
A New October Crisis in the Caribbean?

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The threat looming over Venezuela is growing. And more and more aspects of this crisis, invented by Mr. Rubio in his role as supersecretary, are reminiscent of those fateful days when it seemed that the Cold War of that time, in 1962, would heat up to the point of the fusion of millions of warlike atoms.

Examining the factors that led to what later became known as the October Crisis or the Missile Crisis would take up a lot of space. This conflict, it will be remembered, had much to do with how each side viewed its right to defense, as well as the role that Cuba, condemned since 1959 to be the target of all kinds of aggression, should or could play as an ally.

It's very useful to note that the two powers involved, the former USSR and the US, obviously, after baring their respective nuclear fangs, finally reached an agreement, and Cuba gained some peace of mind, something, because although Washington pledged not to engage in another Bay of Pigs-style invasion adventure, the hostility, the threat, never really disappeared, until now. Back then, Che Guevara rightly uttered that iconic phrase: "We can't trust imperialism, not even a bit."

Naturally, the conditions are different, and undoubtedly for the worse as far as the Empire is concerned, although Venezuela naturally doesn't possess the intercontinental or medium-range missiles that the USSR displayed at the time.

It's not about comparing the defensive capabilities of the land of Bolívar and Chávez; they would never be on par with the US military, replete with sophisticated weaponry. The issue isn't about that, although in strictly defensive terms, the Bolivarians have an invaluable advantage: they are defending their homeland and their families; the others, the aggressors, are protecting Mr. Rubio's dossier or the ramblings of Chief Trump.

The underlying issue is the magnitude of the threat, to what extent the political context, essentially designed by the State Department, would allow Washington to continue escalating the crisis justified under a false flag, as it's known, the fight against drug trafficking.

Let's take it step by step. The military force mobilized by the Pentagon, as President Nicolas Maduro has already denounced, is the most powerful on record, comparing it to the deployment in the last half of October 1962.

At the time of writing, the contingent, aptly described as the Pirates of the Caribbean 2.0, is made up of eight warships, mainly destroyers equipped with hundreds of missiles, an amphibious assault ship, the Iwo Jima, comparable, according to those in the know, to a medium-sized aircraft carrier, plus two amphibious ships, as well as a nuclear-powered submarine.

Also prowling the Caribbean, currently based in Puerto Rico, are ten F-35 fighter jets and P-8 reconnaissance aircraft. On top of all this mass of iron and steel, some 4,000 marines from the 22nd Expeditionary Unit, highly qualified to invade and kill human beings.

Linked to the above are electronic warfare devices and systems, armed drones, and communications interception equipment, all straight out of a science fiction film, so reasonable doubt is applied, as to whether they will actually be of any use.

The last comment isn't necessarily ironic, given the results achieved so far by the enormous device, as Trump himself has announced, they are having a resounding success (now that's sarcasm), with the sinking of some drug boats, which allowed the president to exclaim that the CARI The operation was "clean, free of them."

Interestingly, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) continues to bear the brunt of the drug boat interceptions, as it always has been. Another interesting fact is that the most important operation in recent weeks was called Operation Pacific Viper, a translation of which is unnecessary to understand where it took place. While Pirates of the Caribbean 2.0 celebrates the supposed sinking of four boats, the Coast Guard boasted a historic milestone last August, as they highlighted, with the seizure of drugs valued at approximately \$473 million.

This isn't about celebrating the results of the US Coast Guard; they have plenty of media space, both their own and borrowed. It's enough to add that in the past they have maintained mutually beneficial cooperation with Cuban authorities. In any case, these data show who in the US is truly fighting drug trafficking, as well as the maritime location where it's primarily intercepted.

Thus, it's increasingly clear, no matter how incredulously one assesses the situation, what the true purpose of Pirates of the Caribbean 2.0 and Mr. Rubio may be: to put an end to the Bolivarian project. In the last week alone, new elements have emerged that should be closely observed and that point to an increase in escalation.

See, for example, a recent article/report in the New York Times, a newspaper that often publishes stories to gauge the reaction of local public opinion or influence it to accept the most despicable proposals. The title of the article was: "The increase in US troops in the Caribbean indicates a broader campaign against Venezuela," although it concludes the analysis by stating that "the scope of the operation remains unclear." Be careful with this; it seems that the Time is distracted or is wary of another lawsuit, like the one it faces from the White House for domestic reasons.

Give or take a few minutes, in parallel, a brand-new independent UN commission issues a damning report against Venezuela. This is not the place to assess its veracity; it's only to note that the Bolivarian government has called the sources used in the report biased and that it fails to reflect institutional progress in respect for human rights.

What is relevant here is to note that in the midst of the war against Venezuela, this report appears, coincidentally favorable to the rhetoric spread by Mr. Rubio; but it turns out that "in politics there are rarely coincidences," former US President Franklin D. Roosevelt once said. Paradoxically, Mr. Rubio will not be able to refer to the report; after all, he has already admitted that he doesn't believe anything the UN says.

For his part, the Venezuelan president confirmed having sent a letter to his American counterpart, dated September 5, reiterating his desire to cooperate with the US in the fight against drug trafficking and peacefully discuss any potential disagreements. He also requested the intervention of negotiator Grenell. The letter was apparently signed with a carrier pigeon's feather, if the metaphor is understood.

The White House spokesperson's response: Maduro's letter is a pack of lies and there is nothing to debate. Hours earlier, Trump issued a new threat against the Bolivarian government: "If they don't receive certain individuals

ready to be deported to Venezuela, the price they will pay will be incalculable." The leader of the Empire shouted.

Now, in his speech at the UN General Assembly on September 23, the US president maintained the military threat, recalling that he is using "the supreme force of the US military" to combat what he called "Venezuelan terrorists and drug trafficking networks led by Nicolás Maduro."

He is once again mixing drug traffickers with terrorists, in true Trump style. In other words, if they don't believe him, the crusade against terrorism is unraveled, once again.

In short, when the war narrative about drug trafficking, the original reason for the deployment of Pirates of the Caribbean 2.0, seems to be running out of steam, sunk by the ineffectiveness of such a device with ridiculous results, Washington seems to be rehearsing or promoting other justifications.

Venezuela, for its part, continues with its arduous defensive plans, both military and politically and in terms of communications; while support for their cause is multiplying in social movements throughout Our America, as well as in international institutions, as evidenced by the very recent meeting of CELAC foreign ministers at UN headquarters, where the operation by the aforementioned Pirates of the Caribbean 2.0 was rejected.

The peoples of this region, and of the entire world, have zero tolerance for imperial arrogance, and Washington knows it, or should. Remember what Che Guevara said in December 1964, at the UN General Assembly: "... because humanity has said enough! And he's started walking." "Enough means it's over, Mr. Rubio, Mr. Trump, it's over, get that through your heads.

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