

YANKEE

HOME!

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**THE STAND COMEDY CLUB
G 4 9 H Z**

**FILM SCREENING
MEAL & FUNDRAISER**

**BY UNITE HOSPITALITY GLASGOW
& SOLIDARITY SCREENINGS**

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Editor's Note

Images in this booklet shared for educational and archival purposes only.

Solidarity Screenings Glasgow Manifesto



This manifesto is a guiding document that outlines Solidarity Screenings Glasgow's objectives, principles and strategy. It is aimed at our audience, team and collaborators.

Solidarity Screenings is a film screening initiative based in Glasgow, Scotland. Re-building genuine solidarity through the medium of film is our contribution to the cultural front. We hope to further the growing revolutionary movement in Glasgow. Presentations, booklets, the Solidarity Book Exchange, shared meals and discussions accompany our screenings. The screenings are free of charge to remain accessible to our audience.

Our work is an act of solidarity with liberation struggles internationally. It began in response to Al-Aqsa Flood in October 2023 in support of the Palestinian struggle for national liberation. Initially our primary focus was Arab cinema. We have since broadened our programming, although Palestine always remains our compass. We uphold Al-Thawabet, the fundamental principles of the Palestinian struggle.

The aim of our work is to confront our audience with educational and agitational screenings that move us towards liberation. Glasgow has a rich history of solidarity with movements worldwide. By highlighting under-recognised struggles, we want to build on this history - celebrating with and learning from them. Capitalism instills a pervasive nihilism in every facet of society. We oppose this. We are revolutionary optimists who are guided by anti-imperialist feminist working-class principles.

Solidarity Screenings is rooted amongst its audience. Our programming is oriented around what educates and agitates the people - rather than the curators' subjective ideas of 'taste'. Moreover, we aim to create a space that fosters transformative

and revolutionary discussion. Guiding questions inform the free-flowing dialogue post-film. The films are only the first step; we must release them from the confines of the screen. Ultimately, our audience teaches us how to continuously improve each event through active engagement and constructive criticism.

A few things remain pertinent in our practice: Each screening comes with a particular purpose and theme. The presentations are the medium that conveys this most clearly. Accordingly, it is crucial to orient ourselves around liberatory and revolutionary movements. We recognise colonialism as an ongoing reality, rather than an evil of the past. We must expose it and uphold the right to resist by all means necessary. Through this we oppose imperialist narratives and disinformation that attempt to put a wedge in our solidarity.

Solidarity Screenings is a collective effort. Collaboration is an essential pillar of the project. We are always keen to have more people involved, whether as a volunteer or guest curator.

If you align with this manifesto and would like to join our efforts or collaborate organisationally, please contact us at solidarityscreeningsglasgow@gmail.com.

Solidarity Screenings upholds the The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of 'Israel' (PACBI). We urge our collaborators to join us in amplifying and publicly endorsing PACBI. For more information please see: <https://tinyurl.com/45ybcnyk>.

GO TO HELL, FUCKING YANKEES!

Comuna El Panal, Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of
Venezuela

December 16, 2025

Faced with the declarations of the murderer Donald Trump we stand as the soldiers of Bolívar and Zamora, the people's army, the defenders of Chávez - Fuerza Patriótica Alexis Vive

The recent statements of Donald Trump, threatening Venezuela with a naval oil blockade, constitute a direct and deliberate act of aggression against a sovereign people. It is not a rhetorical excess or an isolated provocation: it is the stark expression of an imperialist policy of war, of exploitation and of punishment targeted at those who refuse to submit. It is piracy in its most brutal form, premeditated economic terrorism and colonial violence.

When Trump speaks of Venezuelan oil as "his" oil, he is not making a mistake: he is confessing that for imperialism Venezuela is not a nation, but an object of conquest; it is not a people, but an obstacle; not a political subject, but a mere territory to be subjugated. This criminal logic disregards the right of peoples to both self determination and to life, and it places us once more in the face of an historical confrontation.

These threats form part of an all-encompassing strategy of domination: blockade, sabotage, psychological warfare, vain attempts to foment internal division and preparations for both direct and indirect aggression. They seek hunger, fear and desperation. They seek to break popular unity, destroy the organisations of the people and to clear the way for occupation and exploitation. They underestimate the people and they mistake the historical situation.

Faced with this imperialist offensive, the Venezuelan people respond with people's war, not as an abstract slogan, but as concrete practice in defence of life, territory and sovereignty. The people's war is an organised commune, a conscious barrio

and a land in resistance. It is civic-politico-military unity in the service of the working masses. It is popular organisation capable of sustaining production, supply, communication and collective protection even under the most adverse circumstances.

We do not deceive ourselves: imperialism can deploy advanced technology, mercenaries, covert operations, media terror campaigns and open attacks against our sacred land. However we count on what they will never have: historical legitimacy, deep roots in the land and a people prepared to defend their right to exist. Each imperialist aggression will strengthen our organisation; each attempt at strangulation will multiply our solidarity; each threat reaffirms our resolve to win.

Our warning is clear: any escalation against Venezuela will have consequences that imperialism will not be able to control. The people do not surrender, they do not forget and they do not kneel. Venezuela is not Iraq, it is not Libya and it is not alone. Here there is revolution, here there is an organised people and here there is indissoluble resolve for independence.

To Donald Trump and to the imperialist machine he represents we say with the voice of the barrio, the commune and of history: hands off Venezuela. We will not give up our oil, we will not give up our homeland and we will not give up our dignity.

President of the Workers Nicolas Maduro - command!

Homeland or death!

We will win!

(Next Page) Still from 'El Maizal Commune Leads by Example, Takes on Venezuela State Superstructure', Venezuela Analysis [2019]



Communes



Long Live the



or Nothing!



People's Fight!

CANTO GUERRERO DE LOS TIMOTES

Corre veloz el viento; corre veloz el agua;
Corre veloz la piedra que cae de la montaña.
Corred guerreros, volados contra el enemigo;
Corred veloces
como el viento
como el agua
como la piedra que corre de la montaña.

Fuerte es el árbol que resiste al viento
fuerte es la roca que resiste al río;
fuerte es la nieve de nuestros páramos que resiste al sol.
Pelead, guerreros, pelead, Valientes: mostraos Fuertes
Como los Arboles,
Como las rocas,
Como las nieves de las Montañas.



Protesters flip over a bus at the Guarenas Terminal during the Caracazo revolts on February 27, 1989. / Photo by Jheremyccg

WAR SONG OF THE TIMOTE PEOPLE

The wind runs swiftly; the water runs swiftly;
The stone that falls from the mountain runs swiftly.
Run, warriors, fly against the enemy;
Run swiftly
like the wind,
like the water,
like the stone that tumbles from the mountain.

Strong is the tree that resists the wind;
strong is the rock that resists the river;
strong is the snow of our highlands that resists the sun.
Fight, warriors, fight, brave ones: show yourselves strong
like the trees,
like the rocks,
or like the snows of the mountains.



The US Kidnapping of Nicolás Maduro

Maga Miranda interviews Geo Maher

January 27, 2026

On January 3, 2026, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro was kidnapped alongside his wife, Cilia Flores. Both were transported to the heart of the US empire, the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, where they are now being held captive (as “a prisoner of war,” in Maduro’s own words). The incident has exposed the United States’s naked imperialism with members of the Trump administration espousing a world order based on raw power and national interests on mainstream media outlets, including Stephen Miller’s declaration to CNN that “we set the terms and conditions” in Venezuela.

The future of Venezuela, and the region more broadly, will be determined by what happens next. With help from other members Spectre’s editorial board, Maga Miranda interviewed Geo Maher, author of *We Created Chávez* and *Building the Commune*, for his expert opinion on the issue.

Below are excerpts from the interview:

Geo, thank you for taking the time to talk to us. There is a lot of confusion in both the mainstream media (by design) and on the left around the recent kidnapping and incarceration of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. Official channels have “justified” Maduro’s kidnapping as an attempt to curb narcoterrorism, specifically the Cartel de los Soles, as part of a larger war on narcos and narcostates. [...] What information do you think the average American is missing about what has happened in the last few days?

First things first, we should be absolutely clear that the military incursion into Venezuela and the kidnapping of Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores had nothing to do with either narco-trafficking or democracy. Most of us probably already knew this, but the Trump administration has done us the favor of confirming it. The DOJ immediately walked back claims about

Maduro being the leader of the fictitious Cartel de los Soles, while Trump brutally snubbed opposition leader María Corina Machado's regime aspirations, all while making perfectly clear that the intervention was actually about Venezuelan oil and the projection of US power in the region. In other words, this was an attack based on the thinnest possible pretext.

Magicians have a technique called “misdirection,” where they do something to distract with one hand while the other hand is actually doing the trick. We're more than familiar with this from the sorts of lies that were rolled out to justify the Iraq War, for example—and we hear lots of the same rhetoric today. But it's also the laziest and most brazen form of misdirection possible; even still, we've seen liberals and even some sectors of the left parroting some of these claims—in particular, the idea that Venezuela is a dictatorship. If we know this invasion had nothing to do with democracy, then why are we even talking in those terms? It shows just how easily misdirected we are by those in power, even when they are being brutally honest about their own motivations.

What explains this brutal honesty of the Trump administration? Here I think the answer lies in the strategy of projection itself, which both Trump and Marco Rubio have emphasized, but also the two different audiences this strategy speaks to. The global hegemony of the United States is crumbling, and quickly—Trump is more honest about this than most liberals. So his strategy is to shore up American power materially by safeguarding access to natural resources from oil to rare earth minerals while simultaneously preventing them from falling into the hands of global adversaries—China in particular. The contradiction here is that the United States lacks the brute military capacity to do so, but also that, because of the long-term occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, most Americans—a key sector of the Trump base in particular—have no appetite to even try.

This is where Trump's “projection” comes in, which we should understand in the dialectical sense rather than the psychoanalytical sense—that is, as a sort of putting the cart before the

horse. Whether through tariffs or precisely coordinated special-forces raids, the point is to perform power in a spectacular way—to act first and negotiate later, with the action resetting the terms of the negotiation. This is why the US government can crow loudly about opposing forever wars while upholding the Monroe Doctrine and US dominance in the western hemisphere and embracing a strategy of provocative and aggressive action to reassert that dominance. It's a sort of perverse guerrilla warfare of a decadent empire.

Now, the psychoanalytic piece is never far below the surface, and we know that Trump's father inculcated him with the strategy of repeating untruths so often that they eventually become reality that we see today. Unfortunately, the left has its own projections to spare. We're so invested in an image of revolutionary purity that we not only neglect the real difficulties of making a revolution, while simultaneously assuming the worst possible motivations about both those in power in Venezuela and the hundreds of thousands struggling on the ground to make that revolution a concrete reality against all odds.

Solidarity isn't valuable when things are going well—it matters most when the going gets tough, as it inevitably does.

Looking toward the struggles on the ground in Venezuela, the mainstream media— especially in the heart of empire— has been amplifying a one-sided barrage of voices from right-wing Venezuelans on the ground and in the diaspora. This narrative typically goes that it's no longer just the traditional bourgeois elements who opposed Chávez and the Bolivarian revolution, but an increasingly generalized sentiment emerging from the working-class nonelites who believe that the Maduro government was a failure that wrecked the economy and that Maduro himself was an evil dictator. To what extent is there some validity to this? What class supports Maduro's kidnapping? Is there much resistance on the ground to this? And, if so, what is its class character? Does this resistance stand a chance?

Is the Maduro government as wildly popular as Chávez was in his heyday? Of course not. But setting this as our baseline guarantees that we will misunderstand reality. Venezuela has been in a sustained economic crisis for well over a decade, although recent years have seen more stability, as government reforms have improved conditions on the ground. Any sustained economic crisis will mean less support for those in power. Not only should this be expected, but the stated objective of US sanctions is simply to punish the people until they turn against their government.⁷ This was the US strategy during the Contra War against Nicaragua's Sandinistas as well: to unleash bloody terror until the people vote, with a gun to their head, to end the revolution—which they finally did in 1990. It's incredibly foolish to interpret that result, or any election under the duress of sanctions and war, as a victory for democracy.

So yes, of course the class composition of both opposition voters and opinion has shifted, because those bearing the brunt of the crisis are not the richest exile communities—even if those exiles remain the loudest and still take up the vast majority of the airtime. Of course, this has meant that a sector of less politicized Venezuelans have swung toward the opposition. But as the best analysts on the ground have always made clear, these electoral swings are largely economic, often temporary, and do not in any way constitute an endorsement of the policies of the Venezuelan opposition—which rarely offers any policy proposals at all. This is no accident either, since over the course of twenty-five years Chavismo has become hegemonic, meaning that almost everyone believes that the oil belongs to the people and should be used to their collective benefit. This means that the opposition's long-held political positions—a return to neoliberalism, privatization, and austerity—are deeply unpopular, so they rarely say them out loud. They simply blame the government for all the effects of the crisis, and seek to win power by default.

[...]

Resistance is there, for sure, in the thousands of communes and grassroots organizations that are doubling-down and digging in for struggle in the long term. These are organizers who

have always seen their primary goal as the defense of a process and not a government, but who also understand that—for now—the process relies on the government. But in the short term, the question is: resistance against who? How do you resist an enemy thousands of miles away?

One part of the program of Chavismo was building solidarity with working class communities across the world, even in the United States. What did that vision look like and where is it now? What are anticapitalist anti-imperialists across the world—and, more particularly, in places like the United States—doing (for example, campaigning to return Maduro)? Or what should left internationalists be doing, but aren't?

I began with the question of selective solidarity, and it's worth ending there too. There was a time when it was easy to support the Venezuelan revolution. Through CITGO, Venezuela distributed free heating oil to working-class people in the Bronx and Indigenous communities across the United States. After Hurricane Katrina, Chávez offered emergency aid, which was refused. And at the height of the Bolivarian process, it was easy and relatively cheap to visit Venezuela to see the process in real time and engage directly with movements on the ground, and for Venezuelan organizers to visit the United States on speaking tours. Those times are long gone, and solidarity has become much more difficult in theory and in practice.

But again, we don't need solidarity when it's easy, we need it when it's hard! Not solidarity with leaders or presidents, but solidarity with communities in struggle. Not the kind of coercive solidarity that we threaten to withdraw whenever we disagree with this or that policy of the Venezuelan government, but a solidarity that gives the revolutionary process some strategic breathing room.

Critique is necessary, but our critique must be grounded in a material understanding of the terrain and the options on the table, and with a respect for strategy in a context where we don't have all the information. To be clear, there are plenty of critics on the ground in Venezuela of all political stripes. Throughout the Venezuelan process, we have seen a sort of

repetition of longstanding strategic debates between what we could roughly see as more Trotskyist and more Stalinist tendencies and strategies, even if they don't always go by those names.

[...]

Those debates are ongoing on the ground. We in the United States don't get to tell Venezuelans how to make their revolution. To be clear, I don't say that from the perspective of an abstract anti-imperialism. "Hands off Venezuela" is important but it isn't enough, because we aren't just against US intervention in Venezuela, as we should be against it everywhere. We're for the truly revolutionary political project that Venezuela has offered to the world, which is geared toward direct democracy, a self-managed economy, and community power against global capitalism and imperialism. We in the United States should be doing our best to not only fight fascism in the streets but also to build a revolution in the belly of the beast as well. And when we do so, we're doing the same fucking thing that Venezuelans are.

When we talk about building communities without police, we're talking about stable and flourishing egalitarian communities where our needs are met and we collectively keep ourselves safe. And when we fight ICE stormtroopers in the streets and refuse to let them kidnap our neighbors and tear our communities apart, we're doing our part to build and wield collective power against fascist terror. That's exactly what Venezuelans are fighting for, and on top of that, they're fighting against US imperialism to have the freedom and opportunity to build upon that revolutionary vision. But doing so is fundamentally a process, and I hate to break it to people: but it's a long and difficult process that will inevitably be characterized by protracted and bloody struggle against the most vicious enemies of progress.

Regardless of our own assessment of the virtues of vices of the

Venezuelan leadership, or our own sectarian commitments, our tasks for the coming weeks, months, and years should be perfectly clear:

- To press for an immediate War Powers Resolution that would halt all funding of aggression against Venezuela;
- To demand the immediate release and repatriation of Nicolás Maduro and Cilia Flores; and most importantly,
- To demand—and fight for—the immediate lifting of sanctions so Venezuelans can decide for themselves—through mass struggle and not with a gun to their heads—what they think the Bolivarian Revolution should mean moving forward.

SOWING

When nothing remains of me but a tree,
when my bones have been scattered
beneath our mother earth:
when nothing remains of you but a white rose
nourished by that which once you were:
when the breath of the kiss that we exchange today
has embarked upon a thousand different breezes:
when even our names have become
mere sounds without echo
asleep in the shade of a fathomless sound:
then you will live on in the beauty of the rose,
and I in the rustling of the tree,
and our love in the murmur of the breeze.

Listen to me!
My wish for us is, to live
in the spoken words of men.
I would survive with you
in the deep lifestream of humanity:
in the laughter of children,
in the peace of mankind,
in love without weeping.

Therefore,
as we must give ourselves to the rose and the tree,
to the earth and the wind,
let us give ourselves, I beg you, to the future of the
world.

Miguel Otero Silva
English Translation by Donald Devenish Walsh

The Commune is the Supreme Expression of Participatory Democracy: A Conversation with Anacaona Marin of El Panal Commune

Cira Pascual Marquina

21.09.2022

The Alexis Vive Patriotic Force, which has deep roots in Caracas' 23 de Enero barrio, began planning a commune years before Chavez even proposed the communal path toward socialism. Yet when Chavez announced the plan to join communal councils into a higher form of organization, Alexis Vive wholeheartedly embraced the initiative and has since then built a highly successful commune called El Panal Commune[1] involving some 13,000 people. We spoke with a key cadre of El Panal about this project that is both economic and political to find out how it is coping with the crisis escalated by US aggressions.

The commune is usually thought of as a space of construction – for the political and economic reorganization of society –, but it is also a space of resistance. Let's talk about the commune today, in a period where Venezuela is under attack by imperialism.

There is a confrontation of models, a clash of two paradigms not only in Venezuela and in Latin America, but also worldwide. One of the questions in the debate is: who is the historical subject? For us, that is the question of who is it that activates, who lights up the field, who pushes changes forward. And when we reflect on this issue, which means thinking about our own practice, we guide our interpretation by the proposal that developed with Comandante Chavez.

Chavez developed a hypothesis after a process of maturing, after a rigorous analysis of the Venezuelan and continental realities, and after a reflection on the revolutionary potential under our feet (based also on a commitment to justice for the poor that was there from the start). His hypothesis was: **The commune is the historical subject, the commune and its people, the**

comuneros, that is where the revolution really begins. So we made this proposal ours, we committed to it.

We were aware that the proposal and our embracing it was going to be attacked from its onset, at its genesis. When Chavez first raised the banner of socialism in 2006, when he said that the Bolivarian Revolution must be socialist, when he said that a vote for him is a vote for socialism, he committed himself and the people to a collective project of rupture. Well, that is where we find the seed of the commune. Self-government and economic emancipation go hand-in-hand with socialism, with a people in power. So that is where we find the initial seeds for the commune: in [Chavez's 2006] proposal to build a socialist "patria."

It became clear to us then that there was going to be a new level of confrontation. We knew that the path towards socialism was going to be demonized, that contradictions would pop up everywhere, inside and outside. So we can say that the communes hadn't even been born yet, and we were already in resistance! But the truth is that we have been in resistance for more than five hundred years.

Today, we are not only resisting imperialism. We are also resisting old forms of production and their diverse forms of domination: from the organization of education and affects, to the organization of the formal political sphere and the economy.

Why is there conflict? We are making a counter-hegemonic proposal to a system that is powerful, a system that seems part and parcel of what the human being is. In the face of this system, the communal subject stands tall and says: Hey, this doesn't have to be so, this is not the only option. The communal subject is the one that affirms that capitalism is not a natural occurrence, it is an imposition.

The communes are counter-hegemonic spaces with a vocation for hegemony. **From our commune, we aim to show that another organization of society is possible, that power must be reorganized, and that power should be in the hands of**

the people. That means combining new economic relations with an exercise of power in the commune's territory.

Here we are in the midst of El Panal Commune, which has a range of productive projects: from a bakery and a textile factory to cultivated land and an industrial packaging plant. How is all this organized?

El Panal Commune has some specific characteristics. We, as Alexis Vive, began to think about building a commune in 2006 and shortly after we began working on it. However, the Law of Communes wasn't promulgated until 2009. The law states that communal councils would be the embryo that would foster the formation of a commune. Here, by contrast, the forming of the commune followed its own path.

This commune comes out of a practice and a set of symbols that we put on the street. In our case, the Alexis Vive Patriotic Force generated a collective practice and a discourse that pointed the way [with Chavez] towards the commune. This worked quite well: the community here, in the central part of 23 de Enero, picked up the idea and ran with it.

Here, in these territories, the "Panalitos por la Patria" ["Beehives for the Homeland"], which are small working and discussion

'Welcome to the socialist commune of El Panal',
Caracas, 2025. / Photo by Plaid Gomiwnyddol Cymru



groups] are the DNA of the communal body. The Panalitos are formed by people from the community with a high degree of commitment to the commune. They are the engines of the communal initiative.

Additionally, we have brigades, which is a term that the Alexis Vive Patriotic Force chose after much debate. The debate touched on the subject of the Chilying Commune[2], which had various structures of participation for the people: councils, brigadists and producers. The division was based on the commitment to work and struggle. The brigades were made up of a militant group of communards with a life-commitment to the struggle. In our commune, these brigades are made up of professional cadres, and they take on the larger issues of production and distribution in the community. They are also, it almost goes without saying, highly politicized units.

Finally, we have the associated work collectives, which are the communal groups directly involved with producing goods and services. Since the commune is not an appendix of the state or the government, it must be autonomous and it must generate the resources it requires to address the community's needs. The associated work collectives are spaces for direct production, and the surplus from their production goes back to the commune and thus to the community.

All this relates to the commune's process of grassroots planning and administration of resources. Some of our resources go to sustaining a "comedor popular" [people's canteen], some to communications, some to the community's medical expenses, and some to transportation and infrastructure. We also have resources allotted for contingencies. All of these resources come from the associated work collectives. After all, the commune is not just a cultural, social and political organization, it is also an economic organization.

There is another "higher" element to the commune's organization: the patriotic assembly, the space where comuneros gather to decide collectively what must be done, and how, through participatory democracy.



Meeting in El Maizal agricultural commune to welcome the internationalist brigade, 2025. / Photo by Plaid Gomiwnyddol Cymru

Let's come back to the situation today: the imperialist aggression. In the past couple of months, we have witnessed a new form of war with the electrical blackout and the attacks on the electric grid. Tell us about how you have organized resistance in the commune in this context.

We are the daughters and sons of Chavez. We listened to his words and we learned. As a result of that, we understood that when you go up against capital and against imperialism, there is only one option: to prepare. If we are going to tell imperialism that we are no longer its backyard – that we have chosen the path to full independence and on top of that we are transitioning towards socialism –, then we must understand that we are going to be in a war with a military superpower.

“Our planning allowed us to build – in the midst of the blackout – a diesel-powered electrical grid for our collective spaces.”

A new phase of aggression against our country has begun. They try to restrict our access to food and they have implemented a financial blockade and, more recently, an oil embargo. They also attack us culturally. They try to inspire fear in us. Most recently, they attacked our electrical system, which is fundamental for modern life.

We were aware that this was coming, so we prepared for a war economy, through organization and work. We also prepared through research and [by paying attention to] popular creativity. A contingency plan was in place. So when this new phase of the aggression began, we were ready for it with the necessary resources.

Our planning allowed us to build – in the midst of the blackout – a diesel-powered electrical grid for our collective spaces. In fact, the commune acts as a kind of state or government in everyday life, and it does so also when faced with a contingency or aggression. Obviously, that [alternative power supply] made for a less hostile environment during the blackout...]

In describing popular power I often refer to the trilogy of self-government, self-determination, and self-defense. If the

commune sometimes functions as a state, as you said, that means communes generate a situation of dual power. This could lead to tensions between the existing state and the commune.

When Chavez promoted the idea of the commune, what he did was very daring. In fact, much of what was advanced in terms of the law was done via the Enabling Act [the National Assembly had given Chavez the power to legislate by presidential decree] since his proposal was sure to rub the establishment the wrong way. By doing so, Chavez broke with the logic of the state.

Alvaro Garcia Linera talks about “creative tensions” that allow for new things to happen. When you pull away from constituted power, that opens a space for the new to bloom: that flower springs forth from the creative tensions. We welcome contradictions. If we didn't have them, it would mean that we wouldn't have a project. Instead, we would be part and parcel with our society's hegemonic logic, which is capitalist.

On the question of dual power: we don't think of it in terms of a parallel state... Instead, we consider the communes to be the crystallization of a proposal left by President Chavez. He understood that the commune, through self-government and autonomous popular economic activity, would bring about the new state, a communal state. But all that is a process under construction.

As I was saying earlier, we encounter contradictions everywhere. Although some [state] institutions may be somewhat more hostile than others, we can also say that our commune has [in general] benefited from the goodwill of people within the state, people who have cast their lot with the commune. We have received economic and technical support from the state, and that has helped us build popular power...

We know that tensions and contradictions will remain, and we welcome them since we do not seek a static situation. Rather, we seek change, and change only happens when there are contradictions.

Is it fair to say, however, that the commune is not in the forefront of the government’s political discourse now?

Absolutely. Look, when Chavez became a public figure, many from the left didn’t understand that they had to change course, that the only way forward was with Chavez. Likewise, many within Nicolas Maduro’s government maintain the old conception of the state and don’t understand that the commune is the goal.

However, that is what the Bolivarian Revolution is: a combination of very diverse currents. Within the Revolution there is a latent debate about the commune. Our role is to show that the commune is indeed the historical subject. We show this through our example, and, in doing so, we hope to make a rupture with the old ways and become hegemonic.

Our contribution to this big debate is through our practice, through work. Our constructive criticism can be found in our concrete example. Building a commune brings forth a new culture, a new form of doing politics, and new economic relations... Against the logic of representative democracy, we propose participatory and protagonic democracy, and the commune is the supreme expression of the latter.

The media discourse tends to criminalize poor barriodwellers. It has been going on for a long time. Recently, there has been a great deal of focus on “colectivos” [a common form of grassroots organization in urban Latin America and Venezuela in particular] to make them seem as if they were merely gangs or paramilitary organizations. Has that affected your projects in the 23 de Enero barrio?

Indeed there is nothing new about all that. In the Fourth Republic the “ñangaras”[3] or the “tupamaros”[4] were the source of all evil. Later the Bolivarian Circles were criminalized. Frankly, every expression of popular organization that isn’t submissive has always been criminalized in history. That’s because popular organization is, indeed, a problem for the system. The mass media has always demonized the people when they organize,

so it shouldn't surprise us.

Now, in this new phase of the imperialist aggression, we can see that popular action is once again being criminalized. They are in a process of rebranding "colectivos" as terrorist organizations, as the maximum expression of evil. Imagine that, poor Chavistas in the street, barrio-dwellers defending their territories! That should be stopped, and the most efficient way is criminalization. Why do they do this? To instill fear into the people, to keep poor people from organizing.

Notes

[1] Panal means beehive or honeycomb in Spanish.

[2] The Chiling Commune was a pioneer commune in Honan province in China. It was subject of a classic study by Li Chu, *Inside a People's Commune*, that Chavez encouraged people to read.

[3] Ñangara is a term used to refer to communists. Initially, it had negative connotations, but Venezuelan leftists later used it to identify themselves.

[4] Tupamaro was a term used to refer to the radical urban left. It was originally used by a revolutionary Uruguayan movement of the 60s and 70s.

Textile production unit in El Panal Commune,
2025. / Photo by Plaid Gomiwnyddol Cymru.



Barrio Women and Popular Politics in Chavez's Venezuela

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ABSTRACT

Since President Hugo Chavez came to power in Venezuela in 1998, ordinary women from the barrios, or shantytowns, of Caracas have become more engaged in grassroots politics; but most of the community leaders still are men. Chavez's programs are controlled by male-dominated bureaucracies, and many women activists still look to the president himself as the main source of direction. Nevertheless, this article argues, women's increasing local activism has created forms of popular participation that challenge gender roles, collectivize private tasks, and create alternatives to male-centric politics. Women's experiences of shared struggle from previous decades, along with their use of democratic methods of popular control, help prevent the state from appropriating women's labor. But these spaces coexist with more vertical, populist notions of politics characteristic of official sectors of Chavismo. Understanding such gendered dimensions of popular participation is crucial to analyzing urban social movements.

Below are excerpts from Fernandes' journal article:

Chavez and the resurgence of women

Despite male leadership and authority, the growing presence of women in local assemblies, committees, and communal kitchens has created forms of popular participation that challenge gender roles, collectivize private tasks, and create alternatives to male-centric politics. Women's experiences of shared struggle from previous decades, along with their use of democratic methods of popular control, such as local assemblies, help to prevent the state's appropriation of women's labor for its own ends. But these spaces of popular participation

exist in dynamic tension with more vertical, populist notions of politics that are characteristic of official sectors of Chavismo.

Long-term feminists have occupied important positions in the Chávez government and in the state women's agency, INAMujer. Some women have been involved in the Chavismo movement, which includes Chávez's party, the Fifth Republic Movement (MVR); mass organizations, such as the Francisco Miranda Front; and the National Union of Work-ers. But Chavista organizations tend to be hierarchically organized and male-dominated, along the lines of traditional political parties and unions. For this reason, rather than joining Chavista organizations, many barrio women have become involved in the parallel social revolution, known as the proceso. José Roberto Duque (2004) defines the proceso as a parallel and underground movement that defends the Chávez government but follows its own trajectory, independent of central government directives. Many women participating in the proceso do not identify themselves as Chavistas. They may participate in Chávez's programs, such as soup kitchens, land committees, and the missions, and they may even look to Chávez for leadership and direction. But they have sources of identity that come from their barrio or parish and that form the basis of alternative social and community networks.

In parishes such as La Vega, moreover, which have a long history of community activism, women have sought to retain community control over the program through the practices of local assemblies. They view food preparation in soup kitchens as a collective task rather than the responsibility of individual cooks, and therefore they seek collective rather than private solutions to the problems presented. When women's increasing participation occurs in the framework of cohesive community networks, there is much more opportunity to build democratic and sustainable projects.

Daily Life and Organising

Instead of forming either mass organizations or independent movements, barrio women in Venezuela work in the context of local community organizations, some of which have long histories.

(The following case study follows the activists in the Carretera Negra barrio)

Carretera Negra (Black Highway) consists of a line of houses located along a stretch of highway, as indicated by its name, and along three smaller lanes, Oriente, 24 de Julio, and Justicia, situated in the broader parish of La Vega, on the west side of Caracas. Its residents total about 140 families. It is a close-knit community with a long history of organizing tied to the parish. During the 1970s, Carretera Negra residents participated in a series of protests and hunger strikes for education, employment, and basic services. In the 1980s, they banded together with residents from other sectors to demand the removal of a local cement factory that was contaminating the area, to protest the building of a prison in the barrio, and to protect large green areas of the neighborhood from being taken over for other government projects.

The women of the Carretera Negra formed a Health Committee in July 2003, when a Cuban doctor was sent to the barrio. The women found a house to use as the clinic; they looked for equipment, chairs, and beds; and they found the doctor a residence in the barrio. They organized meetings between the Cuban doctor and the community, they took health censuses, and visited families to encourage trust in popular clinics. In September 2003, the women started an Urban Land Committee consisting of 21 people who took censuses of families and began to distribute land titles, giving titles to 98 families by June 2004. In September 2004, the community activists set up a soup kitchen, which was functioning by October.



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Point in Time - Linking International Struggle

Editor's Note

February 2026

The United States' desperate attempts to reassert its dominance over the world have reached new heights. The year began with the bombing of Venezuela and the kidnapping of President Nicolás Maduro. Regardless of shifting political machinations, the Venezuelan people remain armed, organised, and prepared to struggle until victory against the barbarity of US imperialism.

The Zionist entity has entered a new era of territorial expansionism and military aggression, accelerating actions across Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iran, Qatar, Libya, and recently, Somaliland. Yet, with AnsarAllah threatening to target military bases in Somaliland, the entity will not go unscathed.

In Syria, the US–Turkey–Zionist puppet government led by former al-Qaeda member Ahmed al-Jolani continues its massacres of minorities. Most recently, the regime has turned its weapons against the people in the autonomous region of North East Syria, leading to fierce fighting and a contested capitulation by the leadership. With Syria effectively under imperialist control, al-Jolani's regime will continue its campaign of terror. In response, the Kurdish, Assyrian, and Arab people will continue to resist and deserve dignity and respect.

The US has pointed its guns toward Greenland, openly signaling its intent to annex the nation. Denmark, the current colonial power, alongside the EU, has portrayed itself as Greenland's protector, when in reality this is a dispute over who will most effectively exploit Greenland's land, resources and Indigenous people. Greenland's Inuit people reject this colonial transfer, stating "we want to say loud and clear that there's no such thing as a better colonizer." As imperialist powers continue

Mural in solidarity with Palestinian resistance in El Panal Commune, 2025.
/ Photo by Plaid Gomiwnyddol Cymru.

to burn the world in their drive to redivide it, conflicts over the Arctic are set to intensify.

The killings of 37-year-old Minneapolis residents Alex Pretti and Renee Nicole Good by federal ICE agents have sparked protests and outrage nationwide. Minneapolis has risen in rebellion, with People's Defence Committees organising Neighbourhood Defence Units across the country in response. 8 people have been killed by ICE under Trump's regime just this year, yet the people continue to find collective ways to organise and fight back.

In Turkey, 95 revolutionaries, journalists, artists, and others were arrested across 22 cities on February 3rd. These house raids and baseless arrests represent another attempt by the Turkish state to crush dissent in Turkey and North Kurdistan.

Closer to home, Palestine Action hunger strikers have ended their strike after winning a significant victory: forcing the Ministry of Defence to drop a £1 billion contract with Elbit. Meanwhile, the Joint Committee to Stop Repression in India has been formed to show solidarity with the people's war against the genocidal Operation Kagaar being carried out by the Indian state. The struggle against Operation Kagar is inseparable from the fight against militarism. Adani Group profits from the displacement of Adivasi communities and is complicit in the genocide in Palestine through its ownership of Haifa Port and arms collaborations with Israel's Elbit Systems.

We honour the martyr Comrade Flecha, a peasant leader in Brazil who dedicated his life to the movement from a young age. Captured by paramilitary forces, he was executed in a cowardly attempt to destroy the League of Poor Peasants (LCP) and the Agrarian Revolution. As the LCP declares:

"A dream of hyenas! Scoundrels, you are mistaken, murderers of the poor! Comrade Flecha lives on in our invincible struggle. He, like all our heroes and heroines, lives in the glorious red flag of the League of Poor Peasants of all Brazil! Eternal honour and glory to Comrade Flecha! Death to the latifundium! Long live the Agrarian Revolution!"

