

## THE YANKEE BASES AND THE LATIN AMERICAN SOVEREIGNTY

The concept of nation emerged from the combination of common elements such as history, language, culture, costumes, laws, institutions and others related to the material and spiritual life of human communities.

Bolivar, who worked the great heroic deeds that turned him into 'The Liberator of peoples' during his struggle for the freedom of the peoples of the Americas, urged them to create what he called "the greatest nation in the world: less for its extension and riches than for its liberty and glory."

In Ayacucho, Antonio José de Sucre waged the last battle against the empire that for more than 300 years had transformed much of this continent into a royal property of the Spanish Crown.

That was the same America that tens of years later, after being divided in part by the rising Yankee imperialism, was called by Martí 'Our America.'

We should remember once again that on May 19, 1895, a few hours before dying in combat for the independence of Cuba, the last bastion of Spanish colonialism in the Americas, Jose Marti prophetically wrote that everything he had done and would was to "...to timely prevent, with the independence of Cuba, that the United States could expand over the Antilles and fall with that additional force over our American lands."

In the United States, where the recently liberated thirteen colonies did not take long to expand disorderly to the West in their quest for land and gold, while exterminating indigenous populations, until they reached the Pacific coast, the agricultural and slave States of the South competed with the industrial States of the North that exploited wage labor in an attempt to create other States to protect their economic interests.

In 1848 Mexico was robbed of more than 50 per cent of its territory during a war of conquest launched against that country that was then militarily weak. The conquerors occupied the capital and imposed humiliating peace conditions. Mexico's big reserves of oil and gas, which remained in the territory that was robbed, would later on be supplied to the United States for more than a century and in part they continue to be so now.

The Yankee filibuster William Walker, encouraged by "the manifest destiny" declared by his country, landed in Nicaragua in 1855 and proclaimed himself as President, until he was expelled by the Nicaraguans and other Central American patriots in 1856.

Our National Hero realized how the destiny of Latin American countries was being shattered by the rising United States Empire.

After Martí's death in combat there was a military intervention in Cuba at a time when the Spanish army had already been defeated.

The Platt Amendment, which granted that powerful country the right to intervene in the Island, was imposed on Cuba.

The occupation of Puerto Rico - which has lasted for 111 years now- a country so called "Free Associated State" that is neither free nor a State, was another consequence of that intervention.

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The worst was still to come for Latin America, as was confirmed by the ingenious premonitions of Martí. The growing empire had decided that the canal that would link the two oceans would go through Panama and not through Nicaragua. The Panama isthmus, the Corinth dreamed of by Bolívar as the capital of the biggest Republic of the world envisaged by him would be a property of the Yankees.

Despite that, the worst consequences were still to come in the course of the 20th century. With the support of the national political oligarchies, the United States became the owner of the resources and the economies of Latin American countries. Military interventions multiplied; military and police forces fell under the US aegis. The Yankee transnationals took control over the fundamental productions and services, banks, insurance companies, foreign trade, railways, ships, warehouses, electricity services and telephone services. Others, to a greater or lesser degree, were finally controlled by them.

It is true that the sharp social inequities led to the emergence of the Mexican Revolution in the second decade of the 20th century, which became a source of inspiration for other countries. The Revolution made it possible for Mexico to make progress in different areas. But the same empire that in the past devoured much of the Mexican territory is devouring today important natural resources it still keeps, cheap labor, and is even forcing the Mexican people to shed its own blood.

The NAFTA is the most brutal economic agreement imposed on a developing country. For the sake of brevity, it will suffice it to point out that the US Government has just stated that at a moment when Mexico has been hit by a double blow, not only because of its economic slowdown, but also because of the effects of the AH1N1 virus, the US would probably want to see a more stable economy before engaging in a long discussion about new commercial negotiations. And of course, not a single word is said about the fact that, as a consequence of the war unleashed by drug trafficking - for which Mexico has deployed 36 000 troops-, almost 4 000 Mexicans have died in 2009. The same phenomenon repeats itself to a greater or lesser degree in the rest of Latin America. Drugs not only cause serious health problems; they are also a source of violence which is causing lot of pain in Mexico and Latin America as a consequence of the insatiable US market, which is an infinite source of the hard currency that is used to foment the production of cocaine and heroine. It is the country that supplies the weapons used in that ferocious and unadvertised war.

Those who die in the territory between Rio Grande and the farthest corners of South America are all Latin Americans. Thus, the general violence is breaking new records of deaths. The victims, mostly because of drugs and poverty, surpass the figure of 100 000 a year in Latin America.

The empire does not wage the struggle on drugs within its borders; it is doing so in the Latin American countries.

In our country we do not grow coca or poppy. We efficiently combat those who attempt to introduce drugs in our country or use Cuba as a transit point. The number of persons who die as a result of violence is decreasing every year. And for that we do not need Yankee soldiers. The struggle against drugs is a pretext to establish military bases in the whole hemisphere.

Since when the vessels of the 4th Fleet and modern combat planes are used to combat drugs?

The true objective is to control the economic resources, the markets, and to struggle against social changes. Was there any need to re-establish that fleet which was demobilized after the Second World War, more than 60 years later, when the cold war is over and the USSR no longer exist? The arguments used for the installation of seven air and naval bases in Colombia are an insult to intelligence.

History will not forgive those who have been so disloyal to their own peoples or those who resort to the exercise of sovereignty as a pretext to harmonize this with the presence of Yankee troops. What sovereignty they refer to? The one conquered by Bolívar, Sucre, San Martín, O'Higgins, Morelos, Juárez, Tiradentes and Martí? None of them would have accepted such a repugnant argument to justify the granting of military bases to the Armed Forces of the United States, an empire far more dominant,

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powerful and universal than the Crowns of the Iberian Peninsula.

If as a consequence of such agreements promoted illegally and unconstitutionally by the United States, any government in that country uses those bases, as was done by Reagan during the dirty war, and Bush at the time of the Iraq war, to provoke an armed conflict between two sister nations, this would be a big tragedy. Venezuela and Colombia were born together in the history of the Americas, after the battles of Boyacá and Carabobo, under the leadership of Simon Bolivar. The Yankee forces could promote a dirty war as they did in Nicaragua, and even recruit soldiers of foreign nationalities trained by them and attack any country, but the combatant, brave and patriotic people of Colombia would hardly let itself be dragged into a war against a brother people like the Venezuelan.

The imperialists would be making a mistake if they equally underestimate the other Latin American peoples. None of them would agree with the presence of Yankee military bases; none of them will stop expressing its solidarity with any Latin American people that is been attacked by the imperialism.

Martí admired Bolivar very much, and he was not wrong when he said: "And that is how Bolivar is in the sky of America: vigilant and frowning...still wearing his campaign boots; because what he did not do, remains to be done still today: because Bolivar still has things to do in the Americas."

Fidel Castro Ruz  
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