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HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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1 Hundreds protest of U.S. actions in Venezuela

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2 In Brattleboro, a mix of outrage and exasperation marks
3 the military capture and removal of Maduro to face criminal drug
4 charges in New York

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5 TEXT BODY:

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6 On Jan. 3, Vermonters woke up to the news of the U.S.
7 military's attack on Venezuela over the weekend that led to the
8 capture of the country's leader, Nicolás Maduro.
9 Within hours, a protest at Pliny Park was organized by
10 Indivisible Brattleboro for the next day.

11 Despite it being a cold and raw Sunday afternoon,
12 approximately 200 people turned out on Jan. 4 to condemn the
13 attack. Protestors lined the sidewalks on both sides of Main Street
14 near Pliny Park.

15 U.S. forces entered the Venezuelan capital of Caracas
16 overnight Friday into Saturday, and more than 100 U.S. aircraft
17 helped neutralize the country's air defenses, *The New York Times*
18 reported. More than 40 people were killed, according to
19 Venezuelan authorities, though Trump said no Americans were
20 killed in the attack.

21 American troops captured both Maduro and his wife,
22 Cilia Flores, later transporting them out of the country, according
23 to news reports. U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi said Maduro
24 would face charges in the U.S. of narcoterrorism conspiracy and
25 cocaine importation conspiracy, among other allegations.

26 **Well-worn protest signs**

27 Unlike the "No Kings" protests last year against President
28 Donald Trump, which were leavened with humor, the Pliny Park
29 gathering — one at least 150 protests held around the country
30 over the weekend, according to the Answer Coalition — was
31 earnest with a mixture of outrage and exasperation, although the
32 People's Resistance Marching Band again provided the
33 soundtrack.

34 One woman had a well-worn protest sign that dated
35 back to the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. She said she taped over
36 the word "Iraq" on the sign so it read "No Venezuela War."

37 Comparisons to the Iraq invasion were echoed by many
38 at the protest. The popular protest slogan "No Blood for Oil" from
39 that conflict found its way onto several of the homemade signs.

40 A cardboard coffin was carried by two pallbearers. A
41 small Venezuelan flag was affixed to its top and the words "Our
42 Democracy: 1776–2025" were written on its side.

43 Most protesters stayed on the sidewalk, while a small
44 group led by the band marched back and forth across the Main
45 and High street intersection when the crosswalk sign was on.

46 Motorists were generally supportive, with only the
47 drivers of a couple of pickup trucks expressing disapproval with
48 either a loud horn or shouted obscenities.

49 **Vermont delegation voices 50 opposition**

51 Vermont's top federal lawmakers wasted little time in
52 condemning the military escalation. They had similarly criticized
53 the staging of Vermont Air National Guard members in the
54 Caribbean to support the military buildup against Venezuela.

55 On Jan. 3, U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and Vermont
56 Democrats U.S. Sen. Peter Welch and U.S. Rep Becca Balint, all
57 labeled Maduro a brutal authoritarian but said President Trump's
58 attacks on the South American country exceeded his
59 constitutional authority.

60 "Trump's attack on Venezuela will make the United
61 States and the world less safe. This brazen violation of
62 international law gives a green light to any nation on Earth that
63 may wish to attack another country to seize their resources or
64 change their governments," Sanders said in a statement.

65 "President Trump's hunger for a regime change war
66 makes it clear he doesn't care about how this unauthorized and
67 illegal action could cause further chaos and suffering in
68 Venezuela. Has he learned nothing from Iraq, Afghanistan, and
69 Libya?" Welch said in a statement Saturday.

70 "This could lead us into another forever war, risking the
71 lives of U.S. service members and hurting the economy," Welch
72 continued.

73 Balint, in her own statement, said the U.S. had made
74 "these horrible mistakes before."

75 "Americans do not want another war," she said.

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BIO/COATTAIL:

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76 With additional reporting by Ethan Weinstein of
77 VTDigger.

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