

OPINION: Annexationism and the culture of violence

By: Enrique Ubieta Gómez / Special for CubaSi

28/07/2024



A few days ago, the Cuban television provided evidence on the existence of new terrorist plans against Cuba, all hatched in Florida. In addition, a video, where a group of Cuban mercenaries carried out live-fire training exercises and gave details on their goals was released. Their military prowess would be to place explosives on their own native country, and shoot to death their former countrymen. One of them illegally entered the country and was arrested, along with his accomplices and recruited ones. The head of the team, a so-called Willy, stated: “We do not care about bodily harm another person.” I am talking about just mercenaries, and not just the opposition of the Revolution. In some way, they serve the interest of a greater power that has sought to take control of their native lands for over two centuries. I have not found a clearer confession that this one posted on the blog in 2011 —a virtual blog with allegedly intellectual airs, which bore two previous symbolic names, with much enthusiasm, “*Últimos días*” and later “*Penúltimos días*,” —in defense of the renowned terrorist Luis Posada Carriles.

“A society (the North American one) to which Posada Carriles, no matter how much this fact bothers his critics in Havana, Caracas and in the United States themselves, belongs by his own right. The French, when talking about legionnaires who become citizens upon graduation, usually say that they are French by blood, not for the blood received but for the bloodshed. This is the case. Few fight better for their adopted countries than immigrants. North American history is full of examples [...] Posada Carriles has been an American soldier in time of war and that gives him the right to be in the United States. A war in which numerous exiles participated against the states that led their nations. [...] The reason why many Cuban-American exiles sympathize with Posada Carriles is because he was a combatant in that war.”

Annexationism is a thorn that has caused damage to Cuba throughout its history. Our history is crossed by that tension of origin: the birth and overflow of imperialism just a few miles away. Simultaneously, the process of consolidation of a small nation. All the great Cuban thinkers of the 19th and 20th centuries admire, fear, warn of the danger, and increasingly, denounce the northern interference in our affairs. The initial confusion around the annexation solution or the convenience of help from the powerful neighbor quickly turned into rejection: Heredia, Varela, Céspedes, Ana Betancourt, Salvador Cisneros, Maceo, Juan Gualberto, Enrique José Varona, Enrique Collazo, Manuel Sanguily, Martínez Villena, Mella, Ramiro Guerra, Marinello, José Antonio Foncueva, Pablo de la Torriente, Emilio Roig, José Antonio Hecheverría, Frank, Blas Roca, Che, Vilma, Haydée... among others. I obviously did not mention the two most important anti-imperialists men of those centuries: Martí and Fidel. The first wrote a few hours before he died that everything he had done in his intense life was to prevent the United States from falling on our American lands. The second would write to Celia, shortly before the revolutionary triumph: *“When this war is over, a much longer and bigger war will begin for me: the war that I am going to wage against them (the United States). “I realize that this is going to be my true destiny.”*

Both annexationism and autonomism always had two motivations: the preservation of privileges (the status quo) and distrust in the people

(“the mulatto mob,” Gálvez would say with contempt). I had the opportunity to review the correspondence of the annexationist José Ignacio Rodríguez kept by the Library of Congress in Washington and photocopy the letters that he received from the then president of the Liberal Autonomist Party, José María Gálvez, during the first North American occupation. Both politicians conspired behind the people's backs to provoke the annexation or at least prevent what they ironically called “the Absolute.” This is what Gálvez wrote on September 3, 1899:

“We always believed that the Protectorate solution, the only viable one, needed to overcome local resistance and make its own way into American opinion. From what you tell me, and I have read with pleasure, I see that we can continue the propaganda without the fear of contradicting the purposes of that Government [...] However, the campaign will be rough, because the general mass of this people is greatly warned against us [...] Absolute independence is the illusion of the day, fostered by the “patriots” and cherished by the mulatto mob. It is advisable to dispel it before undertaking the demonstration that annexation must be achieved in any case. [...] I think I have told you before and I repeat now that all those who have something to lose, those who aspire to acquire, and the general mass of Spaniards yearn for annexation.”

It is a long history of resistance, which no Cuban should ignore. The foundations of the Cuban nation, written in blood, is anti-imperialist. Today, Annexation and Autonomy or “soft nationalism”—from the time of Gálvez until today, with respect to the United States—as political solutions are not generally expressed explicitly, although it is the intended goal after the Torricelli Law. It is visible, however, in the neo-colonizing machinery that imbues a part of our population with false values ??and idols, capable of wearing with colonial “pride” clothing with the stars and stripes flag. How can we interpret the gesture, both ridiculous and tragic, of that Cuban who started running in the Revolution Square—the highest symbol of national independence—a few minutes before the beginning of the May Day march, waving defiant the American flag? A few years later, I sadly read in El Nuevo Herald—an obsessively anti-Cuban newspaper—a request for help for that man, who was now sleeping on the streets of Las Vegas.

The “*Miamiization*” of the horizon brings with it the cult of violence. The same Hollywood offers, but in less sophisticated versions. The violence they try to reinstate is a social diluent, a scare-tourist, a “proof” of failure. There are social reasons that can cause it, and it would be foolish not to recognize them, and not prevent them. But they can also be planned or induced: the bombs in the hotels and the almost cinematic clashes between supposed or real gangs are connected. Why do some popular music performers make videos of songs that narrate bloody street events? Art reflects, but also constructs reality. The relationship is not linear. The issue deserves a deeper analysis, but there is the confessed intention of our enemies to promote disorder and chaos. Social networks describe every violent event in the country, and spread fear. The problem is complex: in times of crisis violence always increases, but even so, Cuba remains one of the least violent societies on the continent. And I, like when I was a teenager, still walk through the streets of my city at dawn, something I wouldn't do in any other nation. I know that I could sometimes be attacked, like in any relatively large city (I hope it never happens), but I confirm the fact.

Someday, our people will respect each other and live in peace, like neighbors that we are. But right now, in Florida, there are mercenaries who train in shooting ranges to come secretly to Cuba to kill Cubans. The annexationists join forces, once again, with the culture of violence. But the independence and peace achieved will not be usurped. The US government knows their actions and do not stop them. They should include themselves in the list of states that do not collaborate in the fight against terrorism. In fact, the US promote it.

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff
