Pentagon draws up plans to attack Cuba amid anti-communist propaganda campaign

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The Pentagon is drawing up a range of detailed plans for a potential military assault on Cuba. The continued threats against Cuba, even as the White House actively discusses sending ground troops into Iran, points to the increasing desperation of the Trump administration as it expands its campaign of imperialist plunder abroad and attacks on democratic rights at home.

The report on the Pentagon's preparations, which first aired July 16 on CBS News, highlighted a plan involving an assault by thousands of US Army troops from the 101st Airborne Division. The 101st Airborne Division is capable of landing thousands of soldiers into a territory within a matter of hours through the use of helicopters. While the operation undertaken by US special forces to kidnap Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, killed over 100 people just to accomplish that objective, an operation to invade Cuba as a first step to take over the country would involve bloodshed and destruction on a much larger scale.

Iranian drones as a *casus belli*

In recent weeks, the Trump administration has ramped up its efforts to construct a *casus belli* by claiming the presence of Iranian drones in Cuba. During a visit to the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay on June 10, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth suggested that Cuba had acquired drones that could pose a threat to the base or even the US mainland. The US government under Trump and Biden has previously alleged that Cuba hosts Chinese and Russian intelligence facilities. Countering Chinese influence in Latin America has been a top strategic priority for the White House.

The drone claim was renewed on Monday, when President Donald Trump said the US was "looking into" the possibility that Cuba was stockpiling Iranian drones, saying, "If they do have that, and they might very well have that … we'll take care of it in short order. We're not going to allow that to happen. So, it could be that they're storing some. We're looking into it now. It could be so, and it maybe isn't."

Foreign Policy A on Julyreport 17 interviewed s experts, all of whom denied Cuba posed any threat to the United States, even if it did possess some small number of drones. Fulton Armstrong, a former American intelligence officer and subject matter expert for Latin America, stated "there has never been, in 63 years since the Cuban missile crisis, any evidence of Cuba [having] offensive intentions against the United States or southern Florida or Guantanamo."

At the same time that the Pentagon draws up invasion plans, the Trump administration has continued its fuel blockade. Cuba's latest reported major shipment came in April, when the Russian tanker Anatoly delivered crude oil, but the energy crunch has since deepened. Residents in Santiago de Cuba said they have endured 26 straight days without electricity, while other areas have faced repeated blackouts lasting many hours and, in some municipalities, more than 87 consecutive hours. Growing anger over the crisis has spilled into the streets, with *cacerolazos* (pot-beating) and fire-lit protests in downtown Havana and other cities.

Amid the growing war threats, US talks continue with elements in the Cuban government. Given the recent escalation of US military violence against Iran—which would tie up many military units and other assets that would be used in an assault on Cuba—the negotiations both allow the US military to buy time and serve to push the Cuban government into offering deeper concessions than those to which it has already committed. As in Iran and Gaza, any agreements or ceasefires will be treated as opportunities for American imperialism to restock its arsenal in preparation for the next phase of the operation.

Havana repudiates egalitarianism as it shreds remaining gains of Cuban Revolution

US aggression and threats have already resulted in deep concessions as the Cuban government uses the crossroads to carry out pro-market policies to attract investors and appease Trump. On June 18, Cuba's National Assembly unanimously

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approved a package of more than 170 measures that amount to a form of shock therapy and would dismantle most of what little remains of the radical reforms the government put in place following the 1959 Revolution.

Taken together, the proposals clearly envision the liquidation of many state enterprises and the opening up of large portions of the economy to private ownership and investment. Mass layoffs are being prepared, with one proposal stating it will, "Directly empower entities to determine which employees will terminate their employment for economic, technological, and structural reasons, after evaluation by the governing body, in agreement with the union, and analysis in the assembly of members and workers."

After being laid off, workers will receive a one-time payment "equivalent to a minimum of three and a maximum of six times the basic salary of the position they held." Social services and benefits for workers are to be slashed or eliminated, entirely in line with measures being carried out by far-right governments in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and elsewhere. Right-wing *gusanos* from Miami are essentially being invited in to set up shop and take over the economy.

The relative egalitarianism that was once promoted by the *libreta* food rationing system will be replaced with a system of means-testing and a vast growth of inequality as large portions of the population are immiserated while a thin layer politically connected to the Castroite regime adds to its wealth and privilege.

The official Cuban newspaper *Granma* noted that during the National Assembly session, Prime Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz "recalled the premises of Army General Raúl Castro Ruz in leading the update of the economic and social model: not to be dogmatic or immobile, to banish the mechanical association between socialism and egalitarianism, and to recognize that socialist planning does not exclude, but must incorporate and regulate the rules of the market." One can hardly imagine a clearer statement of the Cuban government's distance from Marxism and genuine socialism and its social constituency in a capitalist ruling elite intent on intensifying the exploitation of Cuban workers.

This layer is exemplified by figures such as Raúl Guillermo Rodríguez Castro, also known as El Cangrejo, or The Crab. Rodríguez Castro is Raúl Castro's grandson, as well as the son of Luis Alberto Rodríguez López-Calleja, a general who worked closely with the elder Raúl to create the GAESA business conglomerate which is operated by the Cuban military, and which comprises a large part of the Cuban economy, including much of its tourist sector. According to reports, the 42-year-old Rodríguez Castro has enjoyed a life of luxury, including trips on yachts, private jets and designer clothes.

Nominally a colonel in the Interior Ministry without much of a public profile, Rodríguez Castro has emerged from the shadows in recent months as an interlocutor with the US government during talks which have been going on since the beginning of the year. In this role he has effectively served as an indirect line of communication to the 95-year-old Raúl Castro, who maintains substantial control and influence over the government despite his official retirement.

The Trump administration's anti-communist hysteria

The Castros and their close supporters are no doubt prepared to throw open the gates to American capitalism in exchange for a continued political role and a guarantee of their privileges along the lines enjoyed by the Venezuelan *Chavistas*. A *New York Times* article recently revealed that American Secretary of State Marco Rubio is effectively "running Venezuela," controlling its finances and government, approving all major decision of the country's acting president, Delcy Rodríguez.

Whether or not the Trump administration deploys the American military to Cuba in the near term, its goal is the complete overturn of the Cuban Revolution and the extirpation of any even verbal or symbolic link to the Russian Revolution, which it hopes to use as a cudgel to bring Latin America into line as it prepares for war against China.

On Monday, Rubio's State Department issued a 100-page report further laying out a case for regime change that hysterically exaggerates what it calls "Cuba's US-targeted intelligence capabilities" outside and *within* US territory, calling the island "the Capital of 21st Century Communism" and the center of an "Anti-American Internationale."

Rubio and Stephen Miller's fascist conference at the State Department last week revealed the extent to which anti-communist hysteria and fear of working class opposition prevails at the highest levels of the American government.

The Cuban working class will not greet Trump and Rubio as liberators after their imposition of punishing sanctions and a naval blockade which have led to an explosion of child mortality and social misery. This is to say nothing of the mass unemployment and growth of inequality that is on the horizon. But the emerging working class opposition to the plans of the Cuban Communist Party and the Trump administration requires the building of a conscious, socialist leadership as part of an international working class offensive against dictatorship and war.

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