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In Times of Pandemic, to "Smart Ones", not a Chance

By: Manuel Asseff Blanco / ACN

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In very hard times humanity goes through due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Cuba is no foreign to a situation that requires extreme measures to guarantee health and resources, resources that some "smart ones" try to profit from taking advantage of the people.

For this reason, paraphrasing Che Guevara's famous phrase, profiteers cannot be given "a tiny chance", because in popular terms if you give them an inch they'll take a mile and many honest people who work hard to feed their families.

So what to do to avoid those "smart ones" don't get away with it? The people, certainly, could play a key role denouncing them or getting in their way, but the decisive role is played by the country's law enforcement offices.

On this subject, Dixan Fuentes Guzmán, Chief Prosecutor for Havana province, spoke with the Cuban News Agency and referred to the legal punishment asserted in the capital in the current contingency associated with the new coronavirus, causing Covid -19.

Here in Havana, he said, as in the entire country, the prosecution has a well-designed way of responding to those who break the law and take advantage of the possibilities the Revolution offers, to profit from it.

In circumstances like these, the measures are harder and to that effect we have all the legal tools in order to face this kind of conduct, with both administrative and criminal sanctions, he said.

For this reason, we have the chance of criminally sanctioning anyone who misuses the State resources given to the people, so that they can get by in this complicated situation, he explained.

We are talking about crimes such as concealment, profiteering, speculation, illegal economic activities and other

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punishable conduct, he mentioned in reference to punishable actions.

We all know that because of the cruel U.S. blockade against Cuba for more than 60 years, the resources we have are limited, hence we will never allow some people to want to take advantage of the majority of the population, said the interviewee.

That's why in circumstances like the one we live in today, with the existing limitations, the Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Interior work so that everything that is destined for the population reaches them through the established channels, he emphasized.

So we have an obligation to investigate and prosecute citizens who, taking advantage of the few resources available, use them for such inappropriate behavior, he said.

Afterwards, prior to individualization and rationality, the weight of the law will fall on them because Cuban courts have all the right legal tools to judge those cases and the prosecution is ready for that, he said.

He added that for this type of crime, fines and incarceration are in place, but the severity of the offence not only lies in the sanction of prison or being fined; there are also the accessory sanctions they can be charged with, he explained.

For example, he said, this includes the removing of the license as a self-employed worker, ending the leasing of premises or houses, the prohibition of frequenting certain places or the confiscation of assets that have been the result of these criminal acts, he assured.

In short, it's a set of measures that allow effective responses to conducts that only affect the people, concluded the Chief Prosecutor of Havana.

**Translated by Amilkal Labañino / Cubasi Translation Staff**

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