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Fighting corruption? United States? A joke

By: Arnaldo Musa / Special for CubaSi

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The United States claims itself to be the leader of the fight against corruption globally. To achieve it, they use countless claims to smaller nations for the extradition to American soil of several criminals linked to all sorts of practices in this regard for cover.

There is also the official trend to create scapegoats to blame them for any criminal situation affecting the United States, but, as the German-Finnish businessman Kim Dotcom said this Sunday, the responsibility for corruption in the United States falls on the American government, not Russia or China.

*"Do you know someone who always blames others for their mistakes? Neither China, nor Russia, nor the BRICS are responsible for corruption in the United States," he said. "They did not create the rules that allowed corporations, billionaires and lobbyists to buy American politicians," he added.*

Dotcom's statements come in a context of both political and financial

pressure against Russia and China by the US. But Washington's behavior only fuels the de-dollarization process that Moscow and Beijing pursue along with many other nations.

This is the present context of a country where the likely winner of the upcoming presidential election, to be held in November, former President Donald Trump, has been convicted of 34 felonies, bribery crimes among them, which do not prevent him from becoming president, especially after the assassination attempt against him.

## **CAT IN DISGRACE**

Amid all these tangle of irregularities and shield deployment to be untouchable, the luck of Senator of Cuban origin Bob Menendez has abandoned him. He was found guilty of all charges he faced, including those of taking bribes in gold and cash from three businessmen from New Jersey, in addition to serving as an agent of the Egyptian government.

The verdict followed a nine-week trial in which prosecutors argued that the Democratic senator abused the powers of his office to protect allies from criminal investigations and to enrich associates, including his wife, through acts such as meeting with Egyptian intelligence officials and help that country obtain millions of dollars in financial assistance.

The verdict, announced in federal court in Manhattan, comes four months before the election and could end Menendez's ability to campaign for re-election as an independent candidate. That is, despite being considered a criminal, he could continue to be involved in the electoral process of the "democratic" nation.

The jury's decision ends a lengthy investigation that included the June 2022 FBI raid of the couple's home in Englewood Cliffs, a wealthy community just across the Hudson River from New York City.

Within the house, FBI agents found gold bars worth almost \$150,000 and cash, mostly in 100 bills, for a total of over \$480,000. In the garage, they found a Mercedes-Benz convertible.

The senator had already been repeatedly accused of being involved in

corrupt practices, although he was brought to trial just once, when he was “mysteriously” not prosecuted.

## **LOBISM AND OTHER MIASMA**

Lobbying is a legal practice in the United States that allows individuals and groups to influence political decisions. However, it has come under criticism due to its potential to encourage corrupt practices. Lobbying can lead to conflicts of interest and disproportionate influence of certain groups with economic power.

For example, during Donald Trump's term, there were numerous allegations of conflicts of interest related to lobbying. Additionally, Joe Biden's administration has also faced criticism for its ties to private consulting firms that have close ties to various industries.

Ted Cruz's name appears first on the list of beneficiaries of the arms lobby in the United States, receiving \$442,343. For his part, Marco Rubio has received \$183,550 from his country's arms lobby.

I have not been able to find out if Senators Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz and Bob Menéndez were lobbyists in their early political stages, but there is no doubt that these individuals of unfortunate Cuban origin had already had close ties with interest groups and companies they support on the most despicable issues, such as the free sale of weapons by the National Rifle Association.

In addition to lobbying, there are several elements in the United States system that can be perceived as facilitators of corruption:

**Campaign Financing:** Large donations to political campaigns can influence the decisions of politicians, creating an environment where the interests of donors take priority over the common good.

**Revolving doors:** The practice of public officials moving to work in the private sector and vice versa can lead to conflicts of interest and decisions that benefit former or future employers.

**Lax regulations:** In some cases, laws and regulations may be insufficient to prevent corrupt practices, allowing certain actions to be carried out without legal consequences.

Lack of transparency: Opacity in certain government and business processes can make it difficult to detect and prevent corruption.

Foreign Influences: Corruption can also be facilitated by foreign actors seeking to influence U.S. politics and the economy through bribery and other corrupt practices.

These factors, among others, contribute to an environment where corruption can thrive.

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff**

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