

Under Siege: Review of a Resilient Island

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In June 1960, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz appeared on Cuban television to inform the public that, under instructions from the U.S. government, foreign companies were planning to boycott oil refining in Cuba.

This plan became a reality when the monopoly formed by Esso, Texaco, and Shell refused to refine the oil that Cuba had purchased from the USSR.

Just two months earlier, in April 1960, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Lester D. Mallory issued a memorandum that would lay the foundation for the economic war against Cuba.

Shortly thereafter, the National Security Council revisited the issue of Cuba. Allen Dulles stated, *"The only possible solution is the application of severe economic sanctions so that daily life in Cuba becomes unsustainable."*

The spiral of aggression intensified, culminating in February 1962 with

Executive Order 3447, signed by President John F. Kennedy, which marked the beginning of the U.S. embargo against Cuba. This was only the beginning.

According to the dominant corporate media aligned with the White House and its local allies, the main issue with the Cuban economy is inefficiency, allegedly caused by factors such as the so-called "*internal blockade*" and the government's "excessive bureaucracy."

However, the truth is that the total damage caused by the embargo, when adjusted for the depreciation of the dollar against gold, exceeds 1.3 trillion dollars. This reflects the true cost the embargo has imposed on the Island's development.

Since April 2019, the U.S. government has implemented an active policy of sanctions and pressure against vessels and shipping companies transporting oil to Cuba, primarily from Venezuela.

These measures have included over 90 ships and multiple companies added to the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) blacklist. The sanctions prohibit transactions with U.S. entities and block related assets.

Between March 2023 and February 2024 alone, the energy and mining sector suffered approximately 388 million dollars in damages, primarily due to the targeting of shipping companies, insurers, and banks that prevent oil deliveries to the Island.

Nothing has changed since 1960. The hostile campaign unleashed by the U.S. government was designed to break the spirit of the nation, to compel us, through despair, to abandon our dreams of freedom and justice for all.

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

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