
Guantanamo Again!

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Indeed, we are not talking here about the easternmost province of Cuba, but about the well-known Guantanamo naval base, imposed by force on a portion of Cuban territory of approximately 116 km in the bay of the same name.

Its origins date back to when the US army intervened in the war of independence that the Cubans were waging against the Spanish mother country in the late 19th century. When it was practically won, with both contenders exhausted, the Americans took control of the unredeemed island by force, imposing leonine agreements, including the self-granting of perpetual control of that bay; to top it off, the Cuban government, since 1959, has demanded that they go somewhere else and return the territory of the base. Therefore, the existence of the Guantanamo naval base is rejected by the Cuban people and government.

This space, which constitutes one of the most relevant causes of the dispute between Cuba and the United States, was used for years to generate provocations, in the incessant search of US authorities to find a plausible justification for a military aggression. This danger, which works like the sword of Damocles, can be reactivated by any cause, real or made-up.

In this historical context, the danger is understood when the American governments have used the base to deal with its own domestic situations, such as the war on terrorism, unleashed by Bush Jr., which had one of its most sinister consequences when it turned the base into an international torture center for more than 20 years.

Now the news that President Trump decided to enable the base as a place of accommodation

for some 30 thousand "illegal" migrants, is once again setting off alarm about the consequences of this decision; it's difficult, very difficult, for anything good to come out of this decision.

The base is permanently staffed by some 8,000 military personnel and civilian support staff, and it's equipped with all the resources for the subsistence of that number of people; hence the reasonable doubt about the convenience of considerably increasing the number of people who live there in a dignified manner and above all, the million-dollar question: for how long?

It should be remembered that during the so-called "rafter crisis" in 1994, the base was used to "store" illegal migrants in what they called "Camp Bulkeley," initially Haitians and later Cubans, who totaled almost 50,000 people, crowded together in deplorable, inhumane conditions. The matter reached the U.S. federal courts, the U.S. District Court for Eastern New York, where Judge Sterling Johnson Jr. concluded that this overcrowding of people was unconstitutional. The verdict was appealed by the White House, who managed to get their way in the Supreme Court, but the important thing is that the precedent remained, including the qualification of unconstitutionality.

Trump could add that, after all, those he will send to the base are dangerous criminals, which is the qualification when referring to all migrants. However, as they say, data kills stories, if not, look at the more than 20 infants who were recently sent by force to Colombia, just to cite one example of the many that will be seen in the future, about the perverse manipulation of that condition of criminals to people, who in exercising their human right to emigrate, are returned to their countries as outlaws.

The reaction of Cuban authorities, first of all President Díaz-Canel and the Cuban Foreign Ministry itself, was quick. The lacerating memory of the mistreatment of those Cubans and Haitians in the post-"rafter crisis" episode in 1994, is clear proof of how these things end; rightly there's already talk that Trump will once again turn his Guantanamo naval base into a concentration camp, in the best Nazi fascist style. On top of it all, the announcement coincides with the 80th anniversary of the dismantling of the one established in Auschwitz.

The Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs rightly reiterated in a statement dated January 29 in Havana, regarding the future use of the base that: "its irresponsible use would generate a scenario of risk and insecurity in this illegal enclave and its surroundings; it would threaten peace and would lend itself to errors, accidents and misinterpretations that could alter stability and cause serious consequences."

Beware, this is a developing story.

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff
