

THE IMMORTAL IDEAS OF MARTÍ

Just a few days ago a friend sent me the text of a statement made by Gallup, the famous U.S. pollster. I started to leaf through the material with the natural suspicion about the untrue and hypocritical information that is usually used against our homeland.

It was a poll about education and it included Cuba which tends to be ignored. The situation was being analyzed in four regions of the world: Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America. In some aspects, several countries in the Caribbean were included.

First question: Are the children in your country treated with dignity and respect, or not? Positive response: Asia 73%; Europe 67%; Africa 60%; Latin America 41%. If the Caribbean countries are included, Gallup states that in Haiti only 13% of people responded affirmatively to this question.

Second question: Do most children in your country have the opportunity to learn and grow every day, or not? In Asia, 75% answered yes; in Europe, 74%; in Africa, 60%; in Latin America, 56%. Many of the countries in the region remained below 50%.

Third question: Is education in this country accessible to anybody who wants to study, regardless of their economic situation, or not? The answers reveal a painful situation in many of the nations of Latin America, and the best answers are in the English-speaking Caribbean.

I mean no offense to any of the countries I have mentioned, but it would be pointless to write these lines without indicating the place occupied in the poll by Cuba –a country so slandered. It was in first place among all the countries of the world. To the first question, 93% of those polled answered yes; to the second, 96%, and to the third, 98%. As it is well known, Cubans usually answer any question with absolute honesty.

Another particularly striking point is that in Venezuela, the answer to the first and second questions was yes, 70% and 80% respectively. This is a country that is carrying forward a great education program eradicating illiteracy and promoting education at all levels; their process began a few short years ago. For this reason, it took the second place in the region.

To the third question, 82% answered yes, and this corresponded to the third place in Latin America and the Caribbean, bested by Trinidad and Tobago which held the second place with 86%.

In major nations of Latin America such as Argentina, Mexico, Brazil and Chile, the answers were yes to the question by 57%, 56%, 52% and 43% of the polled, respectively. Better results than these were held by the Dominican Republic, Panama, Uruguay, Belize and Bolivia with 76%, 73%, 70%, 66% and 65%. Paraguay and Haiti were among the lowest, at 17%.

Cuba is cooperating free of charge with these two and many other sister countries in the hemisphere, both in education and healthcare, placing special emphasis on the training of medical personnel. Thus, Cuba modestly carries out its Marti-inspired duty: "Homeland is humanity!" as our National Hero proclaimed.

On May 19 we commemorated the 113rd anniversary of his death which took place in Dos Rios in the year 1895. As everyone knows, the military intervention of the United States thwarted the independence of our homeland. Countless patriots had perished in the struggle during almost 30 years.

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The power to the north had always been hostile to our struggle, since a long time before it had targeted our country with the 'Manifest Destiny' to make it part of its territory in its quest for expansion.

At a given point, the decline of the Spanish Empire, over which the sun never set, facilitated the blow to smash Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam given by the new imperial power. It sought excuses, it used deceit and lies, and recognized that to all intents and purposes the Cuban people were free and independent, and with this it sought the backing of its valiant combatants to support the interventionist war.

In that final struggle, the Spanish displayed the customary bravery of their soldiers and the stupidity of their government. Cervera's squadron was annihilated, ship by ship, by the American warships in the mouth of the Bay of Santiago de Cuba, as we have explained on other occasions, practically without being able to fire one shot. The great hoax occurred later when once the people were unarmed, they forced the Platt Amendment on Cuba accompanied with one-sided economic contracts; the country, destroyed and blood-drained, inexorably became property of the United States.

That is the real story.

What has been happening in recent years? They are going mad in the face of the staunch resistance of our people and its modest advance towards a fairer world despite the demise of the socialist bloc and the USSR.

Radio Marti, Television Marti and other sophisticated and aggressive media insult the name of our Apostle of Independence. They are trying with these to humiliate the Cuban people and destroy its resistance.

A flood of speeches and lies are being waged against Cuba. McCain, Bush's candidate to the presidency of the empire, speaks; Bush himself speaks. Against whom? Against Marti. On whose behalf? Marti's.

They refer to atrocious tortures, something that has never happened in our country, and even the least informed Cuban knows that. And who is speaking about torture? McCain, the candidate, and George W. Bush, the President.

What is the declaration of the candidate?

"I would like to thank my two dear friends in Congress, Lincoln and Mario Diaz-Balart, who are great defenders of the Cuban people's liberty. They are men of honor and integrity. I respect and admire them a lot. They are the best congressmen with whom I have been able to work and whom I have known..."

"[My friends,] today, on Cuba's Independence Day, we have occasion to celebrate the rich cultural heritage and deep-rooted traditions of the Cuban people..."

"Those inspired freedom fighters who secured Cuba's independence over 100 years ago could hardly know that their descendants would be engaged in a struggle for freedom and democracy a century later..."

"One day, Cuba will be an important ally in advancing democracy throughout our hemisphere..."

"Yet tyranny will not forever endure, and as President, I will not passively await the day when the Cuban people enjoy the blessings of freedom and democracy. I will not wait..."

"My administration will press the Cuban regime to release all political prisoners unconditionally and to schedule internationally monitored elections..."

"The embargo must stay in place until these basic elements of democratic society are met..."

"We will work to prevent Venezuela and Bolivia from taking the same road to failure Castro has paved for Cuba."

McCain, in his book, Faith of My Fathers, confessed that he was among the five worst students in his West Point studies. He is just proving this. At the end of his imprisonment he showed weakness, and he also admits this. He dropped countless bombs on the Vietnamese people. How many lives and how much money did that adventure cost? The value of gold then was at 35 dollars and that war squandered 500 billion. The consequences are still being paid. Today an ounce of gold costs a thousand dollars and once again wars are squandering billions each year. New and complex problems are added to this. Where are the solutions?

What did President George W. Bush say?

"One hundred and 13 years ago this week, Cuba lost its great poet and patriot, José Martí. And 106 years ago this week, Cuba achieved the independence for which Martí gave his life....."

"Martí's warning proved truer than anyone could have imagined..."

"The regime has not attempted even cosmetic changes. For example, political dissidents continue to be harassed, detained, and beaten..."

"The world is watching the Cuban regime. If it follows its recent public gestures by opening up access to information, respecting political freedom and human rights, then it can credibly say it has delivered the beginnings of change...."

"America refuses to be deceived, and so do the Cuban people."

While the regime ... isolates itself, the Cuban people will continue to act with dignity and honor and courage..."

"This is the first Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People -- and the United States must keep observing such days until Cuba's freedom..."

"We'll continue to support the Cubans who work to make their nation democratic and prosperous and just... "

"...the United States has dramatically stepped up our efforts to promote freedom and democracy in Cuba. This includes our increased efforts to get uncensored information to the Cuban people, primarily through Radio ... Marti..."

"... I also repeat my offer to license U.S. NGOs and faith-based groups to provide computers and Internet to the Cuban people...."

"Through these measures, the United States is reaching out to the Cuban people. Yet we know that life will not fundamentally change for Cubans until their form of government changes. For those who've suffered for decades, such change may seem impossible. But the truth is it is inevitable..."

"The day will come when all political prisoners are offered unconditional release. And these developments will bring another great day -- the day when Cubans choose their own leaders by voting in free and fair elections."

"...113 years after José Martí left us, a new poet-patriot expresses the hopes of the Cuban people. Willy Chirino will perform a song that is on the Cuban people's lips and in their hearts: Nuestro día ya viene llegando."

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Not a word about the cordon of hunger and blockade set around us for decades.

Martí was a profound thinker and a straightforward anti-imperialist. In his times, no one knew so precisely about the dire consequences of the monetary agreements that the United States was trying to force on the Latin American countries, the prototype of a free trade which today has been reborn in conditions that are more unfair than ever.

"Whoever says economic union says political union. The nation that buys, commands. The nation that sells, serves. Trade must be balanced to assure freedom...Let the country desiring freedom be free in business affairs." These are principles proclaimed by Martí.

At that time, payments were made in silver or in gold. Today paper is used.

In the unfinished letter to his friend Manuel Mercado, on the eve of his death, he pointed out:

"I am in daily danger of giving my life for my country and duty, for I understand that duty and have the courage to carry it out - the duty of preventing the United States from spreading through the Antilles as Cuba gains its independence, and from overpowering with that additional strength our lands of America. All I have done so far, and all I will do, is for this purpose...It had to be in silence and sort of indirectly since the achievement of certain goals demands concealment for, if proclaimed for what they really are, obstacles so formidable would rise as to prevent their attainment."

It is not important how many times we repeat these intimate and revealing words, so marvelously put forth.

With these categorical sentences in his mind, a few hours later he took off to charge, alone, on a Spanish column. Nobody could have held him back. On the front line, on horseback, he was hit by three deadly bullets, detaining his impetuous advance.

On July 26, 2004, when Bush had already spent almost three years bombing, torturing and murdering in his absurd anti-terrorist war, with the Iraq invasion already underway, I analyzed his strange personality coming through from a study in the interesting book by Dr. Justin A. Frank, *Bush on the Couch*, which contains one of the most revealing and fundamental studies of George W. Bush's personality:

"Confabulation is a common phenomenon among drinkers, as is perseveration, which is evident in Bush's tendency to repeat key words and phrases, as if the repetition helps him remain calm and stay on track."

"...Even if we assume, moreover, that George W. Bush's drinking days are behind him, the question remains how much lasting damage may have been done before he stopped —beyond the considerable impact on his personality that we can trace to his untreated abstinence. Any comprehensive psychological or psychoanalytical study of President Bush would have to explore how much the brain and its functions are changed by more than twenty years of heavy drinking."

Neither of the two speakers on the 20th and 21st of May even mentioned the Cuban Five anti-terrorist heroes, whose information allowed to discover Posada Carriles' plans and to prevent the blowing up of planes in mid-air, with foreign visitors on board, including Americans, aimed at striking a blow at tourism. They pressured and bribed the president of Panama thus helping to free him. Santiago Alvarez moved him to Florida. I publicly denounced this almost immediately. Everything has been confirmed. Later, an enormous cache of weapons was confiscated from Santiago Alvarez himself.

They want impunity for terrorists and mercenaries. Little do they know Cuba and its people!

McCain's and Bush's crass lies are the only path that will obtain absolutely nothing from the heroic

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people which have resisted the power of the empire for almost half a century.

We want to bring this before history: the immortal ideas which Marti nurtured with his own blood shall never be betrayed!

Fidel Castro Ruz

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