remaining social programs.

Since then, Omole has escalated his defence of the Rodríguez regime, even as it accelerates the handover of Venezuelan oil and treasure to Washington. On January 23, Venezuela's parliament advanced a reform of the Hydrocarbons Law preparing the privatisation of the country's nationalised oil sector, fulfilling a central US demand. The law grants private firms expanded control over oil production and sales and shifts legal disputes out of the control of Venezuelan courts, a key demand of US oil firms. The bill caps royalties collected by the government at 30 percent.

Omole could barely contain his enthusiasm for this blatantly neocolonial policy. The next day, he responded by tweeting, "We defend the Bolivarian Revolution because it objectively weakened imperialism in Latin America."

Omole's response to the Venezuelan crisis exposes the class forces underlying Kenyan Stalinism. The CPMK leadership does not aim to improve workers' living standards in former colonial countries; in fact, it hails

measures that plunder social resources from workers to hand them over to imperialist banks and courts. Rather, it is driven by petty-bourgeois hostility to the independent, international movement of the working class that it justifies theoretically by defending the crimes of Stalin.

Indeed, Omole's escalating defense of the Venezuelan regime's collaboration with America's fascist president has gone hand-in-hand with an escalating promotion of the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939.

The day that Rodriguez signed the reforms to the Hydrocarbons Law, Omole hailed the Pact and praised Stalin as a "master of tactics." When another X user challenged this degraded statement, asking, "What part of tactics was it when he [Stalin] sent critical war materials to the Nazis?," Omole lashed out in defence of the Stalin-Hitler Pact. Omole hailed the pact as "the tactic of buying time to defeat fascism, not appeasing it" and attacked Trotskyist opposition to fascism and imperialist war as "adventurism."

Omole's portrayal of the Stalin-Hitler Pact as a nationalist masterstroke that defended the Soviet Union is a despicable political lie. The Stalin-Hitler Pact disoriented workers in the Soviet Union and internationally amid the eruption of Hitlerite military aggression. It came on top of Stalin's Great Purges, a political genocide of Soviet Marxists that killed much of the top military leadership of the Red Army. This left the Soviet Union vulnerable and unprepared for the Nazi invasion when Hitler's surprise attack came in June 1941, leading to a war in which the Soviet Union was victorious, but at the cost of a staggering 27 million Soviet lives.

Omole's praise for Stalin's pact with Hitler as he defends the Bolivarian regime's emerging pact with Trump, on the false and cowardly pretext that capitulation to fascism buys time, exposes the CPMK. Omole is defending a genocidal leader such as Stalin and covering up the reactionary role of the Bolivarian bourgeois regime, even as conditions rapidly develop for an international struggle of the working class against imperialist war and fascism.

Across Africa, a wave of Gen Z-led protests has erupted from Kenya and Nigeria to Madagascar and Tanzania, as anger explodes over mass youth unemployment, poverty wages, corruption and police-state repression.

In the US, a powerful resurgence of class struggle is unfolding in direct opposition to Trump's far-right dictatorship. Mass strikes have erupted against ICE police murders in Minneapolis in line with a growing strike wave across key industries. Fifteen thousand nurses in New York City have been on strike for three weeks, while 31,000 Kaiser Permanente workers launched a nationwide strike last week. Critically, 30,000 US oil refinery workers are set to enter into struggle as their contracts expired on Sunday.

These workers, who account for approximately two thirds of total US refining capacity, occupy a strategic position at the heart of US energy infrastructure and the global oil supply chain. They process the Venezuelan oil Rodriguez is now handing over to US imperialism.

Omole has nothing to say to the emerging movement in the American working class, to which he is in reality profoundly hostile. His pathetic and impotent response, in line with his promotion of Stalin's pact with Hitler, is to advocate a letter-writing campaign to make moral appeals to America's would-be Führer. He tweeted: "Send your letters demanding Freedom for Nicolás Maduro Moros and Cilia Flores directly to President Donald J. Trump," seeking to divert US workers away from class struggle and toward appeals to the Democratic Party, Congress and the imperialist state.

In reality, events themselves are vindicating Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution. The international upsurge of working class struggles—even as the Bolivarian regime capitulates to Trump with the support of Stalinists like Omole—is the objective basis of a world revolutionary policy.

In the epoch of imperialism, the struggle against imperialist domination and for democracy cannot be left to the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie in countries of belated capitalist development are corrupt, tied to imperialism by a thousand threads, and incapable of realizing the progressive tasks carried out by the great bourgeois-democratic revolutions in the 18th century. These tasks fall to the revolutionary movement in the working class, fighting to take power and use the resources of the world economy to build socialism, a society in which economic resources are used for social needs, not private profit.

Omole's defence of Stalin and his support for Rodriguez's collaboration with CIA underscores the urgency of building a Trotskyist revolutionary leadership, sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International in every country. The statements of Omole are, on the other hand, a warning as to the defeats and crimes towards which he is leading those that would place their faith in the CPMK.



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