

**Trump PsychoTropics: The ‘Banana-ization’ of the World’s Oldest
Democracy and the Coming “Perfect Storm” for Latin America¹**

“Blind belief in authority is the greatest enemy of truth.”

—Albert Einstein

“When the United States sneezes, Latin America gets bronchitis.”

—Venezuelan Democratic President Rómulo Betancourt (1945 to 1948;
1959 to 1964)

“How long will you stay?”

“Just till the old man briefs Scott. I think you know him. Colonel Broderick?”
“Broderick.”

“Good officer, don't you think?”

“For certain armies. The kind that goose step.”

“You don't find a happy medium in this man's army.”

“That's for sure.”

Seven Days in May, 16:24-16:40 (1964)

“Recent U.S. strategy has focused more on enhancing economic opportunity – by *mobilizing private investment, supporting regional entrepreneurs*, and extending climate-conscious development loans – rather than bolstering local security forces. Although economic incentives can help address joblessness and incentives of gang affiliation, even more urgent is the task of giving regional police and *military forces* the training and resources they need to *counter the far-reaching security threats* that are *preventing normal economic life* from taking place.”

—Paul J. Angelo, Director, William Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS) at the National Defense University, in [Foreign Affairs](#), *September 11, 2024* (Italics added.)

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The “Seven Days (in/of)” serves as the title of numerous films, television shows and books, ranging from the romantic to the horrific, [some](#) focusing on [Latin](#)

¹ The Editors have waived the length of this article due to the severity of the situation we find ourselves in the United States under Trump—and in Argentina under Milei.

[America](#). In 2018, [Seven Days of Revenge](#) offered an eerie crime tale of how, after arriving on their dream holiday, friends mysteriously [disappear](#) one by one. Earlier, in 2010, a Canadian thriller, [Les 7 jours du talion](#), “The 7 Days of Retaliation”), straddled art and horror. A “[bloody disgusting](#)” tale of [torture and perversion](#), the life of a medical surgeon is destroyed when his daughter is raped and murdered in a park.

Five years earlier, the [7 Días](#) comedy movie portrays a Monterrey, Mexico small-time concert promoter trying to make good on his late brother’s dream of bringing the superstar rock group [U2](#) to his hometown. Desperate for capital, Claudio Caballero places a [bogus bet](#) with [mob boss Zamacona](#) for half a million dollars ... and loses. [The Seven Days in May](#) is a 1964 thriller, starring Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas, about a Marine Corps colonel who accidentally discovers [a plot to take over the government](#) by a high-ranking general. The film director, John Frankenheimer, was [much admired](#) by President John F. Kennedy (the creator of the [Peace Corps](#) and the [U.S. Agency for International Development](#)), who was assassinated the year before.

Ironically, it was in 2016, the year Donald Trump was first elected, and then [later into his presidency](#), that the media picked up on [an essay on politics and television](#) published by Kennedy in *TV Guide* just before JFK announced his own presidential campaign. His thoughts on the possible pernicious influence of money and public relations then, seemed to be more recently underscored by social media’s global explosion into the public marketplace. “It is in your power to perceive deception, to shut off gimmickry, to reward honesty, to demand legislation where needed. Without your approval, no TV show is worthwhile and no politician can exist,” Kennedy observed. Should it fall into the wrong hands, television could be used for “manipulation, exploitation and gimmicks,” he added. “It can be abused by demigods, by appeals to emotions and prejudice and ignorance.”

“Originality is nothing but judicious imitation,” Voltaire once wrote. A versatile advocate of free speech, freedom of religion, and separation of church and state, the 18th Century French historian uncannily foresaw how the history of entertainment and tragedy would emerge in the farce of the seven days surrounding the second coronation of the first felonious U.S. president, on a day honoring [Dr. Martin Luther King](#). (The 1964 Nobel Peace Prize winner’s own impact in [Latin America](#) and on [Latin Americans](#) in the United States is frequently overlooked.)

Despite his former Chief of Staff, Marine General John F. Kelly, once the head of [U.S. Southern Command](#) in Latin America, publicly calling the [former president a “fascist,”](#) his boss having [praised Adolf Hitler’s](#) generals for their loyalty, Trump won

re-election after [brandishing the threat](#) to go after his own country's alleged "enemy within," using the armed forces. "I think the bigger problem are the people from within. We have some very bad people. We have some sick people. Radical left lunatics," [Trump told](#) the ever complacent *Fox News*' "Sunday Morning Futures" last October, in the run-up to national elections. "I think it should be very easily handled by, if necessary, by National Guard, or if really necessary, by the military, because they can't let that happen."



It is estimated that more than 80 percent of the most murderous cities are in Latin America and the Caribbean. Trump has called for the death penalty for drug dealers and [labeled Mexican drug cartels 'terrorist organizations.'](#) Yet immediately after his second inauguration, he [pardoned the most influential international narcotics trafficker](#) in recent history; someone, like Trump, a shadowy online huckster. (It should be noted that Trump world had already, during his first administration, given [Mexican military narcotics traffickers](#) a [special "before" and "after" dispensation](#), as will be explained more below.)

Life does at times imitate art, never more so than in the Americas, the world's second most democratic region and one for whom the U.S. homeland is vitally dependent on its neighbors. In bitter irony, with Trump's re-assumption, the world's oldest democracy joined the bread line of those wondering whether liberal democratic ideals can survive and how they can be protected.

In the wake of the presidency of a [racist, union busting Ronald Reagan](#) (who made his own curious [proto-Trump nod to America's enemies at a German graveyard where Nazi soldiers were buried](#)), and the end of the Cold War, liberal democracies worldwide have faced enormous challenges. Populist and nationalist movements were again on the rise. Immigration, religious nationalism, polarization, disinformation, and gross economic inequality contributed to both a precipitous decline in individual

freedoms in countries around the Americas and a strain on relations between and among its peoples.

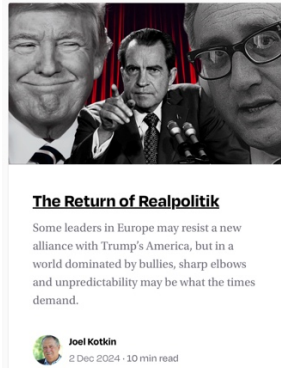
As the peoples of Latin America, the Caribbean and those who live in and around the Gulf of Mexico look back on their traditional reliance for U.S. help and support, the open embrace by the Trump Administration of [oligarchs](#), [neo-Nazis](#), and even the shadowy global narcotics kingpin seems nothing less than a kabuki version of old Soviet anti-American propaganda. Then Moscow claimed that the United States was in essence a devious military-industrial empire of robber barons ransacking its neighbors, a notion that achieved its highest sting under Secretary of State [Henry Kissinger](#) and [Reagan](#). (Not surprisingly, [damaged Nobel Peace winner Kissinger](#), much admired by [Trump](#), Putin and [Hillary Clinton](#), [remarked before his death](#): “President Trump conveyed a characteristic of great decisiveness and very personal vibrancy. He was a unique phenomenon in American foreign policy.”)

“Chaos is costly to businesses and states alike, and thinkers like Kissinger helped leaders lower the cost,” claimed [one anything but vapid analysis](#) published in late January by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, forgetting their ersatz hero’s real [legacy of death](#), destruction and illegality around the world, including Latin America. “World orders change. In Kissinger’s view, two things drive that change. The first is a redefinition of legitimacy, and the second is a significant shift in the balance of power. Each is a gradual process and not an event.”

In fact, the opening hand of Trump’s second presidency, though with a fiery “America First” focus far different from Kissinger’s internationalism, is all about legitimacy redefined and a fiery fork put in the balance of power. For more than a decade, proponents of the alleged “Deep State” skewered incessantly and put on the political map by Trump, have yammered about “whole of government” approaches. (These referred to supposedly ever-perfecting integrated responses to issues of policy development, program management, and service delivery carried out by government departments, agencies, and representatives.) In response, even before January 20th, Trump’s actions mirrored Project 2025, the sweeping and controversial conservative-cum-fascist blueprint that before the November elections Trump baldly claimed he knew little about.

For the proudly transactional casino owner (a veritable dumbed down Kissinger, a third-generation Bavarian without a German accent or real military service, using “force” and “realism” as if learned in real estate), Project 2025 not only replaces the unseen manipulation of government (“Deep State”) by a cast-off of the more

noxious myths surrounding the [Trilateral Commission](#) and the [Bilderberg Conferences](#). It also offers an opportunity for far-right luddites to get in on the ground floor. A “[predatory](#)“ foreign policy is a pillar of that effort, with [31 of the 38 people](#) who either wrote or edited the Heritage Foundation plan having served in Trump’s administration or transition.



In the seven days surrounding his inauguration, Trump aides polished a [Project 2025](#) spoils system in which non-partisan government jobs are parceled out to MAGA minions including in senior positions in the FBI and CIA, while current federal employees are paralyzed by the fear of being forced out, perhaps [in mass firings](#). Prime targets, Trump has warned, are “[deep state ... rogue bureaucrats](#).” It is clear that the Departments of State, Justice and Defense will be part of the far-right denouement, as will the Intelligence Community and, as was clear less than two weeks after his re-assumption of power, the FBI. During World War II, the Bureau’s Special Intelligence Service (SIS) assigned 700 agents to combat Nazi influence in Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and [Argentina](#).

By the beginning of February 2025, neo-Nazi apologists and QAnon promoters looked to return the favor by a [revenge gutting](#) of the FBI by perhaps hundreds of special agents. At the same time, the CIA—already overshadowed by a Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) riddled by pro-Russia and QAnon actors—was similarly decimated, its files now open to oligarchs, when not autocrats. The buyouts offered to the Agency’s entire workforce was justified as an attempt to bring it in line with Trump priorities, allegedly including targeting drug cartels.

The role of QAnon is often overlooked in the major media. However, the [authoritative](#) Jewish [Anti-Defamation League](#) is clear about the threat of the

decentralized, far-right political movement rooted in a baseless conspiracy theory that the world is controlled by the “Deep State,” a cabal of Satan-worshipping pedophiles, and that former President Donald Trump is the only person who can defeat it. QAnon emerged on 4chan in 2017, when an

anonymous poster known as “Q,” *believed by its followers to be a team of U.S. government and military insiders*, began posting cryptic messages online about Trump’s alleged efforts to takedown the Deep State. QAnon followers believe that the Deep State will be brought to justice during a violent day of reckoning known as “the Storm,” when it and its *collaborators will be arrested and sent to Guantanamo Bay to face military tribunals and execution for their various crimes*. (Italics added.)

Trump also put space pioneer and neoNazi advocate Elon Musk in charge of a newly created Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE. In September, [Musk promoted ultra-right Tucker Carlson](#)’s widely condemned interview with a Nazi apologist who said the murder of Jews in concentration camps was “humane” and that Winston Churchill was the “chief villain” of World War II. Musk later deleted his X post that called the interview “very interesting” and “worth watching.” In 2023 he [endorsed an anti-Semitic post](#), also on X. The post read in part, “Jewish communities (sic) have been pushing the exact kind of dialectical hatred against whites that they claim to want people to stop using against them.” Musk replied: “You have said [the actual truth](#).”

Since Trump left office [coup-prone in 2021](#), a remarkable number of his senior staff have been prosecuted for their ties to Moscow’s tyrant, including his one-time [National Security Advisor and QAnon partisan Michael Flynn](#), the former DIA director. (Flynn’s NSA staff included military intelligence [denizens linked to far-right and drug dealing militaries in Latin America](#), including [death squad veterans](#) whose regimes were effectively targeted by President Jimmy Carter and his tough State Department human rights advocate, [Patricia “Patt” Derian](#).) Some 1,500 of his followers were also prosecuted for their role in a January 6, 2021 putsch attempt orchestrated by the then defeated and evermore discredited president. Trump’s phony 2024 “landslide” was accompanied by Project 2025’s male-centric white Christian nationalism—whose public appeals echoed Argentina’s neo-Nazi “dirty war” generals a generation ago—and an attempt to quickly overthrow the Constitutional Republic via chaos and strategic insertion.

Even before Trump’s return to power, he gave lie to the quip made famous by the late *New York Times* columnist James “Scotty” Reston, that “Americans will do anything for Latin America, except read about it.” It was, it was said back then, a [policy of “benign neglect](#),” a comfortable stance belied by the often bloody and usually

clandestine regional operations for which this country is still [paying a price](#) (think illegal immigration) while remaining largely, and all too comfortably, ignorant.

Latin America and Latin Americans are indeed in the news north of the Gulf of Mexico. The big three on Trump's agenda are undocumented migration, real (and imagined), Chinese influence, and fentanyl smuggling, all purloined from President Joseph R. Biden's own agenda and weaponized with bombastic threats against other countries and their leaders.

Trump's well-stoked rage focuses, in particular, on an already initiated "mass deportation" of overwhelmingly Latin American undocumented immigrants. The thinly [veiled racism](#) serving as MAGA red meat is evident in the fact little if any new actions are being taken against Russian illegal visitors in the southern Brooklyn area known as Brighton Beach (popularly known as a Russified "Little Odessa"), or against those from Ireland in and around Boston, or Poles in Chicago, or any other European immigrant community.

Despite the cruel bravado, there is [little or no evidence](#) backing Trump's claim that many undocumented aliens from Latin America have been released from prisons, jails, or mental or psychiatric hospitals. Yet, less media focus is on the fact that their persecution affects the [remittances](#) that millions of families in Latin America rely on in order to live. Many come from countries the U.S. helped destroy over decades in clandestine "dirty wars;" efforts that reflected similar [American military claims](#) in Vietnam: "It became necessary to destroy the town to save it."

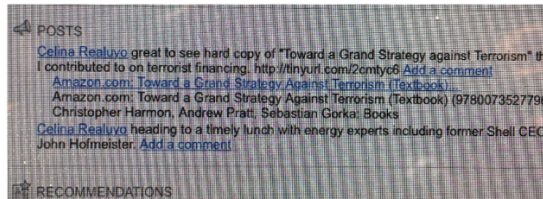
The rank hypocrisy of using "Big Lie" tactics supposedly jettisoned in the West after World War Two and the 1945 trials against German Nazi leaders at Nuremberg is much in evidence.

Consider: A week into his regime, it was discovered that among the Day 1 executive orders Trump signed upon taking office—"Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats"—was a line about enforcing a section of immigration law by which an immigrant's "unlawfully procured" U.S. citizenship can be revoked.

In justifying the mass deportation, Trump said he would invoke the [1798 Alien Enemies Act](#), a law last used during World War Two to target foreign non-citizens of Japanese, German and Italian descent. Yet, the nod to the denaturalization part of his very public crackdown, coming as Trump was demanding the unconstitutional deportation of people actually born in the United States, had its own uniquely Orwellian brand.

Five days after Trump’s inauguration, *The Progressive* magazine published an article entitled, “[The Dangerous Depravity of Tom Homan](#).” It underscored how the felonious sex offender’s “border czar” himself promotes racist conspiracy theories and associates with white nationalists belonging to hate groups. An advocate of Trump’s unconstitutional push to end birthright citizenship, last year Homan engaged in a “disturbing rant” at a cult festival in rural Pennsylvania in which he spewed both racist and antisemitic conspiracy tropes. The company sponsoring the event, [according to local media](#), an arms merchant, is also an important supporter of “right wing radio, *like hate-monger and Nazi-adjacent Sebastian Gorka*.” (Italics added.)

Addendum for the International Criminal Court / Re: Celina Realuyo



**RE: Forward EXCLUSIVE:
Nazi-Allied Group Claims Top
Trump Aide Sebastian Gorka
As Sworn Member**

I classified it based on the classification guides of the agencies whose information was present; those guides are classified, so I cannot say more.

w/r

Date: February 20, 2017 at 9:06:01 PM EST
To: "Glenn.Fine" <Glenn.Fine@dodig.mil>, IC-IG-HOTLINE-TEAM <ICIGHOTLINE@dni.gov>
Subject: CHDS & the Trump Adviser Who Wears Medal of Nazi Collaborators



Another speaker was former DIA director, [Michael Flynn](#), who was fired from Trump’s NSC for his links to Russia uncovered by the FBI. If Trump won in November, Flynn was asked if he would head a military tribunal “to not only drain the swamp but imprison the swamp—and, on a few occasions, execute the swamp?” [Flynn replied](#): “I’m about winning. We have to win. And these people are already up to no good. So, we gotta win first. We win, and then, ‘Katy-bar the door.’ OK? Believe me: The gates of hell—my hell—will be unleashed.” (Earlier in the year, [Flynn admitted in a court deposition](#) ... that one of the biggest election fraud claims pushed by (...) Trump and his supporters had no evidence to back it up.”)



#Trump #Snowden #QAnon #Corporate #thugs
#IntelligenceCommunity #HostileTakeover

“It used to be that immigrants who earned U.S. citizenship,” an investigation by [USA Today](#) noted, “could only see it taken away if they hid their *Nazi past*, had ties to *terrorists*, or *lied on their application*—fewer than a dozen people per year.” (Italics added.)

Trump’s already [highly controversial](#) pick, a “[con man](#),” to be his counterterrorism chief on the White House National Security Council, the Hungarian-American Gorka both [worked on the staff of Hungarian despot Viktor Orbán](#), a Vladimir Putin ally, and directly linked to neo-Nazi organizations in his home country. The purported MAGA counterterrorist also worked at the Pentagon’s [National Defense University](#) in Washington, [side by side with far-right terrorists](#) from Latin America during the stint of [Vice Admiral Ann E. Rondeau](#).

Tariffs on Mexican imports and the mass deportation of Mexican nationals are key to a “good neighbor” policy turned on its head, particularly when a key official focus is on fentanyl trafficking, while Trump pardoned a convicted drug trafficker who ran a massive online criminal enterprise. Trump has also threatened to “take back” the Panama Canal, transferred to Panama in a treaty approved during the Jimmy Carter Administration. He falsely claimed that Chinese soldiers were operating the Canal. This despite the fact that Panama has been in the forefront of regional efforts to help stymie illegal immigration into the United States. Trump’s bullying his country’s southern neighbors is increasingly creating blowback, not the least of which is increased regional interest in closer ties with, among others ... China.

Farther to the south, it was, as the [BBC explained](#), “*Co-operate or else: Trump’s Colombia face-off is warning to all leaders.*” Rather than take on China, Mexico, or Canada, the first international tariff dispute was with one of U.S.’s closest allies in South America. After Colombia refused to allow two U.S. military transport planes to land

carrying deported migrants to land, Trump exploded. “We will not allow the Colombian government to violate its legal obligations with regard to the acceptance and return of the criminals they forced into the United States.” [In addition to 25 percent tariffs](#), the convicted felon said a travel ban and “immediate visa revocations” for Colombian government officials would be implemented, as well as on the country’s other allies and supporters. Cornered, Colombia had [no possibility other than to back down](#).

Meanwhile, those seeking to cuddle with Trump appear to be cut from, as former Vice President Kamala Harris said about him, “fascist” cloth. Three Latin American leaders in particular—Argentine President Javier Milei, [Nayib Bukele](#) in El Salvador and former Brazilian President [Jair Bolsonaro](#)—joined Georgia Meloni in Italy, Orban in Hungary, and Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel as part of a far-right political and economic cartel led by Trump and the neo-Nazi sympathizer [Musk](#).

Milei, a self-promoting “libertarian” firebrand, was the first foreign leader on the phone with Trump after the latter’s election. Milei’s MAGA-shadowing personalistic and narrow ideological vision meant his record is one of assailing the media and political opponents, threatening to crush protests, and warning he would rule by emergency decree if the national legislature stymies his proposed economic reforms.

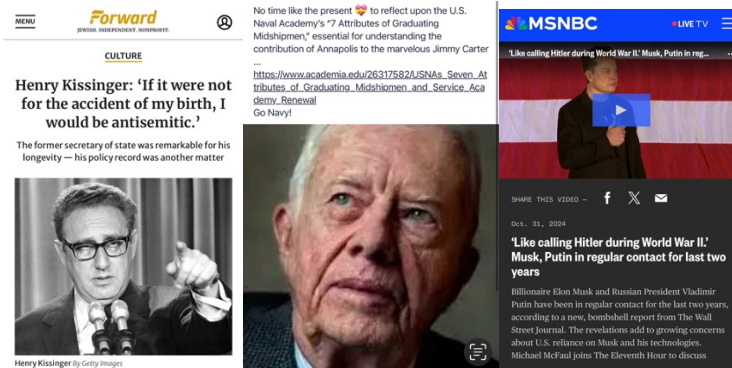
Four days after Trump’s coronation, the authoritative [Human Rights Watch](#) warned of Argentina’s “institutional deterioration,” specifically focusing on critical issues of freedom of speech, gender equality and judicial integrity. Forty years ago, Argentina made history by having the first civilian government in Latin America to bring former neo-Nazi military dictators to trial for crimes against humanity, in what was dubbed a [mini-Nuremberg](#) proceeding. Today, HRW points to Milei’s anti-LGBTQ rhetoric, noting that its potential to incite violence was mirrored in the May 2024 killing in a Buenos Aires boarding house of three lesbian women.

At the January World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland Milei went full-Trump, railing against “the mental virus of woke ideology. “Feminism, equality, gender ideology, climate change, abortion and immigration,” he said, “are all heads of the same monster, whose aim is to justify the advance of the state.” Noted [one Argentine analyst](#):

The ‘N’ word issue is back at the centre of the discussion, particularly after the inauguration of Donald Trump as president of the United States. Not only has the “new right” begun to build a global network that could lead to some level of hegemony that could have an air of bellicose expansionism, but also because of Elon Musk’s controversial gesture — which he repeated twice. You know the one, the one that very much could have been a Nazi salute. Musk, a master

“troll” who comments on almost everything online, didn’t reject the accusations outright. ...

One of Musk’s staunchest defenders was Milei, who wrote a long post on social media platform X (formerly Twitter, renamed by Musk), titled: “My balls [he’s a] Nazi” (a rough translation from a colloquial Argentine expression). ... Milei noted that Musk is a staunch supporter of the ideals of freedom and a crusader against the ideas of “wokeism.” He capped it off with a threat: “We are not afraid of you, we will go after you to the farthest corners of the Earth in defence of the ideals of freedom. Tremble, lefty sons of bitches.”



With the Trump administration already scuttling U.S. participation in international treaties and organizations, as well as USAID, regional institutions such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and its [Inter-American Human Rights System](#), made up of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Inter-American Court) are at profound risk.

“Since 2012, Russia has strategically used criminal networks to evade sanctions, conduct intelligence, and destabilize the West,” the prestigious [Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime](#) noted. “Under (Vladimir) Putin’s ‘mobilization state,’ illegal activities—from smuggling to cyberattacks—are seen as essential tools of warfare.” Law enforcement analysis shows how Putin uses the projection of [“gangsters at war”](#) as a tool of foreign policy [into the Americas](#).

Meanwhile, as was convincingly [reported last](#) year, into the vacuum artfully created by Trump and his pro-Russia Congressional minions:

Russia has successfully implemented long-term strategies to capture and influence intellectual elites in Latin America, using media outlets, educational institutions, and think tanks to shape public opinion and policy. This effort, which includes turning media outlets such as *RT Actualidad* and *Sputnik Mundo* into popular and widely followed outlets, is reminiscent of Soviet-era tactics. It seeks to promote Moscow’s narratives and counter Western influence, often

blurring the lines between genuine intellectual diversity and the co-optation of elites.

One way to spot agents of influence is to look for subtle but telling linguistic alignments, such as referring to the invasion of Ukraine as a “special military operation” or characterizing troop withdrawals as “gestures of goodwill.” Furthermore, their narratives often shift in lockstep with Moscow’s, and their claims frequently fail to hold up against verifiable facts—such as the assertion that Russian troops entered Ukraine to protect civilians when the conflict in Donbas was already de-escalating.

The moves by Putin’s Latin American agents and subterranean minions are, not ironically, paralleled and reinforced by Trump. For example, upon the [second Russian invasion](#), in February 2022, of Ukraine, the owner of significant [investments in Moscow](#) called it a work of “genius” and “pretty savvy.” Earlier, Trump, in a joint press conference with Putin, someone even senior Republican senators condemned as a [Russian imperialist](#), said he sided with the dictator against the conclusion of the U.S. intelligence community, that the Kremlin had not interfered in the 2016 presidential election.

As will be explained below, on the “seventh day” of Trump’s rape of U.S. democracy, January 24th, [Putin returned the favor](#) by claiming that Moscow’s full-scale military invasion of Ukraine could have been averted had Trump been the US president at that time. He also backed @FeloniousRex’s unfounded claims that the victory was stolen from him in 2020.

In the run-up to the 2016 election and in 2017, the now Trump vice president, [J.D. Vance](#), privately worried his future patron—“a total fraud” and “cultural heroin” for many in the United States—was a “moral disaster” on the verge, perhaps, of becoming “America’s Hitler.” Trump was, he said, “one of USA’s most hated, villainous, douchey celebs.”

Last year, as [Vance emerged](#) under consideration to join Trump on the ballot, he scrambled to give a [carefully crafted when not obsequious interview](#) to *The European Conservative*, where he denounced the supposedly “liberal imperialistic views” of what he called the “European elite.”

Vance singled out for particular praise a transnational partner of Milei, Bukele and Bolsonaro, for his dealing with what, as Vance said quoting Kissinger’s [one-time formal boss Richard M. Nixon](#), should be the target: “the professors are the enemy.”

The closest that conservatives have ever gotten to successfully dealing with left-wing domination of universities is Viktor Orbán’s approach in Hungary. I think his way has to be the model for us: not to eliminate universities, but to

give them a choice between survival or taking a much less biased approach to teaching.

The more traditional right-left split in nearly all of Latin America as elsewhere, for which much blood was spilled in the 20th century, has been transmogrified by big money, social media, and staged political theater. Increasingly the oligarchic elites openly rule with unconcealed scorn, while weaving alliances with their multinational colleagues, with their militaries, and [the bermanitos](#) of those—the police.

Trump links to the *garças*, *narcos*, and *los salvadores arios* have far deeper roots in Latin America than reported in the conventional media. Already, the principal demand for increased military involvement, to give civilian police powers to the armed forces to interdict the flow of drugs as quickly as possible, has created [a malestrom](#) of political instability, civilian casualties, and even an explosion of drug [culture](#), acceptance and even popularity.

Now sustained by the incessant militarization of law enforcement at the urging of the Pentagon, social inequality, drug proliferation, and far-right ascendancy also has deep ties to a [corrupted Defense Intelligence Agency](#), overseen by both the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community (IC).

The result is obvious: “Many places around the world have experienced some degree of similar fragmentation, noted a recent analysis in the [Harvard International Review](#), “yet they do not struggle with the emergence of powerful groups that have been able to infiltrate the government and the military while becoming epicenters of drug production...the efforts made by the Latin American militaries have yielded few long-term results.”

At the same time, globalism is a much used sword in debates about U.S. foreign policy. What is certain is that for the first time the International Criminal Court (ICC) has made a valiant effort to stanch global impunity, in stride with the last U.S. administration.

On March 17, 2023, following an investigation of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, the ICC issued the first-ever arrest warrant against the leader of a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council—Putin. By June 2024, the ICC also issued arrest warrants for four senior Russian military officers accused of directing attacks at civilian objects and the crime against humanity of “inhumane acts” under the Rome Statute.

When it was founded, the ICC's first prosecutor was Luis Moreno Ocampo, someone in turn supported by an original prosecutor of the Nazi high command at Nuremberg, and an Argentine who played a key prosecutorial role of military "dirty warriors" in Buenos Aires in the mid-1980s. The Justice Department's [Jack Smith](#) [previously served](#) as the ICC "specialist prosecutor" of Russian-supported war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by or against citizens of Kosovo between 1998 and 2000.

Until he was re-elected, Trump faced multiple charges in the cases prosecuted by Smith, including one under the Espionage Act for the way he grossly mishandled hundreds of classified documents since leaving the White House. For his part, promising "revenge," [Trump made it clear](#) that the prosecutor was at the top of his list of alleged "enemies within" and that that federal government "should throw Jack Smith out" of the country.



In more decent and less oddly unAmerican times, a presidential inauguration would have joyfully embraced the coterminous celebration of the birthday of Dr. King. Fewer times in history was moral lucidity more needed or more a blessing. On October 27, 1983, in the middle of Reagan's "secret wars" in Central America, biographer [Marshall Frady](#) wrote [an essay](#), "[Prophet with Honor](#)," that today is perhaps the most searing indictment of the country over which Trump claims to preside:

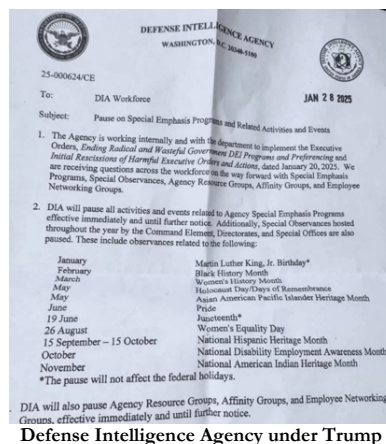
King was moving against what he saw as the moral coma of corporate technological America: the loud and vicious void of its materialism, its insulations of people from one another, its technician's detachment from the human effects of its interests and policies and deeds, and the incalculable brutality all this was visiting not only on the life of America, but elsewhere in the world—most conspicuously, then, in Vietnam. In the end, King had ranged himself against the spirit of the age.

In early February, Trump appointed Darren Beattie to serve as the acting Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the State Department. Six

years ago, Beattie was fired as a Trump speechwriter after *CNN* broke the story that he spoke at a conference hosted by White nationalists. His current position puts him in a key post for shaping U.S. messaging abroad, particularly as it has to do with violent extremism and counterterrorism. Last September Beattie claimed that the U.S. intelligence community, not Iran, was the more likely author of assassination attempts against Trump.



The tragedy of January 20, 2025 was foretold by two events, one a memorial service, the other a divisive anniversary in the run-up to the inauguration. On January 9th, a funeral service was held in the Washington National Cathedral for President Carter. [Rightly called “the most consequential one-term president](#) in American history,” the graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy oversaw a veritable revolution in human rights in U.S. foreign policy, as well as the relinquishing of control of the Canal Zone to Panama. Not since the Nuremberg trials had the U.S. shown itself to be as true to its democratic values. For many, Carter’s enormous contributions included making human rights in long-suffering Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay a focal point of his international civic revolution, as well as his later role as a statesman overseeing free and fair elections around the globe.



Defense Intelligence Agency under Trump

See: <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2025-01-29/department-of-defense-pauses-cultural-observances-16642776.html>

In 2017, the soft-spoken, world-renowned international election monitor called into question both [Trump's ties with the Russian intelligence community](#) and the legitimacy of his election the year before. Trump's re-election, however, spoke to the vulnerability of the legacy of Carter, who passed his personal 100-year mark intending to vote for Kamala Harris, only to be left abandoned by the America he loved, even as his human rights revolution has [only recently given its due](#) by historians. "He made the principle of human rights a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy," biographer Kai Bird autographed, "planting the seeds for the unraveling of the Cold War in Eastern Europe and Russia." Those seeds came from Latin America.

With First Lady Melania Trump in tow wearing a semi-pornographic scarf at the religious ceremony, Trump seemed like a smelt out of water in a burning California forest. (Perhaps he was remembering amidst the praise for Carter that his own followers often hail the vile far-right military regime of Augusto Pinochet in Chile, once called even by [Reagan's State Department and the CIA](#) "terrorists" for carrying out a murderous car bombing less than a mile from the White House. "It is perhaps the only case of state-sponsored terrorism carried out in Washington," noted [an article](#) in the *Washington Post*, by a military dictatorship that was allied to the U.S.) In an *NBC News* interview that same day Carter was remembered, Trump said mass deportations of undocumented immigrants would be in full force "very quickly."

January 13th was the fourth anniversary of Trump becoming the first U.S. president to be impeached twice, after the House of Representatives approved an article of impeachment that accused him of "incitement of insurrection" for his role in encouraging supporters to storm the Capitol in an effort to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election.

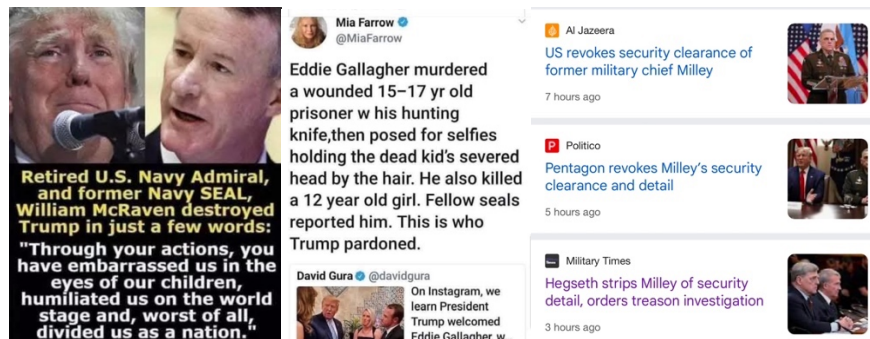
Trump's own revelatory "Seven Days" began on January 18th, when, as reported the [lede article](#) in the international section of *The New York Times*: "Trump Team Rebuffs Talks on Mass Deportations, Latin American Countries Say." (On that day, 32 years earlier, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was officially observed for the first time in all 50 states.)

On the 20th, the epicenter of Trump's "seven days," he was sworn into his second term in the Capitol Rotunda, the same place where four years earlier his far-right followers tried to violently overturn the election victory of Biden and the country's

first black woman vice president. He also pardoned the rioters criminally charged with storming the Capitol, convinced that the 2020 election had been stolen. At least 140 law enforcement officers defending the Capitol were wounded in the insurrection and one, Brian Sicknick, died in the days following the attack. Four other policemen have since died by suicide.

On the 24th, the 7th day, Pete Hegseth, Trump's choice for Secretary of Defense, was narrowly confirmed by the U.S. Senate. A self-described "disruptor," an accused sexual predator, and a reputed floundering alcoholic on par with Argentina's notorious "dirty war" general, Leopoldo Galtieri, (who went on to lose to the British in a real war), the debate over his nomination focused heavily on social issues and personal fitness.

Less focus was put on his defending U.S. troops accused or convicted of war crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq. Hegseth claimed that "restrictive rules of engagement" "made it more difficult to defeat our enemies," yet seemingly took a narrow step away from his once fulsome attacks on the military justice system. In open testimony before Congress, [ABC News reported](#), Hegseth "agreed that the Geneva Convention was the 'law of the land,' but claimed that such laws of war existed 'above reality' and that there was a 'tactical distinction' between international laws and fighting on the ground." His stance called into question an international legal system whose foundations were forged in the Nuremberg trials against the defeated German Nazi high command, which began eight decades ago this year.



SEAL Chief Eddie Gallagher was court martialed for shooting at civilians from a sniper's post and murdering a defenseless captive in Iraq, going on to threaten to kill fellow SEALs if they reported him. Hegseth [received early notoriety](#) for his public role in supporting Gallagher and service members in two other cases involving war crime accusations in 2019, a move that serves as a clarion call in today's deep divisions in the military, putting in the crosshairs questions about the limits of executive power and

military accountability (or the largesse of impunity). “These are men who went into the most dangerous places on earth with a job to defend us and made tough calls on a moment’s notice,” a sober Hegseth said on *Fox & Friends* in May 2019. “They’re not war criminals, they’re warriors.” Hegseth put on notice both the military justice system and outside civilian human rights advocates, achieving both pardons for the other two soldiers and a reprieve for Gallagher from Trump, who went out of his way to give the man now his defense secretary high praise. The Commander-in-Chief [made the ruling in a direct slap](#) at the Pentagon brass, who were against it.

“Pete Hegseth considers himself to be at war with basically everybody to Trump’s left,” pundit Jonathan [Chait wrote](#) in *The Atlantic* shortly after the November election, “and it is by no means clear that he means war metaphorically.” The headline? “Donald Trump’s Most Dangerous Cabinet Pick.”

Who Hegseth’s first target in his new warrior’s crusade was made clear even before he received Senate confirmation, when, within two hours of Trump taking the oath of office, former Joint Chiefs Chairman [Gen. Mark Milley’s official portrait](#) was taken down from a Pentagon hallway that exhibits all of the paintings of former chairmen. Once officially in the Pentagon, Hegseth revoked both Milley’s security detail and security clearance. After serving as chairman during Trump’s first time, Milley was [quoted calling Trump “fascist to the core”](#) and “the most dangerous person to this country”. In his final speech two year ago as chairman, [distributed by the official Voice of America](#), Milley said the military did not take an oath to a “wannabe dictator,” stopping short of naming Trump by name.

The Milley example holds many lessons for Latin American militaries, not the least of which is that truth means nothing, and that standing up against tyranny, as did Uruguayan general [Liber Seregni](#) and his Argentine counterpart General [Arturo Corbetta](#) in the worst of the dirty “wars,” is fraught with danger. Perhaps just as important in a regional context are Hegseth’s views on Muslims, a fast growing population in key countries of “Latin” America.

Other Trump selections in the national security arena are even more troubling. As former Naval War College professor Tom [Nichols wrote in *The Atlantic*](#),

The Russians speak of ‘power ministries,’ the departments that have significant legal and coercive capacity. In the United States, those include the Justice Department, the Defense Department, the FBI, and the intelligence community. Trump has now named sycophants to lead each of these institutions, a move that eliminates important obstacles to his frequently expressed desires to use the armed forces, federal law-enforcement agents,

intelligence professionals, and government lawyers as he chooses, unbounded by the law or the Constitution.

One selection seemingly from a bad fiction novel is [QAnon](#) conspiracy champion and Trump’s pick for director of the FBI, Kash Patel, the headquarters for which the [nominee himself says](#) he would turn into a museum for the “deep state.” If he comes to wield the unlimited power reminiscent of the bad old days of Hoover, [Patel is believed](#) likely to open investigations unilaterally against Trump’s political foes as well as use his political bias on background checks. Even former Trump Attorney General William P. [Barr noted](#): “I categorically opposed making Patel deputy FBI director. I [said] it would happen ‘over my dead body.’ (...) Patel had virtually no experience that would qualify him to serve at the highest level of the world’s preeminent law enforcement agency.”



The headlines are all that is needed to see the danger: Ruth Marcus, “[Kash Patel is a dangerous man and unqualified pick for the FBI.](#)” *The Washington Post*, 12/1/24; Elaina Plott Calabro, “[The Man Who Will Do Anything For Trump.](#)” *The Atlantic*, 8/26/24; Jonathan Swan, Maggie Haberman and Charles Savage, “[A New Trump Administration Will ‘Come After’ the Media, Says Kash Patel.](#)” *The New York Times*, 12/5/24; Nikki McCann Ramirez, Asawin Suebsaeng and Andrew Perez, “[Why Kash Patel May Be Trump’s Scariest Pick Yet.](#)” *Rolling Stone*, 12/1/24, and Eric Tucker and Alan Suderman, “[Trump taps Kash Patel for FBI director, a loyalist who would aid effort to upend law enforcement.](#)” *Associated Press*, 11/30/24.

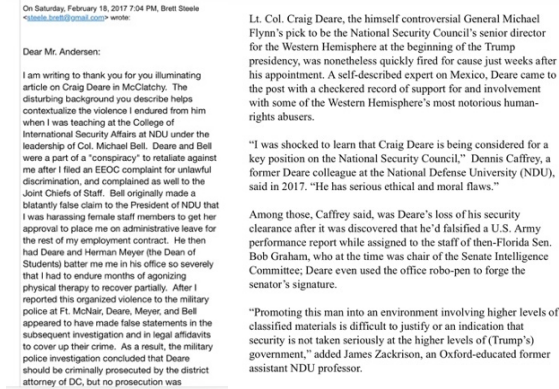
In his Senate confirmation hearing, [Patel claimed](#) to never have heard of Stew Peters, a far right-wing conspiracy theorist, even though he had appeared on his podcast eight times. Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., urged Patel to tell about a song he promoted with Jan. 6 rioters, known as the “[J6 Choir](#)” recording, but instead the Bureau nominee

professed not knowing that the singers had assaulted police officers. Not since the grim directorship of J. Edgar Hoover was the now long-running tradition of keeping presidents and politics at arm's length more at jeopardy than with Patel, who in some ways seems to conjure the image of elected strongman Juan D. Peron's notorious "guru" and Social Welfare minister, [Jose Lopez Rega](#), just before *El Brujo* was violently unleashed against almost any and all opposition.

Where Carter's presidency began to restore the tattered U.S. reputation for decency, high purpose and free and fair elections abroad, a fourth Trump pick suggests someone mirroring something worse than the CIA-of-old on steroids. [The Voice of America was founded in 1942](#), less than two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, to combat Nazi propaganda.

Arizona's failed politician Kari Lake was Trump's choice to run the VOA, a government foreign broadcast organization whose very effectiveness with 354 million viewers relies on objectively and political independence. In fact, she is the [intellectual equivalent](#) of Adolf Hitler's chief propagandist Joseph Goebbels. Lake routinely claims that reporters are "monsters" in the business of promoting "fake news." She is also a nationally known election denier and a fervent promoter of [deporting "tens of millions"](#) of undocumented immigrants in the United States.

For Latin America, Trump selected the intransigent [Mauricio Claver-Carone](#) to be a special envoy. A deputy assistant to the president during his first term, he also served as senior director for Western Hemisphere affairs at the National Security Council after [Craig Deare](#)—a long-time [DIA](#) official, a Rondeau favorite, and a [professor at the National Defense University](#)—was fired from the NSC after [supposedly making lewd comments](#) about Trump's family in an off-the-record Woodrow Wilson Center roundtable. Claver-Carone went on to head the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) until he was fired after [an ethics probe](#) "found he likely carried on an intimate relationship with a subordinate." (Ironically, although Deare did the same thing at the NDU, while married, and even physically assaulted another colleague, he was never disciplined.)



Finally, former Congresswoman and career military officer Tulsi Gabbard is Trump's pick to serve as Director of National Intelligence (DNI), a position that would make her key to any national security related foreign policy or military decision. Lacking any spy agency experience, she both blames the U.S. for the war in Ukraine and plays vocal defense for Putin. During her January 30th confirmation hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee, its vice chairman, [Sen. Mark Warner \(D-Va.\) wondered](#) in his opening statement if Gabbard was so unqualified to be director of national intelligence that being put in that role would itself violate the post-World War 2 law establishing the Intelligence Community, as it requires the nominee to have "extensive national security expertise." Driving home the point, Warner said: "I continue to have significant concerns about your judgment and your qualifications to meet the standard set by the law."

Created after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence coordinates the nation's intelligence agencies and acts as the president's main intelligence adviser. The director is the one charged with putting the most sensitive national security information before the president every morning, and—with 18 intelligence organizations including the CIA and NSA answering to her—has access to all, or almost all, of the country's most important secrets. Noting her [past appearances on Russian TV](#), *RIA Novosti*, a Russian state-controlled news agency, called Gabbard "superwoman," and claimed that Ukrainian intelligence sees her as "probably an agent of the Russian special services."

"America's allies are watching the nomination process closely, worried about how Trump's incoming administration could affect intelligence cooperation and sharing," one [nuanced analysis noted](#).

Trump's election raises "very difficult issues" for America's closest allies and members of the Five Eyes group, an intelligence-sharing coalition of the U.S., the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, according to

Thomas Juneau, a former strategic analyst with Canada's Department of National Defence. "Will the U.S. be more selective in what it shares, to pressure allies? If yes, this will create mistrust between the U.S. and its closest partners," Juneau said. "In the long term, this would negatively affect the Five Eyes, which is an extremely close partnership premised on an extraordinarily high level of trust."

On Latin America, however, Gabbard, like Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., appeals to some on the Left. "Every time the United States, and particularly in Latin America," [she said](#), "has gotten involved in regime change, using different tools to enact that regime change, there have been both short and long-term devastating impacts."



The history of U.S.-Latin America relations suggests that in far too many instances, Gabbard is not wrong. However, it remains a sensitive subject in so far as her would-be boss shows little or no interest in alleviating poverty overseas, respecting human rights, or supporting free and fair elections. Little over a week after taking office, Trump said he wanted to ["clean out"](#) Gaza of a Hamas once financed by Benjamin Netanyahu by moving the Palestinians living there to other countries. Days later, he was talking about making it a U.S. territory.

"In a head spinning move, The First Felon proposes America occupy Gaza, expel its millions of residents and build the 'Riviera of the Middle East,'" former Reagan aide Frank Donatelli fumed. "The proposal by this 'America First' president combines ethnic cleaning, rank imperialism, involving America in the mother of endless wars, and extremely poor resort planning."

Apart from the possibility it would set the United States up for being accused of terror-supported "ethnic cleansing," it should be remembered that there are many Gazas in Latin America. Ask its indigenous peoples.

A focus on the failed January 6 revolt on Capitol Hill and its relationship to Trump's allies in Latin America has been largely overlooked, particularly in terms of its foreign policy implications and what the “banana-ization” of a United States its president hope to merge with Canada means. Even the prestigious *Just Security*, [in its analysis](#) of the make up, culpability and judicial outcome of the insurrection appears to give short shrift to the role played by the inheritors of neo-Nazi doctrine and an international terrorism network that reached back to Europe and the United States. It did underline that:

Trump granted pardons and commutations to the far-right extremists who engaged in a premeditated violent attack on Jan. 6—namely, the leaders and members of the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers. As has been amply documented, the Proud Boys were key instigators of the attack on the U.S. Capitol. While some of their leaders did not personally assault law enforcement officers on Jan. 6, they commanded the rioters who did and their plans included “overwhelming police defenses.

It should be noted that, even before the attack, Proud Boys and Oath Keepers promoted the legacy of Chile's Pinochet. “‘Death Squad’ karma: Pinochet would have been proud of the Proud Boys,” the [WLRN Public Media reported](#). In 2020, they wore *RWDS* (Right-Wing Death Squads) initials on caps at a Washington, D.C., rally for Trump. “Are the Proud Boys a 21st-century dose of karma for all the 20th-century *RWDS*'s the U.S. aided and abetted?” Tim Padgett asked. He continued:

I remember *CNN*'s Jake Tapper and all the other cable news talking heads on Jan. 6, 2021, pointing out that the insurrection we were watching on Capitol Hill was more reminiscent of Latin America than America. What they didn't bring up was how complicit the U.S. has been historically in saddling Latin America with that reputation. And what they also didn't suggest was the not-too-far-fetched notion that America was receiving a little payback that day—a little taste of the castor oil it so often made other countries across the Americas swallow for so many decades.

Padgett expressed his happiness that Proud Boys former leader, Enrique Tarrío, received a 22-year sentence in a federal penitentiary on the charge of seditious conspiracy in the January 6th attack. Tarrío was one of those pardoned by Trump, despite incoming Vance's assurance that those who were violent that day should not be shown the mercy of walking out of jail.

When Mauricio Garcia opened fire at a Dallas mall, killing eight people, he too wore an *RWDS* patch. [The Garcia case](#) offers greater understanding of the threat faced today in both the U.S. and Latin America. The coordinated dance between Putin's network and far-right terrorists, in some ways resembling the [alliance between Hitler](#)

[and Joseph Stalin](#) for the 1939 joint invasion of Poland, was reflected by the thoughts and actions of a Spanish-speaking Texan.

The killer showed extreme interest in white supremacy and mass shooting carried on a Russian social networking site more than likely monitored by Putin's intelligence agencies. Among the photos he posted were "large Nazi tattoos on his arm and torso, including a swastika and the SS lightning bolt logo of Hitler's paramilitary forces."

Meanwhile, as early as 2017, the Proud Boys' "*Free Helicopter Rides*" meme went viral, making a joke of the fact that of the tens of thousands tortured and more than 2300 killed by Pinochet, at least 120 were dropped from helicopters into the ocean, or in Chile's endless expanse of rivers and lakes—their bodies frequently vanishing for good. By desensitizing people against targeted violence by making it the butt of jokes, the hate group seeks both justification and recruitment.

In early September, 2020, U.S. Department of Homeland [Security draft documents leaked](#) to the media predicted an "elevated (national) threat environment at least through next year," during which the most "persistent and lethal threats" are internationally-networked U.S. white supremacists. Today, "Free helicopter rides for commies" [t-shirts are available](#) for \$17.99 on Amazon, owned by Trump booster Jeff Bezos, who also is conducting a fire sale for the reputation of the *Washington Post*, where some of the best reporting on the atrocities of far left and neo-Nazi right in Latin America was once found.

Sinister "free rides" also carried thousands of others in the Southern Cone of South America. In Argentina, a Nazi-inspired military regime overthrew civilian authorities in 1976 and were given [a "green light"](#) by the ever-ready Kissinger. The generals' clandestinely expanding network of concentration camps and torture chambers housed in shackles tens of thousands of *los desaparecidos*. With the Rockefeller family's financial institutions bankrolling the repression, the military carried out its own version of what in the United States Project 2025 appears to project.

The Argentine 601 army intelligence unit was in charge of coordinating the repression both inside the country and by working with its foreign, and usually military, counterparts. The uniformed spymasters not only deceived their fellow citizens into thinking that a vast underground network of leftist guerrillas threatened a "white, Western, Christian country," but also pretended that many casualties on the street were the doings of clandestine enemies, while in fact, as [confirmed by the FBI](#), the number of those murdered by the neo-Marxist insurgents was vastly overblown.

The Nation editor Victor Navasky faces off with Henry Kissinger on his green light for Argentina dirty "war"



"Toll me, Mr. Navasky," [Henry Kissinger] said in his famous guttural tones, "how is it that a short article in an obscure journal such as yours about a conversation that was supposed to have taken place years ago about something that did or didn't happen in Argentina resulted in sixty people holding placards denouncing me a few months ago at the airport when I got off the plane in Copenhagen?"

In Victor S. Navasky, *A Matter of Opinion* (p. 298).

(The article in question, "Kissinger and the 'Dirty War,'" written by me and published in *The Nation*, October 21, 1987, broke the story about how the then-Secretary of State gave Argentina's far-right "dirty warriors" the green light for their unfolding massacre.)



Many of those killed were victims of the military themselves, its [unquestioningly subordinate police institutions](#), or far-right paramilitaries maintaining a bare semblance of operational independence. Far worse was the fact the head of the Peronist Montoneros, bandied about in complicit media as the largest urban terrorist organization in Latin America, was—together with many other supposed armed leftists—working for the 601 Battalion, a fact [also confirmed years later](#) by the FBI. An outsized number of those killed in the clandestine extermination camps were Jews.

By 1979, Argentine military intelligence [overthrew the elected government in Bolivia](#), replacing it with a drug-running fascist military dictatorship in which former German concentration camp heads and Italian neo-Nazi terrorists took part. Shortly thereafter, the 601 Battalion played the role of cut outs for the CIA in its secret wars in Central America. On the economic side, however, unlike in Pinochet's Chile, Argentina maintained its close trade relationships with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

One of those pardoned by Trump for his January 6th role was [Argentine-American Federico Klein](#), a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, who still served at the time of the MAGA attempted overthrow as a political appointee in the State Department's Office of Brazilian and Southern Cone Affairs. Klein, whose lack of diplomatic training made his work at the State Department something of a joke, was given an almost six-year sentence for playing a major role in attacking police officers.

While at the State Department, colleagues said later, Klein "repeatedly" praised the rule by Argentine military junta more than four decades earlier. "One former State Department official said that he'd heard Klein argue a viewpoint held by archconservatives in many Latin American countries," [VICE reported](#), "that when rightwing dictatorships committed human rights abuses, 'the body count was in their legitimate fight against anti-government guerillas.'"

His strident justifications ran in the family. Guillermo Walter Klein Jr., his uncle, was the second highest economic official during the murderous dictatorship.

His drastic neoliberal economic reforms, mirroring those carried out by Pinochet's "Chicago Boys," was endlessly praised by Kissinger and the Rockefellers but left the country in ruins. Trade union organizers, students and religious dissidents filled the ranks of those clandestinely murdered. Often their children born in captivity were given to military families, in some cases the head of the household was the one who killed their parents.

Bob Cox, a former crusading human rights editor in Buenos Aires at the height of the killing, told *VICE* that Guillermo Walter Klein Sr., the patriarch, once told him "The only way to deal with terrorism is to look upon them as stones, and you throw them into a bottomless well," a haunting comment given that the Argentine military junta was known for drugging its political prisoners and throwing them to drown into the Atlantic Ocean from airplanes."

With Trump in the United States the "free helicopter ride" continues, as a joke (for now).

Alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 election was at the time [characterized by Michael Morrell](#), the former acting director of the CIA, as the political equivalent of Sept. 11, 2001.

After Trump's election that year, [I wrote](#) that among the greatest challenges faced by "small D" democrats was one that recalled an earlier age, "when the expectation of a rapid change in policy direction sent shudders through a U.S. government where diplomats and intelligence officers are sworn to protect sources and methods.

At issue: Whether Trump political appointments might put U.S. and allied intelligence assets at risk by revealing their identities to once hostile foreign powers. That was a worry, too, when the presidency of Democrat Jimmy Carter gave way to Republican Ronald Reagan's, with a promise to turn a friendlier eye to dictatorships that had been the target of Carter administration enmity.

As assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs from 1977 to 1981, the indefatigable Patricia ("Patt") Derian, Carter's human rights lance, wanted to make sure that the new Reagan administration, whose electoral victory brought shouts of joy from many dictatorial governments, would not be able to offer information about those dictators' opponents in return for better relations. *So she took it upon herself to destroy hundreds, if not thousands, of possibly classifiable files in her possession that identified international human rights victims, informers and activists.* Then the worry was not *Russia, Ukraine* and Syria's Bashar Assad, but Central and South American dictators and the perpetrators of civilian massacres in El Salvador, Chile, Argentina and elsewhere. (Italics added.)

[U.S. law then as today](#) makes it a felony for “whoever willfully and unlawfully conceals, removes, mutilates, obliterates, or destroys, or attempts to do so, or, with intent to do so takes and carries away any record, proceeding, map, book, paper, document, or other thing, filed or deposited with any clerk or officer of any court of the United States, or in any public office, or with any judicial or public officer of the United States.”

With Trump’s pledge to let back into the White House his felonious compatriots, some of whom whose sentences reflect their [roles as Putin operatives](#), the safe storage of highly classified information vital to the national security of the United States is upended. [Derian](#)’s worries about Reagan-era state terrorist allies getting access to official reports about international human rights victims, informers and activists now clearly extends throughout the nation’s capital and beyond, and to the very sources and methods of officialdom’s innermost sanctums—“[the deepest of the deep state.](#)”



Meanwhile Edward Snowden, the former CIA employee who as a computer intelligence consultant leaked massive amounts of highly classified National Security Agency (NSA) information in 2013, has minimized Trump’s actions both as president and after he left office. A permanent resident of Russia, Snowden (who then [President Trump said](#) he would consider pardoning) [claimed](#) that although Trump mishandled classified documents, it is the “broken system” in Washington that is responsible for the intelligence community leakage.

“The Snowden disclosures were much more wide-ranging than the NSA program, in fact so wide-ranging that it’s almost impossible to keep track,” [wrote conservative Republican journalist Rich Lowry](#), often a Trump critic, in *Politico*. “As Harvard law professor Jack Goldsmith asked, in a piece at the website *Lamfare* opposing a Snowden pardon by (President) Barack Obama, why did Snowden’s devotion to the Constitution require him to disclose details of how we spy on other countries, how we cooperate with Sweden and Norway to spy on Russia, or an NSA program called

MasterMind to respond to cyberattacks?” (In her hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee on January 30th, Trump nominee Gabbard [refused to backdown](#) on her support for Snowden.)

Although Snowden is responsible for the most damaging leakage of classified information in American history, those questions grow both far wider and exponentially with Trump’s return to office. All the more so, given that, [as reported in the *Rolling Stone*](#), on the eve of the national election, the United States’ “literal neo-Nazi leader endorses Trump,” perhaps the most transactional chief of state in modern memory.

“Does Putin’s deadly reach extend to the U.S.?” [CBS News’ 60 Minutes](#) asked November 10th. “There have been falls from windows, poisonings and unsolved shootings outside the U.S., among other suspicious deaths. Inside the U.S., there have been attempts to interfere in elections, cyber attacks and actions putting critical infrastructure at risk, ‘a stark and chilling message,’” one senior Justice Department official noted.

Jack Smith’s investigation into the classified records that Trump stored at his Mar-a-Lago home after his first term and his alleged attempt to obstruct efforts to retrieve them was quashed by the intervention of the then former president’s judicial allies, some of whom he appointed.

“When plunder becomes a way of life for a group of men in a society, over the course of time they create for themselves a legal system that authorizes it and a moral code that glorifies it,” wrote 19th century French economist Frédéric Bastiat.

The tables may once again be turning, although a great risk to those who want to play. Never before have human rights advocates, career foreign service officers, and members of the Intelligence Community been put essentially in the same pot, simmering as Trump make nice and makes money with autocrats and their plutocratic patrons around the world. The nexus goes beyond any, “I scratch your back, you scratch mine” argument. The ranks of what Trump dismissively calls a “Deep State” have, with all-too-often notable exceptions, shared values, insights and resources.

Trump maintains that anything that he can do is perfectly legal and beyond reproach, whether that includes his [casual sharing of intelligence reporting](#) to foreign nationals, or whether it is appointing someone to head the Intelligence Community some fear, with reason, may in fact be compromised. Or, by naming as the head of the FBI a conspiracy maven tied to fringe cults, the most important federal law enforcement agency will be diverted to find and use classified records for what in past years was considered highly unethical, when not illegal, purposes. For an

Administration known for its legal bifurcation into criminality, its felonious senior ranks, and its ultra-right machinations, the fact that classified and prosecutorial information is now in their hands portends an avalanche of direct, indirect, veiled and conditional threats both at home and abroad.

What transactional Trump and his gang have begun to plunder from Day 1 upon taking office may very well include life-or-death information about courageous dissidents both exiled in the United States and living in their own countries, about foreign human rights-friendly diplomats and activists, truth-tellers in witness protection programs, [anti-narcotics and anti-organized crime](#) informers, and the supposedly secure and often anonymous disclosures of national security and other whistleblowers. Trump was, after all, the first president in American history convicted of felonies, with the other cases against him both strong and now withering.

The challenge is even worse when considering the dilemma faced by U.S. partners in the Five Eyes alliance (FVEY) and particularly the Five Eyes Intelligence Oversight and Review Council (FIORC), composed of *non-political* intelligence oversight, review, and security entities of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

[The laws are clear.](#)

18 U.S.C. § 793 prohibits the gathering, transmitting, or receipt of defense information with the intent or reason to believe the information will be used against the United States or to the benefit of a foreign nation. Violators are subject to a fine or up to 10 years imprisonment, or both, as are those who conspire to violate the statute. ...18 U.S.C. § 794 (aiding foreign governments or communicating information to an enemy in time of war) covers 'classic spying' cases. These provide for imprisonment for any term of years or life, or under certain circumstances, the death penalty. ... 18 U.S.C. § 641 punishes the theft or conversion of government property or records for one's own use or the use of another. While this section does not explicitly prohibit disclosure of classified information, it has been used to prosecute 'leakers.'

And the legal restrictions go on.

Trump fundamentally believes that anything in the federal government is his for the taking, no questions asked. He demands that top secret [security clearances](#) "be given to whomever he wants." This despite the fact that "Top Secret and SCI clearance grants people access to information that, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to cause 'exceptionally grave damage to the national security,' according to the Department of Defense Manual." Wrote one scathing critic, "It's unclear if this would

include foreign nationals. Trump could in theory could give a top U.S. security clearance to Vladimir Putin.”

Yet concern for the safety of those on the front ranks in the protection of U.S. values as well as interests has a bureaucratic scope that would seem to match that of a world war. As Trump radically reorients American foreign policy, as he moves away from traditional and stalwart democratic allies, and he eviscerates public interest law to serve his interests and that of his oligarchic partners both foreign and domestic while putting a global environment at risk for everyone, public knowledge about the real threats, and urgent discussion about what to do, is vital.

Three decades ago, it was none other than the former reformist director of the Central Intelligence Agency, [William Colby](#), who claimed that there was one country in Latin America that actually needed a military—Colombia, and, “perhaps,” Peru. All the others, he judged, could handle their challenges using civilian police forces, although (as in Costa Rica and later Panama) with militarized training if a crisis loomed.

Other government agency officials had diametrically different ideas. For the Pentagon at the end of the Cold War, Latin America provided a much needed market for a floundering weapons industry, melded with traditional assumptions—raised to an art by Henry Kissinger and his aides—that foreign militaries were the United States’ most dependable allies.

The CIA, too, had returned under Reagan to a pre-Colby state of official lawlessness; international police programs were useful only if they could be, as they had been before, an extension of Agency needs and interests, [a complaint briefly made public](#) using “graymail” by a senior Justice Department official working in Latin America, [whose parents were Agency](#) veterans.

Barr, who served as George H.W. Bush’s U.S. Attorney General and later that in the first Trump regime, received full support from President George W. Bush not in small part because of the lawyer’s insistence that the [Iran-Contra](#) scandal was merely an executive powers question.

Barr’s federal service began as [a CIA analyst](#) shortly before the time Colby was fired by President Gerald Ford and replaced with a successor more agreeable to Kissinger—Bush. (Colby, who later died under mysterious circumstances, was [“shunned and reviled](#) by many of his former colleagues because he cooperated with congressional and other investigations of illegal and improper activities by the spy agency.”) Barr also built his [career manipulating law](#) to deploy military forces on U.S.

streets—a cudgel promoted incessantly by far-right coupmongers south of the border, [with Pentagon support](#).

Federal legislation strictly forbade the secret sale of weapons to Iran and the use of the proceeds to fund an anti-communist insurgency in Nicaragua, the Contras. In what critics called his 40-year struggle against [Congressional oversight](#), Barr claimed the legislation to be unconstitutional, positing (as Trump does now) that attempts by Congress to “insert itself in the area of foreign affairs at the expense of the authority traditionally exercised by the President” was an encroachment on presidential powers. The House select committee charged with investigating Iran-Contra issued a blistering bipartisan report. A “cabal of zealots,” it noted, with “disdain for the law” violated the statutes that forbade the transactions.

With Barr as his counsel, Bush pardoned the six officials most involved in the clandestine operation that included both [using infamous Argentine military dirty warriors](#) as proxies in Central America (those who carried out the Nazi-backed 1979 narco coup in Bolivia) and [consistently lying](#) to Congress and to the American public about what was really happening.

As the Soviet Union crumbled, Barr’s predecessor, the moderate Richard Thornburgh, worked to enlist mostly civilian law enforcement agencies around the world in a common effort to combat drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, and international white-collar crime. Working to avoid the scandals of prior “operational training” of foreign police, Thornburgh specifically endorsed the concept of “development education” meant to strengthen civilian law enforcement in emerging and troubled democracies.

As Thornburgh’s top aide, however, Assistant Attorney General Barr in late 1989 [issued a memorandum](#) that opened the gates to the U.S. military conducting law enforcement operations outside the United States. It included an ever-widening door to the military to conduct offensives in other nations, including pursuing and apprehending international terrorists and drug traffickers. Barr ruled that a legal ban dating to the Reconstruction Era was not intended to apply outside U.S. borders. (At the time one CIA academic consultant told the author that Justice Department programs in the emerging Russia should strictly focus on prosecutors and judges, not the more working-class police, as the latter were “dirty”—as if the supposed former Soviet white-collar crusaders were not.) Upon replacing Thornburgh, Barr sounded a Justice Department retreat both in time and resources, purposefully and tragically

leaving much of the law enforcement overseas programs to the CIA and to the Defense Department.

Despite Bill Colby's prescient observations about a way forward to promote crime fighting and public security in Latin America, the Defense Department moved in essentially as the only relatively non-clandestine game in town. It convinced Congress to keep and even increase its budget in the post-Cold War dawn.

In 1992, Lt. Col. Charles Dunlap, Jr., wrote [a penetrating essay](#) entitled, "The Origins of the American Military Coup in 2012." The paper, which was co-winner of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition, outlined the hypothetical consequences of accelerating "trends begun in the 1980s; tasking the military with a variety of new, non-traditional missions, and vastly escalating its commitment to formerly ancillary duties."

The cumulative effect of these new responsibilities, Dunlap warned, "*was to incorporate the military into the political process to an unprecedented degree.*" (Italics added.)

That same year the fiscal 1993 Defense Authorization Act contained a proposal for [a pilot program to use DoD resources to "help" civilian authorities](#) in the United States. The Senate Armed Services Committee staff director, a Democrat, defended its collaborative nature by referring to on-going Section 401 humanitarian and civic assistance programs overseas. "*We do it in Honduras,*" he pointed out. A republic whose principle export is [bananas](#), for decades both before and after, [Honduras has suffered hugely](#) from U.S. supported military intervention in politics, internal security, and the economy.

At the time Dunlap wrote his essay, the National Defense University at Fort Leslie McNair less than a mile from Capitol Hill was sponsoring a symposium on "Non-Traditional Roles for the U.S. Military in the Post-Cold War era." Presentations included topics such as disaster relief, humanitarian medical care, environmental and infrastructure engineering, *counter narcotics, riot control, and civil unrest.*



Once Barr was in the Justice saddle for a second time, he met privately overseas with foreign intelligence officials, trying to create from whole cloth [a sham Justice Department probe](#) that the authoritarian Trump brandished in an attempt discredit to U.S. intelligence agencies' examination of the now undisputable connections between Russia and members of the Trump campaign during the 2016 election. [At least seven](#) senior Trump advisers who served at the White House or worked in the campaign were criminally prosecuted.

As professional staff at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee working for Majority Whip Alan Cranston (the only American ever to be successfully sued in a U.S. court by Adolf Hitler), I wrote and shepherded into law key legislation in a number of areas, including nuclear arms-for-grain swapping with the republics of the former Soviet Union; requiring the State Department to include indigenous peoples in its annual country human rights reports, and expanding FBI coverage east of Vienna. Later, for nearly a decade the Latin American / Caribbean specialist for Freedom House, I

successfully got indigenous and LGBTQ rights into the global reporting of the organization originally founded to fight against Nazi Germany.

I am also the first national security whistleblower recipient of the 2001 U.S. Office of Special Counsel's "Public Servant Award," for fighting against Justice Department failures to protect CIA classified information and senior Criminal Division management leaving itself open to blackmail in proto-Putin Russia. My disclosures also included myriad issues of financial mismanagement, visa fraud, employee preselection and favoritism, and the abuse of travel rules and regulations.

In my most recent case, in which I lost my job in reprisal, I filed three Congressional Disclosures to the Intelligence Community Office of the Inspector General (IC OIG), the latest forwarded by the Director of National Intelligence to the House and Senate Intelligence Committees in June 2018. My disclosures involve U.S. Southern Command, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the DIA, and the NDU under Vice Adm. [Rondeau](#) and her dirty war minions, Army Cols. Richard D. Downie and Kenneth LaPlante, and Lt. Col. Deare.



It is important to point out that Rondeau, a DIA veteran, was later appointed by Trump as the president of the [once-prestigious Naval Postgraduate School](#), while Deare, who also came from DIA, served on Trump's National Security Council under National Security Adviser Flynn. The former [DIA chief fired](#) by President Barack Obama, Congressional investigators believe, was a "possible conduit between extremist groups and people in Trump's orbit." Convicted on charges related to the investigation by former Justice Department Special Counsel Robert Mueller, once the head of the FBI, into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, in 2020, Trump pardoned Flynn.

The criminal conduct I blew the whistle on included later proven NDU/DSCA/DIA 2009 coup mongering in Honduras, aiding and abetting the illegal

overthrow of its elected government, and crimes against humanity cases by neo-Nazis and others employed by the Pentagon's university. My disclosures centered around the later conviction in civilian court of an NDU / DIA / Southern Command partner and Argentine death squad leader. They also included what ended up being the successful criminal prosecution in [three separate murder cases](#) of nine unarmed detainees of a fellow NDU professor (and torturer accused of sexual perversion), Jaime García Covarrubias, who had previously been the 'counterintelligence chief' of a Chilean DINA international state terrorist organization responsible for the car bomb murders of two people (one a U.S. citizen) less than a mile from the White House. Another major disclosure was the outing of a third, a double agent for the military death squads whose former organization nonetheless claimed responsibility, and was responsible for, the murder of a U.S. diplomat in Argentina.

Finally, there was the question of why, with our military deeply involved in the "drug war" in Latin America, did the Pentagon's premier university keep publicly promoting, for example, as recipients of the "[William J. Perry Award](#)," notorious rightwing senior military and civilians themselves demonstrably tied to narcotics trafficking kingpins and [murderous far-right paramilitaries](#)? Such supposed strategic communications focused specifically on [Mexico](#), [Honduras](#) (the direct result of [coup mongering](#) in which the NDU participated) and [Colombia](#).



Retired Army Col. Sergio de la Peña served as part of the first Trump transition "landing team" for the Pentagon and later became Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Western Hemisphere. A close friend of NDU serial wrongdoers LaPlante, Downie, and Deare (he witnessed the author being assaulted by Downie at a public event away from the Pentagon's university), de la Peña supposedly forced the William Perry Center to giving [Salvador "El Padrino" Cienfuegos](#) a prestigious award.

At the time the [Mexican general's responsibility in clandestine repression](#) against civilians was already known, but the Drug Enforcement Administration had yet to [arrest him in Los Angeles](#) for working with the most notorious of the drug cartels. "We began at a good starting place, de la Peña told those assembled at the William Perry ceremony, "but it has arrived at a place that is unprecedented. ... I consider him a great mentor, a good partner, but most importantly, a friend."

When detained by the DEA, Cienfuegos protested. “I have worked with your CIA. I have been honored by your Department of Defense!” Deare continued [to champion Cienfuegos](#) even after he was detained and [before the Trump Attorney General William Barr had the narco general returned to Mexico City](#). When de la Peña, a [Mexican immigrant from Chihuahua](#), [unsuccessfully ran](#) for the GOP nomination for Virginia governor in 2021, [LaPlante contributed \\$250](#) to his campaign.

NDU professor García Covarrubias was head of counterintelligence for a feared international state terrorism organization during the dictatorship of Pinochet, the Kissinger-promoted strongman about whom then Secretary of State Shultz said in secret 1987 memorandum to President Reagan the CIA had “convincing evidence” ordered the 1976 assassination of [Orlando Letelier](#) and his American (Jewish) colleague, [Ronni Moffitt](#). (Pinochet also considered eliminating García Covarrubias’ state terrorism boss to cover up who was *really* responsible for the outrage).

Among the nine unarmed prisoners for which García Covarrubias was convicted of being a party to killing is that of two unarmed detainees in two separate cases. In August 2020, the NDU professor was one of those found guilty in the September 1973 murder of unarmed detainee and math teacher Rubén Eduardo Morales Jara.

The other case involves Chilean lawyer Jaime Emilio Eltit Spielmann, who was detained and went missing on the 13th of September of the same year. It is important to note that Eltit Spielmann was Jewish, and that key partners in the international terrorist organization in which García Covarrubias was a rising (and increasingly powerful) star were intimately linked to a group of German Nazis in hiding in Chile.



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**The Pinochet Regime
Declassified**
**DINA: “A Gestapo-Type Police
Force” in Chile**

Jaime Guillermo García Covarrubias

Oficial de Ejército, fue jefe de Contrainteligencia de la DINA, en 1988 fue nombrado por Pinochet subsecretario general de Gobierno y entre 1995 y 1997 fue director de la Academia de Guerra; también fue alumno de la Escuela de las Américas en 1970.

En marzo de 2023, fue condenado a siete años de cárcel como autor del asesinato de Jaime Eltit, ocurrido en 1973 ([ver documento](#)).

Para más información revise el reportaje “Las presiones que desató el encarcelamiento del hermano del jefe del Ejército por DD. HH.”.

A 27 August 1974 communications by the Chilean head of the DINA, Director of National Intelligence Manuel Contreras, to the deputy foreign minister of that country was key in understanding the subterranean nightmare. Posted on 31 March

2021 by the National Security Archive, a respected nongovernment organization, the letter from Colonel Contreras requested official passports for a trip to Brazil for twelve Chilean military officers, including DINA state terrorism agents later involved in the car-bomb murders of the exiled democratic General Carlos Prats in Argentina and former Chilean foreign minister Letelier and Ronni Moffitt less than a mile from the White House.

In addition, the dozen included those who ran various extermination camps, were guilty of the torture and murder of Catholic priests, and an alumnus of the infamous [School of the Americas](#) (a US Army center that trained more than sixty thousand soldiers and police, mostly from Latin America and shut down by Congress in 2000) linked to the Letelier assassination.

[Ken LaPlante](#), who prided himself on being [a former instructor](#) and an avid post-2000 public defender of the School, was one of those who both protected and defended García Covarrubias while at the same time privately advocating “dirty war” techniques against real or imagined opponents in Mexico. LaPlante was a key ally of Rondeau, the then president at the National Defense University, in her war against whistleblowers. Credibly accused sexual perversion in the torture chamber, [García Covarrubias](#) was known for his partying hearty with Deare and the woman who worked for the lieutenant coronel and who he dated while married.

The screenshot shows an email from Evan Ellis to Ken LaPlante dated June 12, 2014. The email subject is 'Official evaluation just in from the U.S. Naval Academy'. The email body contains a message of thanks and a link to a LinkedIn profile for Ken LaPlante. The LinkedIn profile includes a photo, name, location (Washington DC), and a list of recent activity. The activity list includes several documents related to terrorism, murder, and security clearances, as well as testimony before the U.S. House of Government. A text box on the right side of the screenshot provides a detailed background on Ken LaPlante, mentioning his role at the National Defense University (NDU) and his involvement in various controversial activities, including narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and protecting German neo-Nazis.

From: Evan Ellis <r_evan_ellis@hotmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jun 12, 2014 at 12:55 PM
Subject: RE: FY: Official evaluation just in from the U.S. Naval Academy.
To: Martin Edwin Andersen <martinedw@comcast.net>
<martinedw@comcast.net>

Thanks, Mick. It's actually pretty striking...OSD has relieved Ken of all hiring and firing authority, decisionmaking authority with respect to travel...and is even sending Walter Earle in to "oversee" the transition to make sure that US government equities don't get subverted by vested interests as they have so many times before. They haven't het sent in a MP to supervise Ken while he cleans out his desk...but it's all pretty striking.

Good luck with your job search!

Evan

Ken LaPlante
Washington DC

National Defense University (NDU) officials (one being Kenneth LaPlante) praised to my face the rule of the former vicious Paraguayan military strongman Alfredo Stroessner, whose regime was deeply involved in narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and protecting German neo-Nazis on the run. (It was President Reagan's Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, Elliot Abrams — someone who to the best of my knowledge and belief was never accused of being a "leftist" "conspiracy theorist" — who in a December 1987 interview with the United States Information Service urged Stroessner to "throw out of his government any officials who are involved in drug trafficking," publicly speculating that investigation "would reveal that this is not a small number.")

Several were involved in the DINA's 1975 Operación Colombo, in which 119 people were abducted and later killed, with reputable media reporting that the regime's foreign media allies, some directly tied to the Intelligence Community, knowingly published false information that made it appear that the dead political opponents were vanquished while fighting guerrillas.

My disclosures to the Intelligence Community OIG included at least one murderous neo-Nazi who later became a “task force” leader in the Argentine military intelligence's notorious 601 Battalion, responsible for coordinating the torture and murder of thousands in clandestine concentration camps. In such dungeons, Hitler and

his minions were frequently praised; in 1985 their antisemitic military overseers were tried and convicted in “mini-Nuremberg” civilian court and in subsequent trials. As shown by incontrovertible documentation, senior NDU officials knew exactly who Julio Cirino was and the crimes against humanity that he committed, yet continued to offer him a featured spot at university events.

I Alone Can Fix It: Donald J. Trump’s Catastrophic Final Year was written by *Washington Post* reporters Carol D. Leonnig and Philip Rucker and published in 2021. In it they claimed that the U.S. military is indeed threatened by those who would seek to use it for extremist means. General Mark Milley, the then chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, actually worried about a “Reichstag moment” in which “the gospel of the Führer” (Hitler) would set into motion a perhaps military-supported coup. “They may try, but they’re not going to f__king succeed,” Milley told his deputies, Leonnig and Rucker reported. “You can’t do this without the military. You can’t do this without the CIA and the FBI. We’re the guys with the guns.”

Even before the alarming assessment by the principal military advisor to the President and the nation’s highest ranking military officer appeared in print, I had provided “Paul Revere” disclosures about senior officials at the National Defense University and their either being, protecting and/or defending those either employed or promoted who previously belonged to international terrorist organizations (as officially defined by the U.S. Department of State); extremist organizations, and/or neo-Nazi and other hate groups.

What happened subsequently goes back to General Milley’s earlier role as Army chief of staff, the extremist nature of the Trump regime, and a question that goes back to antiquity.

“Who will guard the guards?”

The question is directly relevant to Trump’s Project 2025 / Elon Musk effort to gut the Inspectors General apparatus throughout the federal government, doing to myriad departments—including the enormous Department of Defense—what Trump’s appointee to the Naval Postgraduate School, Rondeau, did as president of the National Defense University.

In 2012, Rondeau allowed for the establishment of an ersatz Army 15-6 “inquiry,” a military procedure carried out, in this case, in a civilian educational institution. It was conducted by NDU official [Saul Bracero](#), a retired army officer whose own NDU civilian sister institution was personally indebted to retired army

officers Downie and LaPlante, targets of whistleblower disclosures about, among other things, the maintaining of foreign neo-Nazi terrorists on the Pentagon university's payroll.

Appointed by Downie, Bracero supposedly looked into several of lawful allegations about gross violations of rules, regulations and/or law. Yet at no time did the deliberately misleading Bracero "inquiry" (which was [publicly revealed](#) only by a Freedom of Information Act request by the Center for Public Integrity, CPI, several years later) forthrightly address NDU senior leadership either being, protecting and/or defending those either employed or promoted who previously belonged to international terrorist organizations (as officially defined by the State Department); extremist organizations, and/or neo-Nazi and other hate groups.

Although Bracero did in the once-over-lightly "investigation" come up with serious administrative and ethical problems, they were quickly brushed out of the picture when he gave his AR 15-6 report to Downie and LaPlante and they promptly pocketed it without real feedback to the staff or the public. After Rondeau and Downie had already moved on, the García Covarrubias story blew up in their wake, the CPI fishing out the limp Bracero whitewash, and the incompetent LaPlante left holding the bag.

On May 1, 2016, then Army Chief [Milley banned](#) those credibly accused of wrongdoing from "investigating" themselves. This was precisely what Rondeau, who five years earlier unsuccessfully angled to become the "first female ever" head of a combat command—U.S. Southern Command (egged on by Deare and Downie)—actively coordinated illegal whistleblower reprisals. The DIA veteran had her own reasons for protecting those engaged in major violations of federal rules, regulations, and domestic and international law both at home and abroad.

Transactional. I bully you, you give me respect? No. How many bullies have you ever respected or wanted to spend time with? He's chasing allies away with abandon, one week into his job. Denmark, Canada, Panama, Colombia, Jordan, Egypt ...

— Former U.S. diplomat Gerald Loftus, on the [@realDonaldTrump](#)

Auschwitz was at the end of a long process. We must remember that it did not start from gas chambers. This hatred was gradually developed by humans. From ideas, words, stereotypes & prejudice through legal exclusion, dehumanization & escalating violence... to systematic and industrial murder. Auschwitz took time."

Auschwitz Memorial / Muzeum Auschwitz

January 27, 2025, marking 80 years since the liberation of the Nazi extermination camp

Seething with antipathy for a fanciful “Deep State” they want to run, and an out-of-control tendency to side with brutal foreign leaders rather than democratic representatives and professionals, it remains an open question whether Patt Derian’s worst fears will come to pass in a new Trump Administration veering to the far right. Few, if any, current members of the intelligence community are likely to adopt a policy of civil disobedience mirroring the essence of Derian’s efforts. The FBI and the CIA still may rally, but the militarized “tech-industrial complex” run by oligarchs and administered in part with the help of the DIA (the legendary Godfather of the Argentine Army 601 Battalion) has the full force of its firepower trained on those who seek to protect the rule of law and keep the country’s autocratic enemies at bay.

A careful reading of William Perry Center director Paul J. Angelo’s article last year in *Foreign Affairs* requires historical knowledge about Latin America and a willingness to confront Pentagon public relations now not unlike the mix of *FOX* and corporate drool offered by Trump, Flynn, and Rondeau.

Meaningful legal sanctions are required against those on their way to completing the hollowing out of democracy. Real secrets, and real heroes, need to be protected. International police *development* (not just operational) programs will need to be fortified, extended and highlighted in what remains of the world’s democracies. The American military only really works for U.S. taxpayers if kept focused peering beyond the United States’ geographically-defined frontier, and with real civilian control—the same as in Latin America. Time is running out.

“The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything.”

– Albert Einstein