
US: Helms-Burton Act and the Insistence in Destroying Cuba

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In the next few days, the United States will decide whether or not it will enforce Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, an initiative that evokes the darkest elements of the Monroe Doctrine to destroy the Cuban Revolution.

That title had been suspended by all US administrations for six months since 1996, but the current government, headed by President Donald Trump, has decided to postpone its approval for 45 days only, a stance that Cuba has described as political blackmail and irresponsible hostility.

With the possible activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, the United States bets again on the domino effect to destroy the Cuban Revolution, the researcher Olga Rosa Gonzalez said.

The deputy director of the Center for Hemispheric Studies and on the United States (CEHSEU), attached to the University of Havana, said in an interview with Prensa Latina that Washington is trying to step up the blockade of Cuba to achieve its long-awaited goal of a regime change.

She noted that Venezuela plays a key role in that political scheme by the White House, because as an added effect from its coup attempt in that South American nation, the US seeks to finish off the social system in Cuba.

'It is as if we return to the story of the domino effect that the US used in the 1990s when the Helms-Burton Act came into force as an unprecedented legislation in the world, due to its strong

interfering and extraterritorial nature,' the expert added.

The Helms-Burton Act, which came into force in March 1996, establishes the internationalization of the blockade, and the refusal to credits and financial aid to countries and organizations that favor or promote cooperation with Cuba, thus hindering foreign investments in the Caribbean island.

'It was approved in a very difficult economic context for Cuba, because after the demise of the socialist camp in the 1990s, Cuba lost its major economic partners and was forced to join the international market from zero,' Gonzalez noted.

A theory that did not work for Washington, with the maximum evidence that Cuba still maintains the system of its revolutionary and socialist government, she pointed out.

Gonzalez noted that the rafters' crisis took place in 1994, when bilateral migration agreements were signed. It was a very convulse period in which the counterrevolution mobilized against Cuba, she went on to say.

It was so that in 1996, Cuba's air space was violated by small planes belonging to Brothers to the Rescue, a counterrevolutionary organization closely linked to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). That group is closely linked to the Miami-based extreme right wing, which is responsible for terrorist actions carried out in Cuba and abroad, Gonzalez noted.

The researcher stated that Cuba repeatedly complained to the US Government about incidents, but Washington did nothing, and in an act of legitimate defense, Cuban authorities brought down two small planes from Brothers to the Rescue on February 24, 1996.

'It was a major election year in the United States and for William Clinton, and according to the characteristics of the US election process, Florida, as a state, determines a large number of votes in any presidential race,' she explained.

The regrettable event, which could have been prevented by the United States, was used by Senators Jesse Helms and Dan Burton to submit to then President Clinton the act that no one dared to sign, due to its marked extraterritorial nature.

At present, 23 years later, Donald Trump is threatening to activate its Title III which, if approved in the next few days, would authorize lawsuits in US courts to demand compensations for properties nationalized in Cuba in 1960.

Even though that process (the nationalization) was carried out on the basis of international laws, the United States did not want to negotiate with Cuba as other countries did, Gonzalez ratified.

Cuba, in the context of the possible approval of Title III, says that the Helms-Burton Act is repudiated in all its content, because it interferes in the country's internal affairs.

In addition, there are other titles, like Title II, which the United States enforces with the objective of openly betting on the demise of the Cuban Revolution and the establishment of a regime that will serve Washington's interests, violating international law.