

Trump removes Maduro – and the world is shocked

by Phillip W. Weiss

Trump's removal of Maduro rocked the world. It also confirmed that fact that the United States has no allies. The United States has strategic partners with whom we have shared interests, but conditions change, alliances shift and the partner of today can quickly become an adversary. This means that collective security is a dream, an example of wishful thinking. Each nation acts in its own self-interest. That principle applies to the United States. No one can tell us what to do and likewise we cannot tell other countries what to do. Sometimes, the self-interests of two or more countries clash. When that happens, tension ensues and conditions become unstable. Sometimes these clashes lead to war.

War is the pursuit of national interest by force. War happens when peaceful resolution of conflict fails. War is the worst way to settle conflicts because it leaves all parties damaged. War can be compared to a card game that goes violent. The table is upset, players are no longer playing, and the give and take that drove the game is replaced by a mad and reckless attempt to steal what's in the pot. When Trump went into Venezuela, he signalled that the US has left the card table and no longer wants to play. The Trump action is a response to the way the rest of the world overplayed its hand when dealing with the United States. The world totally misjudged Trump and the mood of the American people. That position was fueled by denial that conditions had changed. For decades the United States had sought to work

cooperatively with other nations militarily, economically, culturally and socially. The United States allowed other countries to impose high tariffs, engage in saber-rattling, take advantage of our natural goodwill to extract concessions, all of which made the United States seem weak, indecisive and on the decline. Despite obvious shows of strength, such as the bombing of Iran, the world continued to treat the United States with disrespect bordering on outright scorn. The Maduro extraction ended all that. It jolted the rest of the world back to reality forcing the rest of the world to stop taking the United States for granted. Now, if any country wants anything from the United States, that country will have to pay. There will be no more freebies. If NATO wants the United States to remain a member of NATO, then NATO members will have to pay. If any country wants to trade with the United States, that country will have to pay. Our message is clear: **THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT NEED YOU.**

Now, most of the world is accusing the United States of going into Venezuela to gain control of the oil. That of course is ridiculous. Trump went into Venezuela to send a message not to trifle with the United States. We don't need to steal anybody else's oil or other natural resources. What we do need for other countries to stop treating the American people with disrespect. This principle is also applicable to the way we treat each other personally, but that is a subject for another essay.