
OPINION: Yearend Message

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31/12/2024



I don't know when the last remnant of the moral wall in international relations crumbled, when appearances stopped mattering. Bush Jr. began his crusade to reconquer the Middle East, his endless war against terrorism and invaded Afghanistan, but he used the atrocious attack on the Twin Towers as a pretext; when he invaded Iraq, he said that his government was manufacturing atomic weapons. In reality, the jihadist groups had been armed and trained many years before by the United States, to confront a socialist-leaning government. There were no atomic weapons in Iraq. But imperialism still considered it necessary to lie, to expose reasons and excuses. If the deception was later revealed, it no longer mattered.

I don't know when, or how it happened, but one day the lie, the excuse, was no longer necessary, and the real reason appeared naked, defiant, cynical. Imperialism, in decline, had no time to make up stories and needed to impose itself by force; pride has since been, paradoxically, a sign of weakness, but also a symptom of the emergence of fascism. It probably repeats the mistakes of all previous empires in their final period of existence, with one difference: never before have there been such massively lethal weapons. Israel, confident in the unconditional support of the North American government, and shielded by a huge media machinery, transforms genocide, the ethnic cleansing of an entire people, into an act of defense, unmovedly ignoring the voices calling for an end to the slaughter of civilians.

As I write these lines, 15,000 human beings, mainly women, elderly, and children, are cornered in Al-Mawasi, a narrow strip of coastal land one kilometer wide and fourteen kilometers long, in the city of Rafah, and the Israeli air force mercilessly bombs their camps and shelters. The supposed initial reason (because there are reasons that go back much further than that reason), Hamas attack on the occupied territory of Palestine, is diluted when the Zionist army completely occupies the Golan Heights in Syria, after the fall of its government, and declares, without shame, that it has begun to reconfigure the Middle East. Wasn't that what Bush Jr. intended with his endless war? To this end, Biden, in his final hours, now turns the "bad" jihadists that imperialism once armed and prepared for its purposes into "good guys." And let's clarify: North American imperialism is not synonymous with the United States; there's a noble people in that country, manipulated, deceived, fundamentalist believers in a false creed.

The moral debacle is fascism. The transparent execution of a foreign policy of force without legal or moral justifications — something that White House never respected, but pretended to respect — takes on superlative degrees with Trump: if you don't adjust the prices for the passage of my ships, I will take back the Panama Canal, said the elected president with similar words and literally added "the Panama Canal is a vital national asset for the United States due to its critical role for the economy and national security." It's that simple. Any country or region in the world can be considered "vital" for the national security of the United States, and consequently be taken by force. That's how the Israelis think and act. The Panamanian president, who is not left-wing but is not suicidal either, rejected the emperor's statement: "the Canal is and will remain Panamanian." And Trump, arrogant, responded: "we'll see." Furthermore, he posted a photo of the canal with the North American flag and a phrase: "Welcome to the United States Canal." I don't think he will carry out his threat, which is probably unrealizable, but he will try to bend the knees of the Mulino government in exchange for it to accede to other demands that are less mediatic but equally alien to the national interest of Panama.

I join those who think that the third world war is underway. It may take other paths, and encompass other territories, but it involves us all. And as we've known since Ancient Greece, the first victim is the truth. It hurts to see how in many countries geopolitical interests are imposed, petty calculations, how one sells one's brother, in exchange for nothing or for a lot, it doesn't matter. The difficulty in unraveling the agenda of the world chessboard lies precisely in the absence of stable principles that govern the behavior of nations. I cling to the idea that the bells that toll for others, also toll for me. The year that ends leaves a sad balance of inconsistencies, of impunity.

That's why the heroic resistance of entire peoples like the Cubans or the Venezuelans, like the Palestinians, is so important, peoples who are defamed, blockaded, attacked, who don't give in. It hurts to know that there are Cubans who believe more in the social networks of imperialism than in their hearts, because their minds were taken by storm and colonized. "When there are many men without dignity," José Martí explained to the children of Our America in The Golden Age, "there are always others who have within themselves the dignity of many men. These are the ones who rebel with terrible force against those who rob peoples of their freedom, which is robbing men of their dignity. In these men there are thousands of men, an entire people, human dignity." But there are millions of dignified, incorruptible Cubans. In today's Cuba, no one needs to walk very far if they want to find our heroines and heroes: There are millions! —Díaz Canel told the National Assembly a few days ago, and added later— (...) They do not think about losing but about winning; and if someone asks them what they are up to, they will say that they are "in the fight", "in the fight", "fighting", without crying, without kneeling, because their beloved country has been denied, for more than 60 years, in cold blood and with total perversity, by the most powerful empire in history."

The year ends with a March of the Combatant People, "like in the old days", my retired neighbor would say, who with his recent limp and his dignity intact, Cuban flag in hand, did not fail to attend. Imperialism and its national lackeys did not expect it: its embassy banned visa interviews, something normal when the people march in front of the imperial headquarters, and sold the inevitable measure as a response, to stir up the spirits of those who want to emigrate, or come and go, and filled the networks with demobilizing messages. However, 500,000 Havana residents attended, representing all Cubans. They will say that we were forced, but they know that's not true. They can lie, but they know the truth. Cuba does not give up, that is the message of the yearend.

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff