

CUBA: IMPERIALISM AND REVOLUTION

UNITED NATIONS, THE BLOCKADE, THE PANDEMIC AND SOUTHERN COMMAND

Last Sunday, July 11, an unprecedented event in the history of the Cuban revolution took place: groups of people in different parts of the country went out to the streets to demonstrate against the government and the revolution. The only precedent was in 1994, at the hardest moment of the special period, after the collapse of the socialist bloc and in a situation of terrible hardship. Even so, on that occasion it was a one-time event that was limited to Havana's Malecon and lasted only a few hours.

What has happened now deserves to be rigorously evaluated. In this text we will try to answer four questions: What is the context in which it has occurred, what has happened, why it has happened and how to take action .

The geopolitical context

Some years ago, the decline of US hegemony was noted, that is to say, the loss of its capacity to rule the world and to unilaterally decide the destiny of the planet. At that time, it was already suggested that in the short term Latin America would be a central objective for the United States. A space that it always considered its own, its "backyard" in which the presence of other powers would not be tolerated (the "Monroe Doctrine"). Latin America contains natural resources to supply the needs of the American way of life: water, hydrocarbons, strategic minerals, fertile lands, enough population to produce and consume, etc., and moreover, it is within easy reach.

For all this to be at its disposal, it needs to totally dominate this space and for no one to interfere in this domination, it needs to recolonize it by putting an end to the pockets of resistance that defend its sovereignty and independence. It needs to prevent other powers from establishing ties with that territory and encourage multilateralism, fostering avenues of cooperation that do not respond to US interests but quite the opposite.

Everything indicates that Latin America is in a cycle in which clearly pro-imperialist governments are in decline after long neo-liberal periods. In addition, new pro-sovereignty governments are coming to power, as in the cases of Peru, Bolivia and Mexico. There are also countries such as Chile or Colombia, where large social mobilizations are taking place, and a probable triumph of Lula in Brazil. There are also less clear-cut situations such as Argentina, which in any case is not to the liking of the US.

To all the above must be added the trio of irreducible countries, Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, which constitute the main stumbling block to the recolonization of Latin America at the hands of the US. The three countries unequivocally defend their sovereignty, assume profound social transformations and, singularly, their armed forces, due to their origin, composition and social role, are very little or not at all vulnerable to the manipulations of the

empire. At least, that is the opinion of Admiral Craig S. Faller, head of the U.S. Southern Command, who, in his appearance before the Senate on March 13, said that countries such as Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua perpetuate corruption, defy freedom and democracy and are a direct threat to U.S. territory. Faller acknowledged that these countries constituted a challenge that, he said, "We cannot face on our own". He added: "The only way to counter these threats is to strengthen our partners in the region," referring to Colombia and Brazil. Once again, it is about unleashing a war in the region. A war that will prevent any anti-imperialist alliance and in which, moreover, the dead will be laid by others. The antecedents of Yugoslavia and the Middle East allow us to consider that this is not mere propaganda, but the announcement of a strategy of intervention that has numerous precedents.

In the midst of the pandemic, the attacks have intensified. In Nicaragua, because this is an election year, the situation turns more propitious to deploy a hybrid warfare. In Venezuela, the imperialist agenda works on new scenarios, using Colombia to initiate the war that Faller intends to wage. And in Cuba, to increase sanctions and encourage intervention from abroad.

Throughout its revolutionary history, Cuba has not ceased to be attacked in every possible way: landing of thousands of mercenaries at Playa Girón, bombing of the José Martí airport, armed gangs in the Escambray, shooting down a Cuban National Airlines (Cubana de Aviación) plane, terrorist acts, bombs in hotels, machine-gunning on the coast, biological warfare, and permanently, an economic war that has lasted more than 60 years, which the Cubans call a blockade because of its content and the empire calls an embargo to hide its nature. On 6 April 1960, the US State Department memorandum stated: Implement "all possible measures to weaken economic life by denying Cuba money and supplies". As always, parallel to its propaganda campaigns, in which the empire defines itself as a defender of freedom, democracy and human rights, official reports appear, in which its true objectives are openly declared.

The blockade against Cuba is the economic, commercial and financial encirclement of any activity in the country that strengthens the Cuban state and Revolution. In order for it to be effective, for more than sixty years a complex network of measures has been developed to ensure, on the one hand, that strategic products for the development and survival of the country do not reach Cuba; on the other hand, to prevent the existence of loopholes through which it can be circumvented. To get an idea of its magnitude, it should be noted that to the already existing measures, 242 new ones have been added that have been implemented during Trump's term (none of them have been repealed by Biden). To understand its scope, it is calculated that the blockade entailed, between April 2019 and December 2020, the loss of 9,157 million dollars and in the total computation of the 6 decades, a loss to the Cuban nation of 147,853 million dollars.

During the pandemic, not only have the aggressions against Cuba not ceased, but they have gone directly to crime. The companies IMT Medical AG and Acutronic Medical System AG maintained commercial relations with Cuba for the supply of medical equipment until they were bought by the American company Vyair Medical Inc. The result was that the delivery to Cuba of ventilators for the assisted respiration of the critically ill patients of COVID 19 was suspended. Is this not a criminal act in the strict sense?

What we denounce here would be just another opinion if it were not for the fact that such a call is supported by 95.33% of the total number of countries that make up the United Nations. On June 23, 2021, the United Nations General Assembly debated and voted on a resolution presented by Cuba with the title "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". The Resolution was

approved by 184 votes in favor, 2 against and 3 abstentions; 4 countries did not vote.

The result does not offer the slightest doubt; even more so if it is taken into account that it has been practically the same since 1992. In other words, it is not the result of a circumstance but of a profound conviction of the vast majority of the planet, including most of the US allies.

If this in itself is relevant, it is even more so if we pay attention to what has been approved. Indeed, the fact that the United States was soundly defeated in the UN is a singular event; that it did so against an enemy which labels as a dictatorship that violates human rights is even more so; but it is even more so because of what was approved in resolution A/75/L.97: "Strict respect for the UN Charter", "the sovereign equality of states, non-interference, non-intervention". With respect to the USA, the resolution cites that "laws such as Helms-Burton continue to be promulgated and applied which have extraterritorial effects, affect sovereignty and the freedom of trade and navigation". It adds a request to states to "take the necessary measures to repeal or invalidate them". If the United Nations were indeed a democratic body, for the above alone, the US would have to be considered a rogue country on the fringes of the international community.

In these circumstances, the allegations presented by the US representative in the General Assembly, Rodney Hunt, insisting on the good intentions of the blockade, are pathetic: "The sanctions seek to promote democracy, to promote respect for human rights".

What happened in Cuba

Eighteen days after this vote in the UN, on July 11, a series of mobilizations began in 12 points of the country (in the capital, some important cities and smaller places); the attendance was very unequal, from four hundred to less than a hundred. Slogans were launched against the government and against the Revolution with a strong ideological charge, even calling for US intervention. The reasons: the shortage of basic necessities, including medicines, and power cuts. In both cases, problems which should not be underestimated. It should be added that, in most cases, the demonstrators acted with violence, at times extreme, armed with machetes, assaulting and looting stores, storming hospitals, overturning cars and attempting to storm police stations. In spite of everything, there were no police charges and except for some specific cases, the police acted prudently. It should be noted that in an assault on a police station, the only fatality of these events occurred.

From the very beginning of the demonstrations, the social networks broadcast the events with an unusual display, constantly repeating the same messages and slogans, carrying the same symbols patented by foundations based in Miami and financed by the US; everything indicates that these were not spontaneous acts but induced and organized inside and outside the country. In a short time, videos appeared with image processing and audio montage superimposed, mixing the footage of these actions with images from other parts of the world and even with images of large revolutionary mobilizations in Cuba itself.

A veritable orgy of fake news spread around the world, creating an image of chaos and desperation of enormous proportions. The news media of the empire and its allies joined the party and the conventional media immediately followed suit. The deception was so superlative that after the euphoria, the denials are the real news, although the campaign continues today.

It should be noted that the deployment of the media's instrumentation was extraordinary, the robots incessantly multiplied the messages, projecting the image of a universal mass following and support. Spain was the operational center of this maneuver. Within this maelstrom, there was no lack of messages calling for the assassination of prominent people for their identification with the Revolution or offering a payment rate for images of people injured by the police, no matter if they were feigned injuries, self-injuries or injuries caused to third parties, of course, the best paid image was that of a "child injured by the police".

The networks have shown their potential as an instrument of intervention, articulated in an enormous complex in which corporations, state and private agencies act, in which individual figures are integrated and have unlimited reach. If we add that what is published has no verification mechanism, we are in a position to affirm that the constructed virtual reality, however absurd and nonsensical it may be objectively, is the reality for the majority of the receivers of these messages. This is how lies and manipulation become the body of the dominant message and freedom of expression becomes the freedom to deceive, to confuse and to alienate.

None of this can be understood if we do not understand that we are talking about a war, the war associated with imperialism, which we call "the world war" (la guerra mundo), and in this permanent war, the art of deception is what leads to success. The enemy must be deceived and confused, but the aggressiveness of their own must be encouraged; the successes of those they consider their enemies must be minimised and denied, but their own actions must be magnified; their supposed enemies are criminals, but they appear to be generous and act in defence of the highest values of humanity.

In this context, it appears to matter little that their only support in the vote against the blockade on June 23 was the racist, supremacist, apartheid Zionist entity of Israel, condemned countless times in the UN; nor that the only abstentions were those of Colombia, a narco-state that counts its victims by the thousands; Ukraine, a neo-Nazi regime that took power in a coup d'etat; and Brazil, an ultra-neoliberal regime that emerged from a judicial coup that has left its population defenseless in the face of Covid.

When the Cuban authorities shut down the toxic Internet, a demonstrator declared on a Spanish Radiotelevision news program: "They have taken away our Internet and disarmed us". Indeed, in this war, without direction, slogans or propaganda from the empire, its vassals can do nothing.

Why this happened

We have already commented on the difficult conditions of the island, the shortages, the difficulties in health care and the cuts in the electricity supply; all of them are objective factors that determine living conditions, but we must pay attention to two other conditioning factors. On the one hand, the existence of sectors of the population with marginal features which the Revolution, in spite of its efforts, has not been able to integrate into the revolutionary project; these are sectors which have not been reached by the Revolution. This population has increased and its situation has worsened with the growth of inequality in the new economic model. On the other hand, the need and urgency of the empire to subdue Latin America and above all, the countries that lead the struggles for sovereignty and independence, without any doubt, Cuba is an essential piece of that leadership.

The "backyard" is in turmoil: China is advancing in its investment plan; a few days ago a Chinese company won a tender for the supply of electricity in Brazil and Russia is the benchmark for military equipment due to its relationship with Venezuela. All this is reflected in the recent declarations of these two countries which, referring to the events in Cuba, announced that they would not allow external interventions on the island.

Furthermore, the results of the vote in the UN against the blockade has triggered a new imperialist charge against Cuba, criminalizing the Revolution and making it responsible for all the problems of the population. Their agents in the networks repeated ad infinitum that the blockade does not exist and that the measures taken only affect the country's leaders.

What is the position of the IAF?

First of all, we share and support the response given by the Revolutionary Government: it is the population and the party who have to take a leading role and avoid, as far as possible, a direct confrontation between the state security forces and the people. That is why there are very few scenes of police violence and many scenes of the population protecting the police. In the same way, we share the announced criterion of a selective verification of the crimes committed and a forceful application of the law for those who have put people's lives at risk and have attacked public property. We also share the criterion of maintaining calm, renouncing improvised responses to provocations and urgently confronting the problems detected.

But we must also look for our role at this moment. It is, on the one hand, to unmask the US maneuver, to denounce once again the use of the alleged altruistic purposes of human rights as a means of intervention, the destruction of governments, states and social organization under the "responsibility to protect". It is necessary to demand that the United States protect its population from the pandemic which, in that country, has cost more than 600,000 deaths (more victims than in World War II). That they put an end to white supremacy and defend the rights of Afro-descendants and Latinos, that they demonstrate in their own territory that they defend human rights before claiming them anywhere in the world. In short, we must fight to prevent the hegemonic agony of the United States from becoming a new scourge for humanity.

On the other hand, we must intensify the unity of resistance at all levels, feeling that every imperialist aggression is an aggression against each one of us. In an increasingly confused world, to walk with firm steps towards internationalism as a political expression of solidarity.

Now is the time, with more strength than ever, to know and understand the Cuban Revolution, to defend it, to respect it and not to judge it.

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