



Trump Bizarrely Claims Venezuela STOLE U.S. Oil, U.S. Sends MASSIVE ARMADA?!

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): The major networks announced that they were going to reserve 20 minutes of prime time beginning at nine o'clock PM Eastern last night in order for President Trump to address the nation, a request made by the White House, and as is typically the case, was honoured immediately by networks. And the reason for that type of relationship where the White House demands prime time minutes for the President to speak to the nation, and why network news outlets have traditionally honoured that, even though it's their prime time, their most important money making part of the day, is in part they feel like they have an obligation under their licence to provide a public service of allowing important messages to be heard by the American people from their president, but also because presidents typically use it very sparingly only to announce major news. President Obama used it, for example, to

announce that Osama bin Laden had been killed after nine years of finding him. He was an old decrepit, unwell man who was hiding out in Pakistan, but the country I think thought that was important enough news to hear that directly live from the President on prime time. Oftentimes being the United States, presidents use it to announce new wars. It's certainly something George Bush used, for example, to announce various aspects of the War on Terror. And so when Donald Trump last night announced that, or the networks announced that he had requested 20 minutes of prime time television, beginning at nine o'clock p.m., we decided, well, presumably this is a very important announcement because when the White House requests it, it always is. And we don't want to do a show which begins at 7 p.m., when we knew the President was speaking at nine, because we thought it was important to be able to react to whatever news the President broke, which is of course what you would expect a President to do when making that kind of request. And so we told our audience we're not gonna have our regular show tonight, but instead we're gonna be on right after President Trump speaks in order to analyse and to react to whatever it is that he announced. And we expected, even if it wasn't the focus of the speech, which it very well might have been, as some had speculated, but even if it wasn't, we certainly expected we're gonna get some explanation directly from President Trump explaining to the American people why it's necessary to have assembled this gigantic military buildup in the Caribbean around the country of Venezuela, even though that was never talked about during the campaign, why it is important to continuously bomb boats and blow boats up with no evidence presented that they even have drugs on them, let alone that they're drugs being taken to the United States. Why it's important now to seize oil tankers, why President Trump authorised a CIA covert regime change and destabilisation campaign in Venezuela, what the effects of that might be, what the intentions of the United States are; that would obviously be something that President Trump, having the attention of millions of Americans who don't watch cable news and don't follow the news every day, would want to explain to the American people: Hey, we have this new war. And it is a new war. When you're blockading a country and bombing their boats and destabilising their country with the CIA and threatening a land and bombing campaign to begin imminently, and the goal is clearly regime change, that is a war. It may not be a full-scale land invasion yet, but it's certainly something the American people have the right to have explained to them. It's extremely expensive. Obviously, troops are in harm's way by definition. And so you would think President Trump would have talked, at least in part, if not in its entirety, about this new policy that was, again, never talked about during the campaign. A war with Venezuela was never part of the Republican platform and the Trump platform. To the contrary, part of the Republican platform was no more regime change wars. The Republican Party was campaigning actively on the idea that it was Kamala Harris and Tim Walz and Joe Biden and the Democrats who were the warmongers while President Trump was the peacemaker. So you would think the country has owned something other than a couple of sound bites here and there, which is thus far what they've been given, and that's what we expected we were gonna hear. We wanted to dissect it, as well as whatever else President Trump ended up saying.

Instead, the word Venezuela was never mentioned once or even alluded to. Basically the 20 minute speech which was rambling and unfocused and poorly delivered was really designed

to do two things. One was to insist that the economy is actually doing extremely well, even though polls show overwhelmingly Americans believe that they're not doing well economically, basically telling them don't believe your eyes, don't believe your experiences, look at the economic metrics. And then secondly, to say, to the extent that the economy is not doing well, it's not our fault, even though we've been in office for a full year now, it's the fault of Joe Biden because we inherited such a mess. So once we heard that speech, I even said to my colleagues: I think we should go on and say something. And then they go: What do you want to say? I was like: I don't know. There's really nothing to react to. Maybe it's just better to say nothing rather than take people's time by saying things that have no real worth because the speech had no real worth because it had no real substance. But with the positive time, I just want to reflect on a couple of things as to why, first of all we expected it to include and believe me it should have included some explanation about Venezuela. I know people made a lot about the fact that Tucker Carlson had said on the podcast of Judge Andrew Napolitano yesterday that he heard from a member of Congress that the speech was going to be devoted to Venezuela and about a war with Venezuela. I have no doubt that's what Tucker heard. Sometimes members of Congress get things wrong, sometimes they hear things and plans change. Who knows what happened there? But I'm not even saying my expectations were based on that. My expectations were based on the fact that you would think the Trump administration would want to explain this. But they didn't. They acted as if none of it's happening. And just to give you a sense for how much is happening, here's a Truth Social tweet that Trump posted on Tuesday, and it read this, quote: "Venezuela is completely surrounded by the largest armada ever assembled in the history of South America." So that sentence alone indicates the gravity and the magnitude of this military operation, this aggression against Venezuela. Don't you think the American people are owed an explanation as to why it is that in Trump's words, Venezuela is now completely surrounded by the largest armada ever assembled in the history of South America? And then he goes on and promises this, quote: "It will only get bigger. And the shock to them will be like nothing they have ever seen before. Until such time as they return to the United States of America all of the oil, land and other assets that they previously stole from us."

I pay attention quite a bit for obvious reasons. It's my job to American politics, to foreign policy in particular, and I've been doing so for 20 years now, and I believe with a lot of certainty that I've never heard anybody previously say that Venezuela has stolen American oil or land. Like what conceivable land does Venezuela possess that they stole from the United States? And the oil that Venezuela possesses is oil that exists within their soil or in their water and their sea. How did Venezuela steal that from the United States? I've never heard anybody – I never heard Donald Trump say that in the three times he ran for president. I've never heard anybody say that. You would think that would also require some kind of an explanation given that that is apparently according to Trump the condition for stopping what he describes as not just the largest armada ever assembled, but one that will continue to grow and that will cause Venezuela great suffering. He then goes on to say: "The illegitimate Maduro regime is using oil from these stolen oil fields to finance themselves, drug terrorism, human trafficking, murder, and kidnapping for the theft of our assets and many other reasons, including terrorism, drug smuggling, and human trafficking, the Venezuela regime has now been

designated a foreign terrorist organisation. Therefore, today I am ordering a total and complete blockade of all sanctioned oil tankers going into and out of Venezuela. The illegal aliens and criminals that the Maduro regime has sent into the United States during the weak and inept Biden administration are being returned to Venezuela at a rapid pace. America will not allow criminals, terrorists, or other countries to rob, threaten, or harm our nation, and likewise will not allow a hostile regime to take our oil land or any other asset, all of which must be returned to the United States immediately. Thank you for your attention to this matter."

What is this? What is that? That is deranged. I'm sorry, that is deranged. Venezuela has stolen our oil, and no one mentioned this previously?! They've stolen our land and they have to give back our oil and give back our land. What land? What oil did Venezuela steal from us? I presume, I guess, in the attempt to make the best argument I can in defence of Trump's statement, that what he means is that US oil companies made investments in extracting the oil and refining it, and then Venezuela decided that it actually wanted to use its oil for nationalistic purposes, not to give it to Exxon Mobil and Chevron, although Chevron does still do business with Venezuela. I mean, this was very similar to the rationale for the war in Libya. Of course it wasn't stated explicitly, and I guess credit to Trump, because you know, it used to be in the 70s and the 80s and the 90s, when primarily the Left would say: Oh, all these wars, certainly in Iraq, too, that are being told are for freedom or for you know, vanquishing the dictators, all the propaganda, actually, it's for oil. That was like the hallmark that meant you were a crazy person, like that you were a left-wing crazy conspiracist who hated America. How dare you suggest we fight wars for oil? It's a gigantic coincidence that we continuously fight wars in countries that are rich in oil. It says: No like there's any causal connection. Credit to Trump, I guess, for being candid at least. Although remember, the whole framework, the whole groundwork that was laid for this had nothing to do with oil. It was all about: Oh, they're sending drugs into the United States, which is not true in terms of fentanyl at all, and even in terms of cocaine, it is barely true in the scope of how much cocaine enters the United States. And even if we were to change the regime, that wouldn't affect the flow of drugs into the United States because the new government that we control is not going to immediately seize control of all of Venezuela. They have drug gangs that are gonna actually thrive even more in the instability that will ensue. We controlled all of Colombia for the last 25 years with the puppet regime that we had there. And the cocaine continued to proliferate and even grow the more we aided the civil war in Colombia. Because those militias like FARC and others, drug gangs, thrived in the instability. The same thing's gonna happen in Venezuela. So not only is there no truth to the underlying claim about the problem, there's also no connection to the solution. So now Trump's, I guess, just saying: No, that's about oil, we want their oil that they stole from us.

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