

Waiting for the Eagle: Chavez Mobilizes the Militia

Posted by

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With accusations of conspiracy to assassinate Venezuelan President, Hugo Chavez coming out of [high level government figures, and evidence](#) of Colombian involvement in other dark deeds designed to destabilize the country, there is nervousness that worsening diplomatic relations with the United States could lead to an American invasion.

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"...Chavez invited the 'pueblo' to go to the local garrisons and barracks to receive training in self-defense. This was the first important step to gradually mobilize the mass of the population."

[Military trains students to use rifles; study guerilla tactics in the case of an external threat to Venezuelan national sovereignty](#)

Carlos Herrera

Wednesday, February 23, 2005

The Propaganda Program Continues

The threat of intervention in Venezuela's sovereign affairs ... either directly from the US beach head in Latin America represented by Plan Colombia or direct intervention using US troops, cruise missiles, smart bombs etc., or the constant stream of distorted statements from US State Department spokesmen laying the ground to 'prove' that Chavez is consorting with terrorists are all elements of the growing US hostility from the government of George W. Bush towards the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its sovereign people.

The latter strategy has been implemented with the connivance of corporate US media outlets such as Fox News, CNN en espa?ol and the help of deluded extreme right-wing journalists such as Mary Anastasia O'Grady writing in the Wall Street Journal, Michael Rowan in various Caracas-based publications such as El Universal and The Daily Journal, Phil Gunson operating out of Miami ... as well as other paid hacks.

US attorney Eva Golinger stated that more than 50 articles ... all with the same negative tone ... had been published in recent weeks in the US mass media, when Venezuela NEVER receives this amount of coverage.

Such coverage is limited to Chavez funding the Colombian guerrillas, buying arms from Russia, being friends with Fidel Castro, troops taking over private property, more poverty than ever in

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Venezuela and any other negative aspects these hacks could dream up in their servile roles of supporting the Bush doctrine of combating terrorism, real or imagined, at any cost.

In the case of Venezuela, like Iraq and Afghanistan, it's all about ?black gold? or natural gas

Suffice to say that no mention is made of respecting the democratic will of the Venezuelan people after 9 elections or referendum victories in six years supporting Chavez himself and his policies ... or the fact that social policies implemented by the Bolivarian Revolution via the Missions are specifically aimed at restoring basic human dignity, human rights and self-esteem to almost 20 million Venezuelans who had never had access to anything.

Since these accomplishments cannot be measured in dollars and cents, they do not exist for the one-dimensional mentality of the US corporate mass media and their Venezuelan off shoots.

This is more than sad. It is tragic.

On February 29, 2004, there was a massive march and rally on the main freeway that passes through Caracas near the botanical gardens, the theme of which was ?No to Yankee Imperialism.? Chavez spoke for nigh on 2? hours to almost one million Bolivarians plus a nationwide TV audience and it was at this point that the national defense of Venezuela against US intimidation and threats began to take shape. It was then that the Bolivarian Revolution was declared ?anti-imperialist?.

What measures are being taken?

Since one of the cornerstones of the social transformation of Venezuela as exemplified in the context of the democratic Bolivarian Revolution is based on civic-military union and cooperation, not only in order to strengthen ties but also actively working together on projects to improve the lot of the majority poor, Chavez invited the ?pueblo? to go to the local garrisons and barracks to receive training in self-defense. This was the first important step to gradually mobilize the mass of the population.

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Last Sunday in the President's weekly radio and TV program "Alo Presidente," Chavez called on the "revolutionary squads" to prepare themselves and organize the local populace. This is the first time he has mentioned this strategy to my certain knowledge.

Previous to this ... about two years ago ... the abandoned military reserve had been reactivated consisting mainly of men and women who had once served in the military and who had been trained in the use of arms. The establishment of the reservists started with 50,000 and by July this year should be in the region of 190,000--200,000. These reservists are paid, armed and encouraged to form cooperatives so as to generate both wealth and work in the function of the needs of the country.

Venezuela's armed forces consist of 120,000 men and women in all four components -- Army, Navy, Air Force and National Guard. These numbers are due to be increased and fresh weapons purchased from Brazil and Russia in preparation for the defense of the homeland against any external threat as outlined above. Even though the official line is that the 100,000 AK 47 assault rifles from Russia will be used to replace outdated bolt action weapons, the latter will still exist in order to arm the population in the case of an emergency.

In a news report on Venezuelan National Radio (RNV) last night, it was revealed that the Bolivarian University of Venezuela (UBV) will be located in the barracks and garrisons of the armed forces.

To understand the significance of this strategic move, it is necessary to grasp the ethos and purpose of the UBV. This popular university was created in June 2003 so as to guarantee university places to the sons and daughters of the poor who has been historically excluded from the middle class dominated educational elitist institutions such as the Central University of Venezuela (UCV) and the Simon Bolivar University (USB).

In fact, it meant the mass-ification of higher education and as such had to be nationwide.

Thus, the plan was to "municipalize" classes all over the country, usually in the evening when school classrooms are vacant, so that students could receive classes in their own towns, and not have to travel. Effectively, this is the true democratization of education with the poorest receiving monthly grants of around US\$100. The UBV will eventually have 400,000 students rivaling Beijing University as the largest in the world.

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Most of the students now studying in the UBV entered through Mission Sucre, designed to allow access of the underprivileged to university education -- thus most of these students will have received the benefit of the Chavez social/educational policies and should be committed to the process of change which has allowed them to study and make more of their lives, especially as some in their early 30s had waited ten years or more to secure a university place.

By extension, this 'municipalization' has been extended to military installations, where classes will still be held, where students can learn and study the Bolivarian Constitution as well as how to sow and plant in line with the policy of 'endogenous development' or self-sufficiency. Now, however, being under the wing of the military trainers, they can also learn how to use a rifle and study guerilla tactics in the case of the materialization of an external threat to Venezuelan national sovereignty.

The long term plan is to mobilize millions of citizens, students, reservists and professional soldiers to be at the ready in case there is a direct intervention either via Colombia or from US troops trying to take oil installations or wells.

Critics may whine that Chavez is 'militarizing' Venezuelan society -- but what else do you expect the government to do?

Disarm, as was the case in Haiti, and allow Chavez to be kidnapped as was President Aristide?

Or be like Costa Rica, where there is only a police force and no military?

The Bolivarian military doctrine clearly states that the armed forces are the people in arms and vice-versa -- that is everyone. I can personally vouch for the fact that many poor who live in the barrios (slum districts) in the provinces, are already preparing themselves for an invasion, even without the constant cajoling of President Chavez.

Why?

Since they are conscious of what happened in Guatemala in 1954, Brazil in 1964, Chile in 1973, Grenada in 1986, Panama in 1989, Nicaragua and El Salvador in the 1980's and more recently in Haiti in February 2004, without mentioning the human tragedy taking place in Iraq and

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Afghanistan. They understand the implications of the 1823 Monroe Doctrine.

No one really knows how many people are ready, and I am not one to hazard a guess on this strategic matter

The US State Department must realize that if their boss continues with this destabilization policy with a view to invasion or assassination of Chavez, then the consequences could be disastrous on a long, long term basis, as described in my article published yesterday ?Let?s hope and pray that US corporate greed does not trigger a blood bath,? either by invading or attempting to assassinate Chavez.

International public opinion and diplomatic moves in the OAS, UN could prevent a preemptive strike on Venezuela, but rest assured, that the ?pueblo? will always be on the alert and prepared together with our armed forces. The US could conceivably occupy Venezuela, but the word ?surrender ? (rendici?n) does not exist either in Cuban or Bolivarian vocabulary, for that matter.

South American integration is a huge obstacle to US hegemony in the region and has effectively stopped the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) dead in its tracks, and thus US corporate exploitation and greed at the expense of disseminating more poverty in the region.

I propose reciprocal military defense alliances between all signatory countries to the South American Community of Nations (CSN). This could be discussed at the next meeting as early as April.

I am also certain that we can depend on the support of international players such as China, Cuba, Russia and Iran as the US continues to isolate itself on the geopolitical stage, simply due to the war mongering mentality of the hawks in the Bush administration driven blindly forward by US transnational corporations in their quest for Nazi-like world domination, as Bob Chapman of the International Forecaster has asserted in recent months.

The days, weeks and months ahead could be tense and difficult but action has to be taken and the population prepared. Bolivarians are peace loving but we also demand respect for our right to self-determination and to implement our own values and create a society based on human dignity and equality.

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Venezuela is not a threat to the US and we do not possess WMD's - neither did Iraq - just dignity and free will to shape our own destiny and that of our children and grand children.

We will not shirk to defend ourselves and our country since this is not just about Venezuela?.but about all the underprivileged and excluded in Central America, the Caribbean basin and South America, in fact the poor on all continents who represent around 4 billion human beings at the last count.

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