REGIONS

August 23, 2025 By: Brandon J. Weichert SHARE: f X in \(\Sigma\)

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Tags: Arleigh Burke-class Destroyer, Destroyers, Nicolas Maduro, South America, US Navy, and Venezuela

Why Is Donald Trump Sending Three US Navy

Destroyers to Venezuela?

Officially, the three Arleigh Burke-class destroyers are anchored off Venezuela on a "counter-narcotics"

mission—but that mission set could be a catch-all

During his election campaign in 2024, President Donald Trump made it clear that he intended to refocus

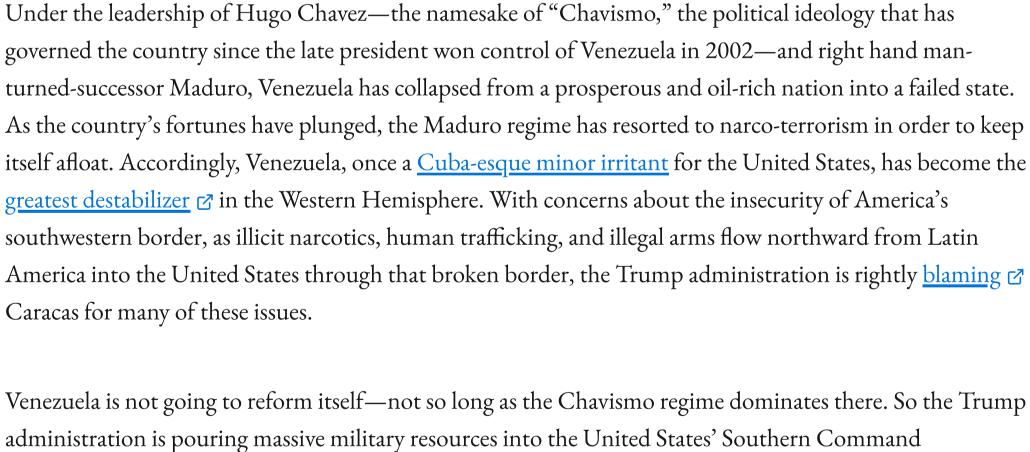
wars in Europe and the Middle East—and towards the Western Hemisphere. In keeping with this claim,

US foreign and national security policy away from America's more peripheral interest—namely the ongoing

term for other military activities.

Trump has worked assiduously to reset trade relations with Canada, has spoken openly about acquiring ☑ Greenland, and has speculated about returning control ☑ of the Panama Canal Zone to the United States. Whatever one thinks of these ideas, it is clear that there is one strategic bugaboo in the Western Hemisphere that ought to take precedence: the <u>ongoing crisis in Venezuela</u>, led by the tyrannical regime of socialist dictator Nicolas Maduro 2.

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(USSOUTHCOM) area of operation. <u>US Navy P-8 Poseidon surveillance planes</u>, <u>thousands of US Marines</u> , an amphibious landing ship, the USS *Iwo Jima* are reportedly underway, along with three *Arleigh*

How Far Venezuela Has Fallen

Burke-class destroyers (the USS Gravely, DDG-107 ☑, USS Jason Dunham, DDG-109 ☑, and USS Sampson, DDG-102 ☑) set to join these forces deployed to coast of Venezuela. American Red Cross **EVERY 8 MINUTES** someone is affected by disaster. DONATE NOW

While officially framed as an anti-narcotics effort, the presence of these advanced warships near Venezuelan

shores has prompted responses from Maduro, including militia mobilization, raising questions about the

The Arleigh Burke-Class Destroyer: The Backbone of the US

specter of broader US military operations directed against the regime in Caracas.

• Engines: Four General Electric LM2500 gas turbines (26,250 bhp each)

• Crew: 303-323, depending on variant The <u>Arleigh Burke-class destroyers</u> or are one of the most important platforms in the US Navy's surface warfare fleet. With 74 ships in service since the first was commissioned in 1991, these warships are named

after legendary US Navy Admiral Arleigh Burke and were designed for multi-mission operations. In fact,

away, making these ships perfect vessels for providing the outer ring of protection around a US Navy's

strikes on ground targets, such as command centers or airfields, without risking aircraft.

aircraft carrier strike group...or, perhaps, for amphibious forces needing defense against aerial threats

• Armaments: 5-inch Mk 45 gun; Harpoon anti-ship missiles; Aegis Combat System; Mk 45 or 46

- and ballistic missile defense (BMD).
- these ships excel in anti-air warfare (AAW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), anti-submarine warfare (ASW),

Navy

• Year Introduced: 1991

• Length: 505-510 ft, depending on variant

torpedoes; Tomahawk cruise missiles (96 VLS cells)

• Number Built: 74

• Beam (Width): 66 ft

• **Displacement**: 9,000 tons

• **Top Speed**: ~30 knots (35 mph)

• Range: ~4,400 nmi (5,100 mi)

- The Aegis Combat System , this is probably the most important feature of this warship class. It features an integrated radar and weapons control platform that provides 360-degree surveillance and engagement
- For offensive strikes, the Arleigh Burke-class comes equipped with up to 96 VLS cells, capable of firing

flight.

Defending the warship is an impressive Phalanx Close-In Weapon System (CIWS) for point defense against

missiles and drones, as well as EW suites like the SLQ-32 for jamming enemy radars. Advanced variants, like

those in Flight IIA — which includes the warships recently deployed to Venezuela—feature improved

ballistic missile defense (BMD) with SM-3 missiles that can intercept ballistic missile threats in mid-course

These capabilities make Arleigh Burke-class destroyers extremely versatile assets in modern naval warfare. In

the context of Venezuela, where the Maduro regime maintains alliances with Russia, China, and Iran, and

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possesses Russian-supplied S-300 air defense systems and Sukhoi fighters, these destroyers provide a formidable deterrent. Venezuela's military, though weakened by sanctions, includes submarines and coastal defenses, posing risks to US operations. Although, the risks that Venezuela's paltry military offers are almost comical—which is why three destroyers pose such a threat to the country's armed forces.

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Trump's Quiet Romance: Wh...

What Might a War with Venezuela Look Like? If the Trump administration decided to launch a military incursion into Venezuela, what would the Arleigh Burke-class's role actually look like? One hypothetical scenario could go as follows. First, the destroyers' Aegis systems would establish air superiority by neutralizing the few Venezuelan warplanes still airworthy, as well as targeting any missiles that would threaten the ships or friendly forces

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operating nearby. These actions by the warships would be the main step toward establishing overall

dominance and protecting amphibious landings by US forces onto Venezuela's shores.

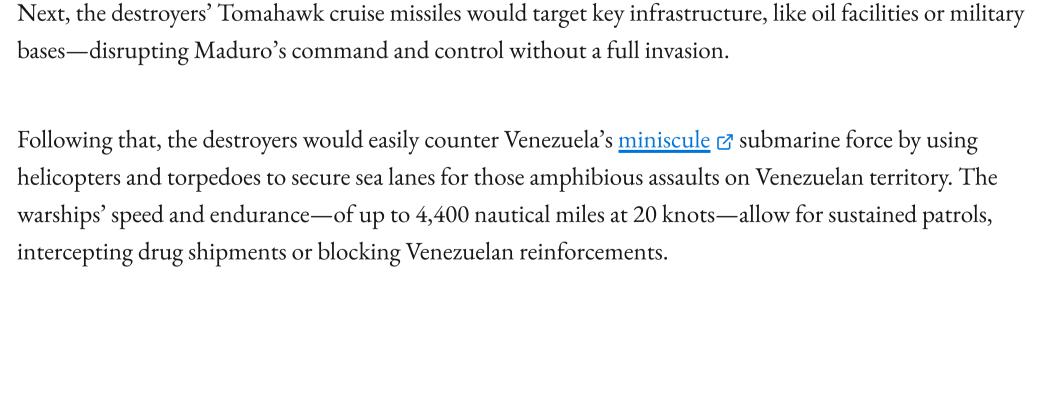
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As part of a larger force, including the *Iwo Jima* Amphibious Ready Group , these destroyers would

In a non-kinetic scenario, their presence alone enhances intelligence gathering via radars and signals

intelligence, while deterring aggression through constant shows of force.

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would annihilate the impoverished Venezuelan military.

Venezuelan regime itself.

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provide escort and fire support for Marine landings, using their guns and missiles to suppress shore defenses.

The Arleigh Burke-class destroyers deployed to Venezuela are not just going for a show of force. At the very

least, they will be used as part of a massive counter-narcotics operation. But it is quite possible that the

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"counter-narcotics" mission set is a catch-all term, also perhaps including military action against the

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Mechanics and has consulted regularly with various government institutions and private organizations on

geopolitical issues. Weichert's writings have appeared in multiple publications, including The Washington

Times, National Review, The American Spectator, MSN, The Asia Times, and others. His books include

Winning Space: How America Remains a Superpower, Biohacked: China's Race to Control Life, and The

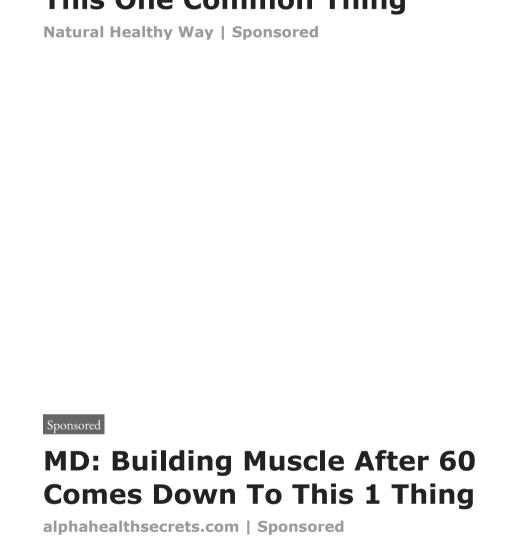
Shadow War: Iran's Quest for Supremacy. His newest book, A Disaster of Our Own Making: How the West

There has been much talk about the need to replace the Arleigh Burke-class destroyers with newer systems,

given the growing threat that near-peer competitors like China and Russia are posing to the US military. In

the case of Venezuela, however, if Trump authorized military action against the Maduro regime, these boats



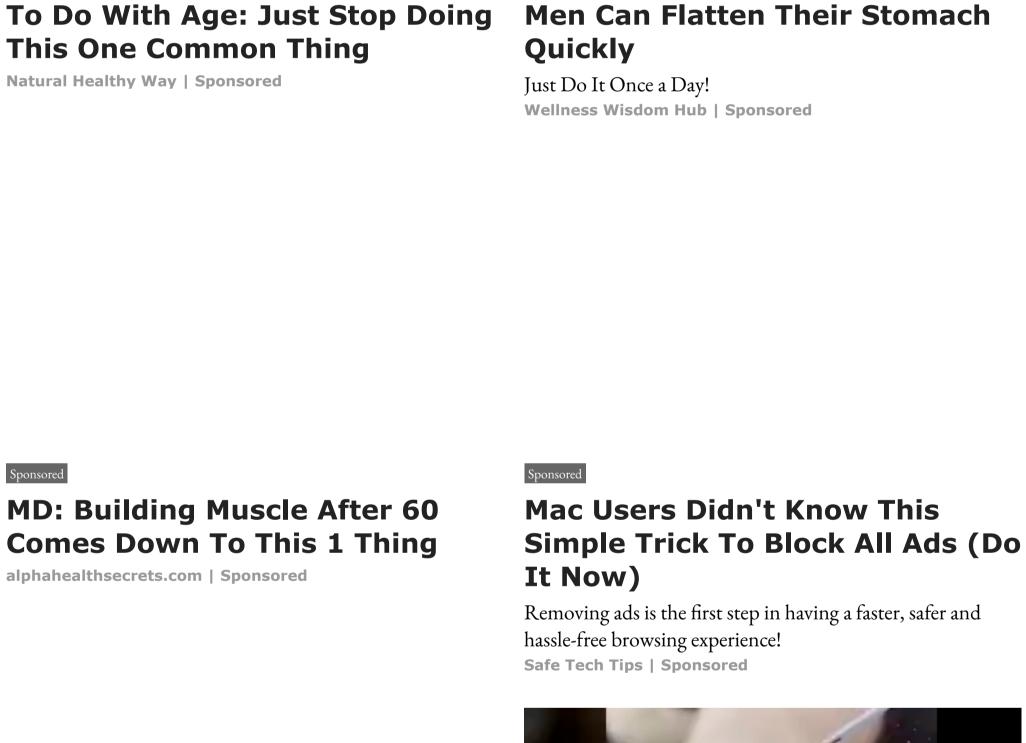


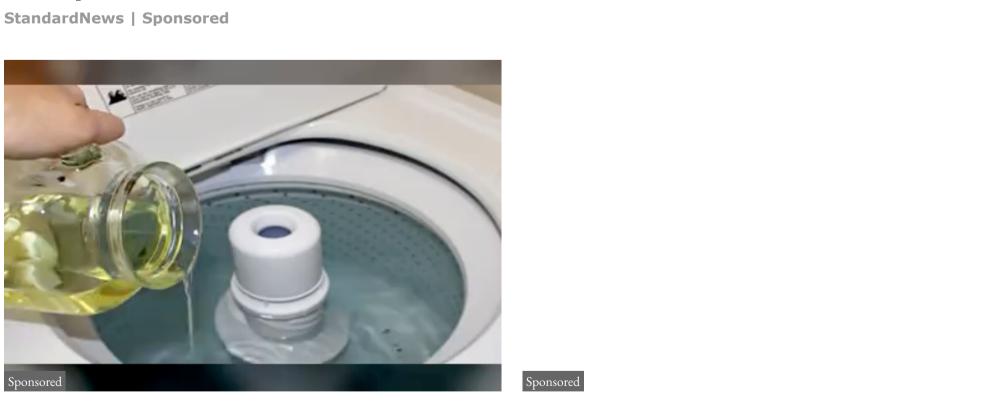
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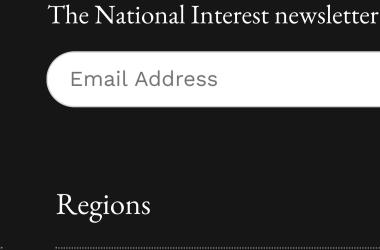
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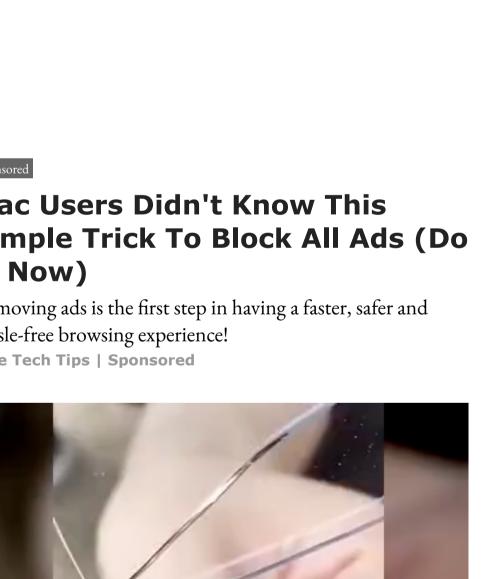
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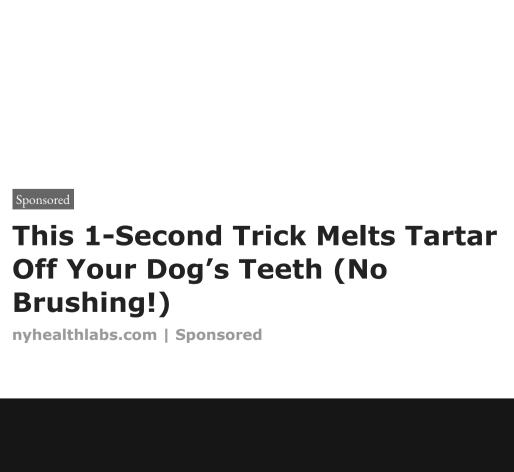
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