
Marco Rubio, Hawk or Scavenger Bird?

By: Arnaldo Musa / Cubasí
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The Trumpist policy that turns sadistic against Latin America cannot have a better representative than the former senator turned foreign minister of the reddish president, Marco Rubio, a hawk in American politics and a scourge for our America, where for him the government of Venezuela is "the narco-dictatorship of Maduro", that of Cuba, a "criminal regime" that is "an enemy of the United States", and that of Nicaragua "a direct threat to American national security, with a systematic offensive against the Catholic Church and that seeks to establish a family dynasty in the country."

The US government returns to a harsh policy against Cuba

These days he began his work as Secretary of State with a visit to Panama, where annoyances are very heated due to Trump's attitude of controlling or even occupying the Canal, although the work of the infamous character of regrettable Cuban origin has more to do with the American opposition to the work of a Chinese company that improves the important place.

The Panamanian president, who has covered his pro-American sympathies with the costume of nationalism, has for the time being sponsored the disappearance of billboards advertising the places where the Chinese company carries out its improvement work.

As we recall every time the opportunity presents itself, Rubio, 53, claimed when he was younger that he was born in Cuba and his parents fled the Castro dictatorship, and he never admitted this lie when he was born in Miami and his parents left the Island during the Batista regime.

He has been characterized in his 13 years as a US senator by assuming tough positions towards those and other countries governed by leftists, and by cultivating ties with right-wing leaders in the region. Trump has presented him as "a staunch defender of our nation, a true friend of our allies, and a fearless warrior who will never back down from our adversaries."

The senator responded that he felt "honored" by the trust. "Under President Trump's leadership, we will achieve peace through strength and always put the interests of Americans and the United States above all else."

But despite his repeated attacks on progressive governments and his recent tour of Central America, it should not be forgotten that Rubio has been characterized by following in Trump's footsteps in foreign policy since he changed his stance against the aforementioned, from his own presidential aspirations to one of greater acquiescence and genuflection with Trumpist desires.

However, Rubio's choice for the State Department seems to be due "largely to the fact that he is a hawk on non-Latin American issues such as China and Iran," says Alan McPherson, an expert at Temple University on Washington's relations with Latin America.

"I don't think there's much more attention paid to Latin America simply because of its presence in the cabinet," McPherson told BBC Mundo, although reality shows otherwise.

Trump also chose as his next National Security Advisor another "hawk" critic of China and Iran: Representative Michael Waltz, who in his military past participated in combat missions in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Africa.

As a member of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations and Intelligence Committees, Rubio has also been an active opponent of China's growing influence in America.

Since entering the Senate in 2011, Rubio has defended reactionary causes such as opposition to the normalization of relations with Havana promoted by the government of Democrat Barack Obama (2009-2017).

Although Rubio also criticized Trump when he unsuccessfully competed with him for the Republican nomination in 2016, his influence grew during Trump's first administration, to the point that US media pointed to him as a shadow secretary of state for Latin America.

He was an architect of the failed strategy of recognizing Venezuelan opposition deputy Juan Guaidó as "president in charge" of his country in 2019 instead of Nicolás Maduro, who, however, remains in power. Now his phoenix is the elderly former CIA agent González Urrutia, but it seems that he will not be able to take flight either.

Rubio has also criticized Colombian President Gustavo Petro several times. After the president's election in 2022, he said that "the US now faces a Colombia we don't know, one that will be led by someone from the far left, a former M-19 guerrilla with an openly hostile approach toward joint U.S. efforts as well as our interests in promoting a more prosperous hemisphere."

He said that Petro's rise to power poses a "great concern for the Colombian-American community in Florida, which sees up close how its beloved homeland falls prey to the hands of a Marxist leader."

In August 2023, Rubio sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland demanding the rejection of the Petro government's request for the extradition of former paramilitary leader Salvatore Mancuso. Mancuso finished serving his sentence in the U.S. in 2020 and was appointed by Petro as a peacemaker.

In May 2024, he published a column in which he said that with Petro's election, "the biggest winners (...) have been drug traffickers and human traffickers," and criticized the president's "total peace" policy. When Petro announced that he would break relations with Israel over the genocide in Gaza, Rubio called him a "terrorist sympathizer who wants to be the Colombian version of Hugo Chávez."

TO THOSE WHO "MISSBEHAVE"

Cynthia Arnson, a distinguished fellow at the Wilson Center, a think tank in Washington DC, believes that Trump's second administration will once again "impose sanctions to punish left-wing leaders for their bad behavior, without considering the impact on the civilian population."

"The Trump administration will most likely re-implement general oil sanctions against Venezuela, including secondary sanctions on companies like Repsol and Eni and countries like India that do business with [state oil company] PdVSA."

She also believes it's possible that an attempt will be made to expel Nicaragua from the Central American Free Trade Agreement (Cafta), to deny Daniel Ortega's government access to the US market, the main destination for the country's exports.

"The secondary consequences of that are significant: putting hundreds of thousands of people out of work in the textile and other sectors, increasing migratory pressures in neighboring Costa Rica, as well as on the southern border of the US," says Arnson, who is a professor of economics and international studies at Johns Hopkins University.

But Rubio's political positions in Latin America have gone far beyond the appointed governments, rebuking other left-wing Latin American leaders for their positions.

When Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva indicated at the beginning of his administration that he would seek closer ties with both the U.S. and China, Rubio also came out bare fangs:

"President Biden must take a firm line, holding Lula accountable for his friendship with the Chinese Communist Party, as well as with other bloodthirsty dictatorships such as those in Cuba, Nicaragua' and Venezuela," the senator wrote in The Epoch Times in February 2023.

A year earlier, he argued that then-Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador had "handed over sections of his country to drug cartels and is an apologist for tyranny in Cuba, a murderous dictator in Nicaragua and a drug trafficker in Venezuela."

With such a background, the morbid hatred of this scavenger bird rather than a hawk, is understandable, today with a submissive mask as Trump's son, constant repeater of his slogan "America first."
