Seven daggers at the heart of the Americas

I read and reread data and articles written by smart personalities, some better known than others, who publish in various media outlets drawing the information from sources nobody questions.

Everywhere in the world, the people living on this planet are taking economic, environmental and war risks due to the United States policies but no other region of the world as threatened by such grave problems as that country's neighbors, that is, the peoples of this continent south of that hegemonic power.

The presence of such a powerful empire --with military bases, nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers; modern warships and sophisticated fighter planes that can carry any type of weapons, deployed in every continent and ocean; with hundreds of thousands of troops and a government that claims absolute impunity for them-- is the most important headache for any government, be it a leftist, rightist or center government, an allied of the United States or not.

The problem for those of us who are its neighbors is not that it is a different country with a different language. There are Americans of every color and background. They are people just like us with all kinds of feelings, in one sense or another. What is dramatic is the system that has been developed there and imposed on everyone else. That system is not new to the use of force and to the domination methods that have prevailed throughout history; what is new is the time we are living. Approaching the issue from a traditional perspective would be a mistake and no one would benefit. Reading and getting acquainted with the ideas of the advocates of the system can be very educational for it helps to become aware of the nature of a system which builds on a continuous appeal to selfishness and to the peoples' most basic instincts.

Without convictions about the value of conscience and its capacity to prevail over instincts, it would not be possible to even speak of a hope for change in any period of the very short history of man. Neither would it be possible to understand the formidable obstacles lying in the way of the different political leaders of the Latin American or Ibero-American nations in the hemisphere. In any case, the peoples living in this part of the world in the last tens of thousands of years until the famous discovery of the Americas had no traits of the Latin, Iberian or European peoples and their features resembled more those of the Asian peoples where their ancestors had come from. Today, we can find them on the faces of the indigenous people in Mexico, Central America, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Chile, a country where the Araucanians wrote enduring pages. In certain areas of Canada and Alaska they still preserve their indigenous roots as purely as they can, but in the continental United States a large part of the ancient peoples was exterminated by the white conquerors.

As everybody knows, millions of Africans were uprooted from their land and brought to work as slaves in this hemisphere. In some countries like Haiti and a large part of the Caribbean Islands their descendants make up the majority of the population, and in some other countries they add up to large segments. In the United States, there are tens of millions of people of African descent who, as a rule, are the poorest and most discriminated against.

For centuries that country claimed privileged rights over our continent. At the time of Jose Marti, it tried to impose a single currency based on gold, a metal whose value has been the steadiest through history. In general, international trade was based on gold; but that is not the case today. From the days of Nixon's administration, world trade developed on the basis of the paper money printed by the United States, the dollar, a currency worth today about 27 times less than in the early '70s; one of the many ways to dominate and defraud the rest of the world. At the present moment, however, other currencies

are taking the place of the dollar in international trade and in the hard currency reserves.

Then, while the value of the empire's currency is decreasing, its military forces' reserves are increasing and the state-of-the-art technology and science monopolized by the superpower are largely directed to weapons development. Presently, it is not only the thousands of nuclear missiles or the modern destructive power of conventional weapons, but the guided planes piloted by robots. This is not just a fantasy. Some of these aircraft are being used in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Recent reports indicate that in a relatively near future, by the year 2020, --long before the Antarctic icecap melts-- the empire plans to have among its 2500 war planes, 1100 fifth-generation F-35 and F-22 fighter-bombers. Just to give an idea of that potential, suffice it to say that the aircraft used at the Soto Cano base in Honduras to train that country's pilots are F-5, and the ones supplied to the Venezuelan air force --prior to Chavez-- and to Chile and other countries, were small F-16 squadrons.

Even more significant is the empire's plan for the next 30 years anticipating that every U.S. combat aircraft, from fighter planes to heavy bombers and tanker planes are piloted by robots.

Such a military might is not a necessity of the world; it is a necessity of the economic system that the empire imposes to the world.

Anyone understands that if the robots can replace the combat pilots, they can also replace the workers in many factories. The free-trade agreements that the empire is trying to impose on the countries of this hemisphere mean that these workers will have to compete with the advanced technology and the robots of the Yankee industry.

Robots do not go on strike; they are obedient and disciplined. We have seen on TV machinery that can pick up apples and other fruits. The question could also be asked to the American workers. Where will the jobs be? What is the future that capitalism without borders, in its advanced development stage, assigns to the people?

In light of this and other realities, the leaders of UNASUR, MERCOSUR, the Rio Group and others cannot but analyze the very good question raised by Venezuela: What's the meaning of the military and naval bases that the United States wants to set up around Venezuela and in the heart of South America? I remember that a few years back, when relations between Colombia and Venezuela, two sister nations bound by geography and history, grew dangerously tense Cuba quietly promoted significant steps leading to peace between them. Cuba will never encourage war between sister nations. Historic experience, the manifest destiny claimed and applied by the United States and the weak accusations against Venezuela about weapon supplies to the FARC, combined with the negotiations aimed at granting to the U.S. Armed Forces seven places in that territory to be used by their air and naval troops, are leaving Venezuela no other choice but to invest in weaponry the resources it could use for the economy, social programs and cooperation with other countries of the region having less resources and development. Venezuela's military build-up is not aimed against the fraternal people of Colombia but against the empire which already tried to overthrow its Revolution and today intends to set up its sophisticated weapons near the Venezuelan border.

It would be a serious mistake to believe that only Venezuela is being threatened. Actually, every country in the south of the continent is under threat. Not one of them will be able to avoid the issue as some of them have already stated.

The present and future generations will pass judgment on their leaders for the way they conduct themselves at this moment. It is not only the United States, but the United States and the system. What does it offer? What does it want?

It offers the FTAA, that is, the early ruin of our countries: free transit of goods and capital, but not free transit of people. They are now afraid that the opulent consumerist society is inundated by poor Hispanics, indigenous people, black, mulatto or whites who cannot find jobs in their own countries. They

return everyone who commits an offense or that they do not need; quite often these people are killed before they enter that country or returned like animals when they are not necessary. Twelve million Latin American or Caribbean immigrants remain in the United States illegally. A new economy has emerged in our countries, especially in the smallest and poorest: that of remittances. In times of crisis, this strikes mostly the immigrants and their families. Parents and children are separated, sometimes forever. If the immigrant is of military age, he is given the chance to enlist for fighting thousands of miles away from home “on behalf of freedom and democracy,” and if they do not get killed, on their return they are given the right to become US citizens. Then, as they are well trained they are offered the possibility of a contract, not as official soldiers but as civilian soldiers for the private companies that provide services to the imperial wars of conquest.

There are other extremely serious dangers. There are always news of immigrants from Mexico and other countries of our region dying as they try to cross the U.S.-Mexican border. The number of victims each year widely exceeds the totality of those who lost their lives in the almost 28 years of existence of the famous Berlin Wall.

But what is most incredible is that there is hardly any news in the world about a war that is taking thousands of lives every year. In 2009, more Mexicans have been killed than the number of American soldiers who died during Bush’s war on Iraq in the course of his administration.

The cause of the war in Mexico is the largest drug market in the world: the United States market. But there is no war going on in the American territory between the U.S. police and the military fighting the drug-traffickers. The war has instead been exported to Mexico and Central America, but especially to the Aztec country which is closer to the United States. Dreadful images of dead bodies are shown on TV while news keep coming in of people murdered in the surgery rooms where their lives were being saved. None of these images originates in the U.S. territory.

Such a wave of violence and bloodshed is expanding through the countries of South America, affecting them to a lesser or greater extent. Where does the money come from if not the endless source of the U.S. market? Likewise, consumption tends to expand to the rest of the countries in the region causing more victims and direct or indirect damages than AIDS, malaria and other illnesses put together.

The imperial plans of domination are preceded by huge sums of money assigned to the task of deceiving and misinforming the public. For this purpose, they have the full complicity of the oligarchy, the bourgeoisie, the rightist intelligentsia and the media.

They are experts in spreading news of the politicians’ mistakes and contradictions.

The fate of mankind must not be left in the hands of robots turned into people or people turned into robots.

In the year 2010, the U.S. government will promote its policy through the State Department and USAID spending 2.2 billion dollars –12 percent more than the Bush administration received in the last year of its second term-- and almost 450 million of them will be used to prove that the tyranny imposed on the world means democracy and respect for human rights.

They constantly appeal to the human beings’ instinct and selfishness; they despise the value of education and conscience. The resistance put up by the Cuban people throughout 50 years is evident. Resistance is the weapon that peoples can never give up. The Puerto Ricans were able to stop the military exercises in Vieques by standing on the site of the firing range.

Bolivar’s homeland is today the country they are most worried about for its historical role in the struggle for the independence of the peoples of the Americas. Cubans working there as healthcare and informatics specialists, educators, physical education and sports professors, agricultural technicians and specialists in other areas should do their best to fulfill their internationalist duty to prove that the

peoples can put up a resistance and carry forward the most sacred principles of human society. Otherwise, the empire will destroy civilization and even the human race.

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