
OPINION: The Dignity of the Peoples

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The two soap operas on the national television, the Cuban and the Brazilian, have just begun, and they have not yet captured the attention of the media, nor have they dominated street debates. But another soap opera, closer to reality show, becomes an obligatory reference. A character, consciously overacted, takes over all the rules of the genre. Two details define the difference: the possession of the red button of atomic missiles, and an irrational, superb, unpredictable script, at times tragic or comic, sometimes ridiculous. The most important thing: it's not fiction, it's real. It does not seem possible to talk about anything else. Some historians say that Nero set fire to Rome to remake it to his liking; this self-empowered man is aiming for something vaster: to set fire to the world to remake it to his liking. He is so stupid and so rich that he does not joke. He wants us to remain attentive to each new announcement of his, because he enjoys, and needs, that "the others" be frightened, like those dogs that make a gesture of biting at every passerby to inhale the adrenaline of fear. He walks around with his mouth twisted, his lips pressed together, his chin slightly raised. "We don't need them," he says of Latin America, with contempt and arrogance, and adds, "they need us."

But his bravado is counterproductive: not only the governments and peoples of Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua, who have nothing to lose, respond, but also those of Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and Panama. However, the people - remember that in Cuba the press, corrupt politicians and ordinary people repeated that everything was possible, except confronting the army, faithful guardian of the powerful and the United States - do not become aware of their real power until the revolutionary tornado changes their lives.

For a people to adopt the slogan of "Homeland or Death," even with the proven certainty that they will win, they need to feel that they govern, that their destiny is theirs. It's linked to that of its leaders, who say that their true interests - contrary to what they preach - will only be guaranteed if they defend Dignity, that there will only be Life if they are willing to expose it. In the face of North American fascism, interest and dignity are now in the balance. Governments will have to win the trust of their subjects, to immediately put the latter first, or succumb to unworthy colonialism. But there's a submissive, genuflecting Latin American oligarchy that prostrates itself at the feet of the master if its profits are at risk, whose Homeland is Money, because its wealth comes from handing over the country's resources to the United States.

Do not be confused by the imperial discourse, by the thoughtful analysts of this anti-national, colonized and colonizing oligarchy: any gesture of dignity, even if it's not yet sustainable, makes indignity visible. The gallant president of Honduras has called for a CELAC Summit. In the face of fascism, only unity will save us. José Martí wrote for his time, which is ours:

"We can no longer be the people of leaves, living in the air, with the crown laden with flowers, crackling or humming, depending on how the whim of the light caresses it, or how the storms beat and cut it down; the trees must line up, so that the giant of seven leagues does not pass! It is time for counting, and for the united march, and we must walk in a tight square, like silver in the roots of the Andes."

Tens of thousands of Havana residents of all ages descended the university steps on January 27 with a lit torch in their hands. The spectacle, repeated in every provincial capital of the country, shakes and calls upon the indolent. It's a ritual that has been repeated every year since 1953, on the eve of the anniversary of José Martí's birth. "What is born from patriotic fire endures," he had written. It's not the selfish fire of empires, that of missiles that deposit death with millimetric precision in homes, hospitals and schools, as happens in Palestine. Torches do not burn to destroy or conquer territories, but to make up a new world order that does not admit emperors. It's the fire of the star that illuminates. For the love of freedom, of life, not for hatred or petty interests, the inhabitants of Bayamo burned their city. A little more than twenty years ago, Fidel responded thus to the emperor on duty in Washington, modern Rome:

"Since you have decided that our fate is sealed, I have the pleasure of saying goodbye like the Roman gladiators who were going to fight in the circus: Hail, Caesar, those who are going to die salute you.

I only regret that I could not even see your face, because in that case you would be thousands of kilometers away, and I will be on the front line to die fighting in defense of my country."

That decision, which his people support, is the guarantee of his security and freedom. Trump's is not a soap opera, even if it resembles one. The threat is real. In the face of fascism, there's no option, there's no hope, there's no possible distraction. This is what Martí wrote, and this is what is stated in the Cuban Magna Carta: "I want the first law of our Republic to be the cult of Cubans to the full dignity of man."

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSi Translation Staff
