

The Empire and the War

Fidel Castro Ruz

The current danger that the United States attacks North Korea, following the recent incident in the territorial waters of the latter, could perhaps be thwarted if the President of the People's Republic of China decides to exercise the right to veto -a prerogative that country totally dislikes- with respect to the agreements currently under discussion at the UN Security Council.

But, there is a second and more serious problem for which the United States has no possible answer; this is the conflict created involving Iran. This could be clearly seen coming since President Barack Obama made his speech at the Islamic University of Al-Azhar, in Cairo, on June 4, 2010.

In a Reflection I wrote only four days after that, -when I had access to an official copy of his remarks- I used many parts of it to analyze its significance. I shall now mention some of them.

"We meet at a time of great tension between the United States and Muslims around the World..."

"...colonialism that denied rights and opportunities to many Muslims, and a Cold War in which Muslim-majority countries were too often treated as proxies without regard to their own aspirations."

This and other arguments sounded particularly impressive as they were voiced by an African-American US President; they resonated like the self-evident truths contained in the Declaration of Philadelphia of July 4, 1776.

"I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect..."

"As the Holy Quran tells us, "Be conscious of God and speak always the truth."

"And I consider it part of my responsibility as President of the United States to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear."

Thus, he continued dealing with thorny issues from the universe of insoluble contradictions involving US policies.

"In the middle of the Cold War, the United States played a role in the overthrow of a democratically elected Iranian government."

"Since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has played a role in acts of hostage-taking and violence against US troops and civilians."

"America's strong bonds with Israel are well known. This bond is unbreakable."

"Many wait in refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza and neighboring lands for a life of peace and security that they have never been able to lead."

Today, we know that white phosphorus and other inhumane and cruel substances are often dropped on the population of the Gaza Strip with a truly Nazi fascist frenzy. Still, Obama's assertions seemed vibrant, and on occasions sincere, as he repeated them once and again during his feverish racing around the world, wherever he promptly arrived in his US Air Force One.

Yesterday, May 31, the international community was shocked when in international waters, --tens of thousands of miles off the coast of Gaza- nearly one hundred Israeli paratroops jumped from helicopters, in the wee small hours, recklessly shooting on hundreds of peaceful people from various nationalities, causing them -according to press reports- no less than 20 dead and scores of injured. There were also Americans among

those under attack, who were carrying goods to the Palestinians besieged in their own homeland.

When Obama spoke at the Islamic University of Al-Azhar about "the overthrow of a democratically elected Iranian government" and immediately added that "since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has played a role in acts of hostage-taking and violence against US troops and civilians..." he was referring to the revolutionary movement promoted by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini who -from Paris and without a weapon- crushed the Armed Forces of the most powerful US gendarme in South Asia. It was very difficult for the mightiest power of the world not to succumb to the temptation of setting up one of its military bases there, south of the USSR.

More than five decades back, the United States had subdued another absolutely democratic revolution when it overthrew the Iranian government headed by Mohammad Mossadegh, who had been elected Prime Minister of Iran on April 24, 1951. On May 1st that same year, the Senate approved the nationalization of oil, which had been his main demand during the struggle. "So far, our long years of negotiations with foreign countries have proved unsuccessful," he said.

He obviously meant the big capitalist powers that controlled the world economy. In view of the intransigence of the British Petroleum, then known as the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Iran seized its facilities.

The country was unable to train its technicians. The UK had withdrawn its skilled personnel and imposed a blockade on spare parts and markets. It had also sent the Royal Navy ready for action against that country. As a result, Iran's oil production decreased from 241.4 million barrels in 1952 to 10.6 million in 1953. In such favorable conditions, the CIA organized the coup d'etat that ousted Mossadegh, who passed away three years later. Then the monarchy was reinstated and a powerful US ally took power in Iran.

That is the only thing the United States has done with other nations. Ever since the creation of that country on the richest soils of the planet, it never respected the rights of the indigenous population living there for thousands of years or of those brought in as slaves by the English colonizers.

Nevertheless, I am sure that millions of smart and honest Americans understand these truths.

President Obama can make hundreds of speeches trying to accommodate irreconcilable contradictions to the detriment of truth; or he can dream of the magic of his well articulated phrases while making concessions to personalities and groups lacking in ethics. He can also portray fantastic worlds that only fit in his head, as they are planted there by unscrupulous advisors aware of his tendencies.

Two unavoidable questions : Will Obama be able to enjoy the excitement of a second presidential term without seeing the Pentagon or the State of Israel, —whose behavior shows that it does not accept the United States decisions—use their nuclear weapons on Iran? What will life on our planet be like after that? □