



Trump and Rubio dust off REGIME CHANGE Playbook for Venezuela

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): There clearly has been a deliberate buildup of tensions on the part of the Trump administration with the country of Venezuela. It has been a long time, very bipartisan goal to engineer regime change in Venezuela, both because Venezuela is part of the part of the world that we consider to be our domain, our backyard ever since the Monroe doctrine. We rule all of the hemisphere and if there's a government we dislike, that government has to be removed. You may remember that for years, both parties of Washington indulge this absolutely delusional fantasy that the real president of Venezuela was not first Hugo Chavez and then Nicolas Maduro who were actually in charge of governing Venezuela, but instead someone named Juan Guaido who we just singled out some very pro US, pro Western puppet and we're like, he's the president of Venezuela, even though we never received any votes. And he came to Washington. And there was a State of the Union and Donald Trump introduced him as the legitimate president of Venezuela and Nancy Pelosi jumped to her feet faster than you've ever seen her do except when Benjamin Netanyahu speaks to the Congress and began applauding and celebrating, all the Democrats, all the Republicans joining together.

So regime change in Venezuela, very oil rich Venezuela, just total coincidence, but it's worth noting, has been a long time goal of both parties in Washington, but particularly of Marco Rubio. [inaudible] fashion the way a lot of people who are Cuban and come to this country and live in Miami have with Latin America, they want the US government to change the countries and transform the regimes throughout Latin America the way many people want the US to do in the Middle East with Israel and other people want US to do with Ukraine. There's a huge political faction, very powerful in Florida out of which Marco Rubia emerges that wants the US Government to rule Latin America. Now that he's Secretary of State, it is time to do so. And engineering regime change in Cuba and Venezuela probably are his two biggest dreams. And he's now in a position of power inside the US government to do that. And it seems like the US government is on its way.

There were efforts actually in the first Trump administration to engineer regime change in Venezuela led by John Bolton. And one of the reasons why Trump had a falling out with John Bolton and ended up firing him is because it didn't go nearly as quickly or as easily. As Bolton suggested to Trump what happened. And in fact, Trump ended up with some sort of respect for Maduro the way he has respect for what he considers to be tough guys, like tough leaders, strong men as a result of Maduro's ability to stay in power even despite the United States best effort to remove him. But now these efforts seem to be really escalating. The US has deployed major military assets off the coast of Venezuela, constant warships and aircraft carriers and submarines clearly signalling to Caracas that the US is seeking some kind of military conflict or at least trying to have Maduro perceive the threat. And all of that escalated into something quite concrete yesterday when Donald Trump went onto Truth Social and made this announcement, quote, "Early this morning on my orders the US military forces conducted a kinetic strike against positively identified Tren de Aragua Narcoterrorists and the Southcom area of responsibility. TDA is a designated foreign terrorist organisation operating under the control of Nicholas Maduro responsible for mass murder, drug trafficking, sex trafficking and acts of violence and terror across the United States and Western Hemisphere. The strike occurred while the terrorists were at sea in international waters, transporting illegal narcotics heading toward the United States. The strike resulted in 11 terrorists killed in action. No US forces were harmed in the strike. Please let this serve as notice to anybody even thinking about bringing drugs into the United States of America BEWARE! Thank you for your attention to this matter!!!"

And to melodramatize the event, Trump posted a video of this ship; obviously being surveilled by US surveillance technology and then blown up. It's not a big ship to put that mildly. It seems like you could carry an amount of cocaine on a ship like this or a boat like this is not a ship at all, it's just like a speedboat, that might, I don't know, have enough cocaine to fuel say like a big bachelor party or wedding party like the Jeff Bezos wedding. Not saying there was cocaine used there but if there were, seems like this might be the amount, you probably would actually need more. [Inaudible] had a big amount here. They also claim there are 11 people on the small little boat which doesn't make a lot of sense. Why would you pack a boat that you want to carry drugs with 11 people? The more people you have, the less space there is for the drug. But as you'll see, the United States military just zapped it out of existence without any apparent warning. And Trump declassified the footage in order to show us and here's what we saw.

You see a couple of people moving on the boat. It's a pretty close up picture. It's just going through the water and you're about to see very shortly there's a more distant visual of the boat and then something either a helicopter according to the US government dropping a bomb or a drone dropping a bomb, quite a significant bomb, blows the boat into pieces out of water and sets it on fire. Clearly all the people on the boat died. And the Trump administration's claim was and you'll notice in Trump's language, it's very deliberate, it's clearly vetted by lawyers and it's intended to provide the legal justification for this strike. He uses the term terrorist multiple times. Now, the term terrorism has a lot of significance in our discourse. It's used constantly. Not just for propagandistic purposes or to demonise but also to justify legally all

sorts of actions but it's really a term that has no real meaning which is what makes it a valuable propagandist term. It just gets applied to whoever the government wants it to apply it to. There's no criteria for it, there's no metrics for it. At one point it used to mean threatening or using violence against civilian populations with the goal of fostering political change.

Tren de Aragua doesn't even remotely do that. They're not interested in political change. They're not interested in threatening violence against civilians. They're interested in, if the government's claims are correct, in profiteering. They're a drug trafficking gang. They're looking to profit through the sale of drugs, something that drug traffickers have been doing for as long as drugs have existed. What does that have to do with terrorism? The reason it's important for Trump to call them terrorists is because there is no legal authority for Trump to just decide to blow up whatever boats he wants to blow-up in the middle of the ocean in international waters, the only conceivable authorisation there is legally for him to do that are the authorisation to use military force that was enacted by the Congress in the wake of 9/11 that authorised US military force against first al-Qaeda and any groups that were associated with al-Qaeda. And there's been a lot of efforts to try and repeal that based on the concern that at some point presidents will just start using it for any kind of bombing, any kind of wars they want to start. They'll just call them terrorists and they'll say, look, I have this authorization to use military force passed back in 2001 in the wake of the War on Terror and as long as I call someone a terrorist, it means that I get to blow them up.

Now the reality is the UAMF that was passed in 2001 was quite narrow. It only authorised the use of military force against the group that perpetrated the 9/11 attack, which we were told was al-Qaeda and any groups affiliated with it. But then it just stayed around for so long that it basically became carte blanche, like a blank check for first the Bush administration, then the Obama administration, then the Donald Trump administration to just bomb anyone in the Middle East. Even they had nothing to do with al-Qaeda. And say, oh yeah, we're bombing because we're attacking terrorists. Sometimes even, like in Syria, for example, we fought on the same side as al-Qaeda. We were fighting to remove the government of Bashar al-Assad in Syria and so was al-Qaeda. We were allies with al-Qaeda and ISIS and we would just bomb Syria. And it's like, what justification do you have to bomb Syria? Oh, we have this authorization to use military force, but that was supposed to be against al-Qaeda. You're fighting on the side as al-Qaeda, but it got stretched beyond recognition to justify bombing all throughout the Middle East. And a lot of people have said, hey, we should repeal this. The War on Terror is over. And it never got repealed because once the Congress gives itself for the government power, it almost never gets taken away. Remember the Patriot Act was supposed to be temporary. That was gonna be repealed when we no longer needed it. And now it's just a permanent part of our government. Nobody ever talks about repealing it. And so Trump is basically trying to say, this is a terrorist group like al-Qaeda or ISIS and the congressional authorisation for me to use military force against terrorism means that as long as I call someone a terrorist, I can out-bomb them and go to war.

And that's how Tren de Aragua went from being a drug trafficking gang to being a terrorist group. I mean, does Tren de Aragua sound like, based on everything even that the government says about it, if you wanna believe it, what terrorism is supposed to represent as a term. Why don't they threaten to use violence or use violence against civilians as a means of fostering political change? That's not what they're about even remotely. But who cares? Terrorism is a word that means whatever the wielder of it wants it to mean. And according to the Trump administration, it even allows it to just basically start a war by just bombing speedboats in the middle of the ocean.

There's other claims in what Trump said that are extremely important. He said, Tren de Aragua is controlled by Nicholas Maduro. Very similar to how liberals were saying that the hacking of the 2016 election was controlled by Vladimir Putin or that Saddam Hussein was responsible for the 9/11 attack because he was in an alliance with al-Qaeda. Where is there any evidence that Nicholas Maduro controls or directs this terrorist group? Obviously, they're trying to say that because, what they want to do, and I hope you can see this, it's as clear as day, this is not about drugs coming to the United States. The drugs that come into the United States don't come principally from Venezuela at all. For years we heard fentanyl was coming from China and Mexico. And cocaine comes from Colombia and Mexico. The US government's own studies don't even mention Venezuela as a major source of drugs. This is not about drugs. That's the pretext. The real goal is to remove Maduro because he's the head of a very oil-rich country. Doesn't allow access to the oil that Western oil companies want. Same old story as we've been doing for decades, just a continuation of the same foreign policy. And the US government wants to control Venezuela through a puppet, or wants to break it up into little pieces like we did in Syria and have militias fighting each other for our own interests, having nothing to do with Venezuelans or anything like that. And this is what all of this is about.

But then on top of that, there's also no evidence that there was any members of Tren de Aragua on this boat. If that's something you want to believe, and I can't tell you how many people I heard today, Trump supporters, insisting that as usual, not as usual, as always, what Trump did was right. Because this was Tren de Aragua delivering drugs to the United States. There was zero evidence. Where is the evidence? Do you need any evidence at all before you believe that, that this was Tren de Aragua on this boat? No evidence that they were heading to the United States to deliver these drugs. In fact, as we said, Marco Rubio's initial statement said that it was heading to Trinidad. Why would you use a tiny little boat go from all the way from Venezuela to the US? It's not easy on such a small little speed boat to get there. It's easy to get to Trinidad, which is much closer. So there's all these claims being made that have absolutely no evidence attached to them, accompanying them, just assertions from political leaders, knowing that followers of politicians like to believe whatever they say without any evidence. That's how wars are so easily started always. But they have major, major implications. I mean, if what Trump said is true, that Nicolas Maduro is the head of a terrorist organisation and is a terrorist, of course the Trump administration is going to assert that it has authority to go to war with Venezuela. Doesn't need Congress, doesn't need anything. I mean,

if Maduro was a terrorist they're going to use that authorization to use military force against terrorists to justify anything they do to Venezuela.

Here's a New York Times story on this from earlier today: *Trump says the US Attacked Boat Carrying Venezuelan Gang Members Killing 11*. Quote, "President Trump said on Tuesday that the United States had carried out a strike against a boat carrying drugs and killed 11, quote, 'terrorists'. The administration's latest military escalation of Mr. Trump's war against Venezuelan drug cartels that he has blamed for bringing fentanyl into the country. A senior US official said a special operations aircraft – either an attack helicopter or an MQ-9 Reaper drone – carried out the attack on Tuesday morning against a four engine speedboat loaded with drugs. US surveillance aircraft and other sensors had been monitoring cartel maritime traffic for weeks before the strike, said the official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss operation details. A second US official who also was speaking, on the condition of anonymity, said there would be more such attacks against cartel boats. The action comes amid a major buildup of US naval forces outside Venezuela's waters. The administration has also stepped up belligerent rhetoric about fighting drug cartels and labelled Venezuela's president, Nicholas Maduro, a terrorist cartel leader. Quote, 'The president is very clear that he's going to use the full power of America, the full might of the United States, to take on and eradicate these drug cartel no matter where they're operating from and no matter how long they've been able to act with impunity', said Secretary of State Marco Rubio before boarding a plane in Florida to head to Mexico."

This is a question I genuinely have at this point, and I'm somebody who had believed, and in some cases still believe, that MAGA officials, MAGA influencers, MAGA pundits, genuinely find neoconservative ideology to be destructive and are opposed to it. But leave them aside, and let's look at the actions of the Trump administration and what they're saying; we're fighting terrorism. We have to just bomb whatever boats we think are terrorists, filled with terrorists, kind of like Obama bombing wedding parties because he said terrorists were there. So often turned out to be false. We just blew up civilians and wedding parties. We're fighting against terror. How is this remotely different from 2002, 2003 neocon ideology, neocon rhetoric, neocon discourse, neocon mentality, neocon legal justifications? What are the objections at this point that MAGA has to Bush/Cheney neoconservatism?

I really don't see them, especially since, as we're about to show you, what they're doing in Venezuela is basically a verbatim copy of what the first George Bush, former CIA director, ultimate deep state representative, did in Panama to justify the 1989 invasion of Panama. Where we went to war with Panama, killed thousands of Panamanians, bombed Panama, and did so based on the claim that the president of Panama, Manuel Noriega, a long time US ally in the past, had turned into a terrorist and a drug trafficker and we needed to go and change the government of Panama in order to arrest him and bring him to the United States to stand trial, which the United States then did another glorious regime change war in Panama. Congratulations to the US. And all the same language used by the Bush administration then to do that is exactly what's being used now. So I need someone to tell me, who's a MAGA adherent, who supports this, what is the problem that you had with neoconservatism? Was it

that it wasn't militaristic enough? Here is Marco Rubio's original claim before Trump came out and claimed the boat was headed to the United States to deliver drugs where Marco Rubio said something much different.

Marco Rubio (MR): The president made the announcement, it said it was a lethal strike. I think the Pentagon will have more details and other things to offer you here in the next few hours. Yeah, the drug vessel was carrying drugs.

Reporter: Size?

MR: I'll refer you to the Pentagon. They'll give you more details on that, I anticipate shortly and then probably while we're in the air.

Reporter: How many deaths with lethal force?

MR: Again, look, I'm trying to be evasive. I'll let the Pentagon answer that. Suffice it to say that the President is going to be on offence against drug cartels and drug trafficking in the United States. It destabilises not just the country but the entire Caribbean basin. These particular drugs were probably headed to Trinidad or some other country in the Caribbean at which point they just contribute to the instability of these countries.

GG: This boat was headed toward Trinidad or some other country in the Caribbean. And he said it destabilises the Caribbean. He didn't even pretend that this boat was carrying drugs to the United States or to Americans. And then Trump decided to come out and just say that, then Marco Rubio retroactively changed his story. Did he actually not know that? Did Marco Rubio not know? I mean, he was the one, he's the Secretary of State, he was sent out to announce it and to explain it. And he said very explicitly this boat was headed to Trinidad or some other Caribbean island. And then Trump comes out and says, no, no, it was headed to the United States, we're gonna drop drugs for Americans. Does that not raise any doubts or scepticism at all? Like, I don't know, is the government telling the truth, given how often they've not told the truth? Does it raise any scepticism that the justifications were leaked to the New York Times through anonymous US officials in the same way that every programme of government deceit involving war and everything else has been leaked? Not attached to any name, but just to anonymous claims that the New York Times mindlessly print with no scepticism.

Here's a report from the Drug Enforcement Agency, which is the federal government agency charged with being the ultimate authority on drug trafficking internationally and domestically. This is from 2024, it's the most recent report. And this is their annual report on cocaine. Venezuela is not even mentioned in this report. So now we're supposed to believe in 2025 when it's time to regime change Venezuela, that, oh, it's Venezuela dumping huge amounts of cocaine into the United States. Except here was the 2024 report and it said this, quote, "Columbia was identified as the primary source of US seized cocaine analysed through the CSP. Approximately 84% of US samples were classified as originating from Colombian coca." 84% of cocaine entering the United States comes from Columbia. "The predominant

sub-regional source of US samples was Southwestern Columbia, identified in approximately 42% of samples. Cocaine from Peruvian coca was identified in approximately 4% of US samples."

So Venezuela wasn't even, nobody even pretended that they were a major source of drugs. And as far as fentanyl was concerned, there's zero evidence this boat had fentanyl on it. We've heard for years that the main source of fentanyl is China and Mexico, that it comes through Mexico from China, that it's China flooding our country with fentanyl. Why isn't Trump pulling up boats coming from China that are supposedly delivering fentanyl to the United States; is because we're not interested in regime change in China. President Trump loves President Xi. He heaps praise on him all the time. He talks about how great of a relationship they have. There's less antagonism toward China now than there certainly was under the Obama administration. This is all a pretext to do regime change in Venezuela. This is the WMD of Venezuela. This is the Benghazi and the no-fly zone that Obama invoked for regime change of Libya. Do you not see this? Our drug problem doesn't emanate from Venezuela. Really, it emanates from the fact that so many Americans want to do drugs and get addicted to drugs. We ought to ask the question of why that is. And the idea that we're just gonna go around bombing random boats that we suspect to have drugs as a way of preventing the United States from being flooded with drugs, this is lunacy.

Now, as I said, this is not the first time that the Trump administration tried to engineer regime change in Venezuela. It happened as well in the first Trump term. Here from NBC News, July 22nd: Former National Security Advisor John Bolton admits to planning foreign coups. "Pressed about his involvement, Bolton cited an unsuccessful attempt to oust Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro during the Trump Administration". Here's Marco Rubio when he was a senator from Florida, from Miami in particular, where they're fanatical about regime change in these countries that are of interest to them because of their origin, not because they're related to US interests. In April of 2019, which was of course the second to last year of the Trump administration, and he tweeted this, quote, "Just saw CNN shamefully call what is happening today in Venezuela a quote, 'coup attempt'. Juan Guaido is recognised as the legitimate interim president of Venezuela by a constitution, over 50 countries and the OAS. The only coup is the one carried out by Cuba in support of dictator Maduro." So the attempted coup of the United States was not trying to install somebody never elected named Juan Guaido, a Western puppet, as president of Venezuela. No, the coup was somehow what Cuba did in Venezuela.

Here from Axios in April of 2021, they say the coup actually came close to succeeding in the first Trump administration: *The day Maduro almost fell: The inside story of a failed uprising*. Quote, "John Bolton's day began with a 5.25 a.m. phone call from the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. By then it was clear to both officials that, quote, 'this was the day.' Bolton tells Axios. For the first time in his tenure as national security advisor, Bolton woke Donald Trump. He relayed the message that Guaido was putting his plan to split the regime and oust Maduro into action and that the day could end with either Venezuelan leader in prison. In the early afternoon by which time the situation had, quote, 'taken a dip downhill', Bolton emerged

in front of the White House and shocked the international media by declaring that Padrino, Moreno and Ivan Hernandez Dala, the head of the presidential guard, had all conspired against Maduro. Quote, 'I just want everyone to be sure that we know what was going on, that we knew that the people in the Maduro regime had been taking part of this plot', Bolton says. The regime insiders never fully trusted the opposition's promises. The military was only going to side with the winning team and Maduro had kept his cool, the source, who was coordinating between the sides, say. One by one, the regime's top figures took their places behind Maduro. The following morning, Padrino was on state TV smiling alongside his Commander in Chief.". So the whole thing ended up to be a failure.

The obvious comparison here is to what George Bush 41 did in Panama. Here is from the United States Attorney's Office in the Southern District of New York in March of 2020: *Manhattan U.S. Attorney Announces Narco-Terrorism Charges Against Nicolas Maduro, Current And Former Venezuelan Officials, And Farc Leadership*. "William Barr, the Attorney General of the United State, Geoffrey Berman, the US Attorney for the Southern district of New York... announced the unsealing of two separate indictments charging current and former Venezuelan officials and FARC leadership. One Superseding Indictment includes narco-terrorism, drug trafficking, and weapons charges against Maduro. The US Department of State, through its Narcotics Reward Program, is now offering rewards of up to \$15 million for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Maduro", and they increased that subsequently, this month, to \$50 million. Here from CBS News, August 7th: *Trump doubles Nicolas Maduro bounty offers, \$50 million reward for arrest of a Venezuelan president*.

So you see what's happening. They want to remove Nicolas Madura from power and control a country of great importance to Marco Rubio's constituency in South Florida and to Marco Rubio himself. This has nothing to do with American interests. Regime change wars in Venezuela, like the regime change war that Bush 41 did in Panama, has nothing to do with the lives of the American people. It's about controlling this region for the same interest as we always fight wars for. Now, Rubio has been calling Maduro a fugitive from justice, which obviously means that the US believes it has the right to go in, capture him and bring him back to the US. And it's a complete replica of what happened with the US war in Panama, this completely senseless, stupid war. Many of you might not remember, but when George Bush 41 was elected, there was this very common theme that he had this wimp energy, unlike the great, powerful Ronald Reagan. Even though Ronald Reagan avoided war, was an actor, while George H.W. Bush was a genuine war hero in World War II, and then ran the CIA. But somehow it was Reagan who was like this strong, courageous military leader, even though he never got near a war. Whereas George H.W. Bush, who actually risked his life and came close to dying, and was an actual war hero in World War II, was somehow the wimp. And they wanted a war quickly, so that he could lose this wimp status. And they picked Panama to invade, because why not? It is like Reagan invaded Grenada, you know, you just pick up a country, pick a country and just kind of invade it, show the US means business, whatever.

And the New York Times actually ran a front page story, saying no more wimp factor for George H.W. Bush, now that he invaded Panama. And the rationale used to invade Panama

and do regime change there, here from the New York Times, September 1st, 1989. This is 36 years ago, even though it could be today: *U.S. Renews Attacks on Noriega, Offering Evidence of Ties to Drugs*. Quote, "In a new effort to turn world opinion against General Manuel Antonio Noriega, the United States asserted today that the Panamanian strong man continued to play a major role in the laundering of drug money, and the shipment of narcotics through his country. The Bush administration also said the general had built a personal fortune of \$200 million to \$300 million, mainly through drug trafficking and other national criminal activities. Deputy Secretary of State, Lawrence S. Eagleburger, addressing a special session of the Organisation of American States, presented a catalogue of evidence to support accusations that General Noriega had turned Panama into, quote, 'a haven for drug traffickers'".

They just recycle these scripts every 20 to 30 years. People don't remember them. They seem new. People get all riled up. They're like, yeah, get the terrorists, kill the terrorists, kill the drug traffickers. And that's how we end up in an endless war. Here from the Washington Post, December of 1989: *Noriega's CIA ties complicated decision*. Quote, "The 1988 indictments of General Manuel Antonio Noriega, used by the Bush administration to justify efforts to capture and arrest the Panamanian leader, climaxed an intense debate within the US government on the unprecedented legal, diplomatic, and national security issues raised by bringing criminal charges against a foreign leader who had once had a close relationship with the US intelligence agencies. Noriega's long-standing association with the CIA, the DEA, and other branches of the US government continues to haunt the case, current and former US officials said yesterday." Meaning maybe the CIA and the DEA itself have been involved in drug trafficking before. And we're perfectly happy to support Noriega, and then for geopolitical reasons, wanted to remove him, cited his drug trafficking status even though he was in bed with the CIA and the DEA doing exactly that for a long time. By the way, the code name, the phrase given to that invasion was Operation Just Cause. And here is George H.W. Bush losing his wimp status by sending people in the United States to war in Panama, announcing at the White House why we were doing this.

George Bush: Nevertheless, his apprehension and return to the United States should send a clear signal that the United States is serious in its determination that those charged with promoting the distribution of drugs cannot escape the scrutiny of justice. The return of General Noriega marks a significant milestone in Operation Just Cause.

GG: Now, can I ask you a question? We did this because we were showing the world we meant business, that we were not gonna tolerate international drug traffickers into our country. How did that work? Did drugs dry up in the United States? Did drug addiction problems go away? Did we end the war on drugs that put millions of Americans into prison cells based on nonviolent drug offences? Is that what happened? I don't think it worked very well if that were actually the goal. So why 35 years later are people willing to believe that that's actually the reason that we think we're gonna end a problem of towns being overwhelmed with drug addiction by taking out some tiny little Latin American country that isn't even the source of most or even close to most of the drugs entering the United States?

While completely ignoring the actual reasons why so many Americans end up addicted to drugs?

Although this was a dumb, easy, pointless war, it was actually quite a destructive one from the L.A. Times, October 1990, the title of which was: *Invasion Ghosts. Panama tries to bury rumours of mass graves: Allegations persist that up to 4,000 civilians were killed in the U.S. invasion.* Quote, "Some in Panama and the United States insist that as many as 4,000 Panamanians died in the fighting, most of them civilians. There are allegations of mass graves throughout the country where U.S. soldiers, intent on a cover-up, dumped the bodies of victims. The official casualty estimates of the U.S. Southern Command is that 515 Panamanians were killed. Of those, 202 were civilians and 51 members of the Panamanian military. The rest could not be classified because many Panamanian soldiers were in civilian clothes and others, members of a regular military unit called Dignity Battalions, had no uniforms, U.S. sources said." Oh, they are like they used human shields – whatever. "The Independent Respected Panamanian Committee for Human Rights said its investigation showed that a total of 565 Panamanians died. An extensive investigation in the spring by the U.S. Physicians for Human Rights came up with similar figures."

So for sure we're gonna kill a bunch of people. Who knows how many? Hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, whatever. We just have to make sure we have the governments in place of these countries that we want instead of the ones that the people in that country want. Or even if they don't want it, we just do regime change if we think that we feel like doing it. And this is the road we're on, so don't deceive yourself. And if you're gonna deceive yourself that, oh, it's really about drugs, please have scepticism when Donald Trump and Marco Rubio and the rest of these people make claims that you're supposed to believe even though they're showing you no evidence for it or it's being leaked to the New York Times by anonymous officials. I hope I don't even have to say why that weren't so much scepticism. We did see this before in April when Trump decided that he was going to reinstate and escalate Joe Biden's campaign of bombing Yemen, which by the way, Donald Trump condemned when Biden was doing it; said it was unnecessary, he gets into office, he's like hey, I'd like to bomb Yemen, too. And he went on X, Donald Trump did, and he showed a really cool video of 40 Yemenis, maybe 60, standing around in what looks kind of like a prayer circle or a tribal circle. And he posted this video, there you see it on the screen. They were standing there and the United States is just like, your lives are over, we just bombed you. And Trump claimed, quote, "these Houthis gathered for instructions on an attack. Oops, there will be no attack by these Houthis, they will never sink our ships again!".

Why would the Houthis, knowing the United States is bombing their country, constantly monitoring them, constantly surveilling them, just stand out in the open in a big, huge circle? And why would Trump supporters believe when he just asserts with no evidence that oh, they were planning attacks on US ships – there was plenty of evidence to believe that this is a common tribal Yemeni prayer practice. They weren't even armed. It was traditional practises of the kind that Yemenis engage in. There you can see an up close picture of other similar types of prayers where they're in the exact same formation. But Trump said, oh, we

obliterated terrorists and a bunch of Trump supporters – no evidence needed – like, yeah, get the terrorists, as though they were Dick Cheney or Liz Cheney in 2002. Leading me again to question, what is the difference at this point between the MAGA movement as it exists in power, not how it presented itself during the campaign, but as it exist in power versus the 2002, 2003 neocons that we were told MAGA was so violently and vehemently opposed to, what is the difference?

Finally, just to underscore the point before we get to a very patient and zen-like Michael Tracy who's waiting to speak with us about various events that happened yesterday and his other work relating to Epstein. Just to underscore the point, just before we went on air, it was announced that the Department of Defence is going to undergo a name change, not because Congress is changing its name, which is how agencies have in the past had their name changed. It had a name change, it used to be a verbal development, and also the Health and Human Services Agency also had a change all done through Congress. Trump wants to change the name of the Department of Defence back to its original name, which was the Department of War. Which I guess is more honest because the reason it changed from Department of War to Department of Defence was because if it was really just the Department of War we weren't supposed to need it at all times, we're not supposed to be in permanent war. So they changed it to Department of Defence to say, no, what this is really about is defending our country, so we need a permanent cabinet ministry for that. But now it's going to be called the Department of War again, according to Pete Hegseth and Donald Trump, a much more honest name for this agency. That is what this agency does, it doesn't defend the United States. Venezuela is not attacking the United States, Yemen wasn't attacking the United States. You go on and on with all these wars that we fought that weren't about defending the United States. It is actually a Department of War, that's what it is, and Pete Hegseth seems very excited by this. He's going to have a really cool name change, he's not going to be the Secretary of Defence anymore. It's like a soft, woke, gay name. Here's a much cooler name, way more badass, Department of War.

So here you see Fox News: "Exclusive: White House reveals it will bring back the Department of War name for the Department Of Defence." And Pete Hegseth went on X and above that and all caps wrote: Department Of War. I mean, the excitement is palpable. He's going to be the Secretary of War. And this is the direction that Trump foreign policy is clearly headed in. We bombed seven, eight countries, we're on our way to a regime change war in Venezuela, something that neocons and the Marco Rubio's of the world have long dreamed of. Our next guest, Michael Tracy once said, the safest bet where you'll never go broke is if you simply bet on the continuation of bipartisan foreign policy no matter what the outcome of elections are, no matter what the candidates say. In this case, you could almost say it's not really even a continuation of bipartisan, foreign policy. It's really quite an intense escalation; both in terms of the theories they're embracing, the rhetoric that they're spouting, and the actions they're taking to continuously financing our multiple wars and fight and bomb multiple other countries as well.

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