

Trump's Trojan Horse in Europe

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The confusion over what happened in Venezuela on Saturday and what happens next will not go away. Comments from Maroc Rubio yesterday only made the situation more opaque. The [New York Times](#), scratching its head on the issue, noted:

It's not an occupation. Pentagon officials said yesterday that there were no U.S. military personnel in the country. (Though U.S. troops will remain in the Caribbean Sea to exert "leverage" on the new leadership, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said.)

They added:

It's also not regime change. Venezuela's opposition leader, María Corina Machado, who won the Nobel Peace Prize last year and dedicated it to Trump, has been sidelined: Trump said Machado lacked the "respect" needed to govern.

Instead, the U.S. has accepted having Maduro's vice president, Delcy Rodríguez, as interim leader. Trump said she would hold power as long as she "does what we want."

Then they noted:

[T]he administration has vaguely sketched out an arrangement similar to a guardianship: The U.S. will provide a vision for how Venezuela should be run and will expect the interim government to carry that out in a transition period, under the threat of further military intervention.

So what is going on? It seems to be three things.

First, the threat of violence is presumed sufficient to induce compliance. Trump's language on Saturday highlighted the violent element of what happened.

Second, the aim is to create compliant puppet governments. Vichy, anyone?

Third, sanctions are the threat, for now. The effective choice is 'take it or leave it, we're having it'.

Where does that leave the world?

Firstly, this is open thuggery.

Second, diplomacy is over.

Third, the gunboat is back.

Fourth, colonialism has returned.

Fifth, abuse will follow.

And where are we in the UK? We are between the devil and the deep blue sea. We have chosen not to have a sphere of influence now. Brexit delivered that outcome. That inevitably means we are within someone else's sphere of influence. We have a choice, and there are only two. We can be European or an ally of the USA. That's it. There are no other cards on the table.

The problem is, we already look as though, firstly, we supposedly can't decide, and secondly, that this is a cover for not admitting we are Trump's Trojan Horse in Europe.

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