

A CHALLENGE TO THE US PRESIDENT

A few days now an article that contained a number of facts related to the oil spill that occurred 105 days ago was published.

President Obama had authorized the drilling of that well because he trusted the capabilities of modern technology to produce oil -which he wanted to be available in abundance- thus relieving the United States of the dependence on the foreign supplies of such a vital product for the present civilization. The excessive consumption of oil had already led to a vigorous protest by the environmentalists.

Not even George W. Bush ever dared to take that step, given the bitter experience in Alaska with a tanker that carried the oil extracted from that area.

The accident had occurred while searching for the product that is desperately needed in the consumers' society that the newer generations inherited from the preceding ones, the only difference being that now everything moves at an unheard of speed.

Scientists and environmentalists have explained the theories related to the catastrophes that occurred during hundreds of millions of years with the so called huge bubbles of methane that caused the gigantic tsunamis that swept across much of the planet. Their winds, which reached twice the speed of sound, and their waves, which were 1 500 meters high killed 96 per cent of all living species.

They expressed their fear that in the Gulf of Mexico, which for some cosmic reason is the region of the planet where karstic rocks separate us from the enormous methane layer, the latter could be drilled, in this desperate quest for oil, with the very modern equipment used by the technology available today.

After the oil spill caused by British Petroleum, the news agencies reported as follows:

"...The [US] Federal Government has warned people to keep away from the epicenter of operations, threatening to impose a 40 000 dollar fine for every transgression and carry out arrests in case there is any felonious act.

"...The EPA [The United States Environmental Protection Agency] has officially pointed out that Platform No. 1 is releasing methane, benzene, hydrogen sulphide and other toxic gases. Workers on the ground are now using modern protection means which include state- of- the art gas masks supplied by the military."

Extremely transcendental events are becoming unusually frequent.

The first and most imminent is the risk of a nuclear war after the sinking of the sophisticated flagship 'Cheonan' which, according to the South Korean government, was torpedoed from a Soviet-made submarine -both the torpedo and the submarine were manufactured more than 50 years ago- while other sources point to a unique possible and non-detectable cause: a mine planted by the US intelligence services on the Cheonan's hull. The government of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea was soon to blame for that.

This weird occurrence was followed a few days later by the adoption of Resolution 1929 of the UN Security Council, which called for an inspection of all Iranian merchant ships to begin in no later than 90 days.

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A second event, which in part is already rendering its demolishing results, has been the progressive advance of climate change, whose impact is even worse, which led to a denunciation contained in the documentary film "Home" produced by Yann Arthus-Bertrand with the participation of the most prestigious environmentalists of the world. And now there is this oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, a few miles away from our homeland, which has given rise to all sorts of concern.

On July 20 a report by the EFE news agency referred to the statements made by the already well known Admiral Thad Allen, coordinator in charge of the oil spill cleanup in the Gulf of Mexico, who said he had authorized British Petroleum, the owner of the well and the one responsible for the spill, to continue for another 24 hours the tests to determine the soundness of the 'Macondo' structure after the installation, 10 days ago, of a new containment cap."

"According to official data, there are around 27 000 abandoned oil wells in the sea bed of the Gulf of Mexico..."

"Ninety two days after the BP platform accident, the US government main concern is that the underground structure of the well is damaged and leaking oil through the rocks and flowing in multiple end points of the seafloor"

It is the first time an official statement refers to the fear that the oil may start to emanate from the wells which are no longer productive.

Readers showing interest on the issue are now able to make a difference between the sensationalist and the scientific data. To me there is no satisfactory explanation for some facts. Why Admiral Allen stated that "the main concern of the US Government is that the underground structure of the well is damaged and leaking oil through the rocks and flowing in multiple end points of the seafloor? Why did BP state it can not be blamed for the crude that gushed 15 kilometers far from the blown out well?

We will have to wait another 15 days for a relief well to be drilled, following a trajectory that is almost in parallel with the one that caused the spill, at a distance of no less than 5 meters one from the other, according to the Cuban group that analyzes the problem. Meanwhile we, as well educated children, should keep on waiting.

If there is so much confidence in the well in parallel, why didn't they resort to that measure before? What shall we do next if that action fails, as it has happened with all others?

In a recent exchange I held with a person too well informed about the details of the accident, given his country's interests, I learned that because of the characteristics and the situation around the well, in that case there is no risk of a methane emanation there.

No news on the subject was published on July 23.

On the 24th, the news agency DPA stated that a "prominent US scientist had accused British Petroleum of bribing the experts that investigate the oil slick in the Gulf of Mexico to delay the publication of data, as was denounced by the scientist to the BBC network", but it establishes no connection between that immorality and any possible damage in the structure of the sea floor, the oil emanations and the unusual levels of methane.

On July 26, London's most important media -BBC, Sunday Times, Sunday Telegraph, among others- reported that the "Board of Directors" of British Petroleum would "discuss today the timing of Chief Executive Hayward exit "over his handling of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill."

Notimex and El Universal of Mexico published that British Petroleum "...has not decided on any change among its executives", and adds that "a meeting of the Board of Directors is due to take place this afternoon."

On the 27th, news agencies reported that the British Petroleum Chief Executive had been fired.

July 28: Twelve wire services and 14 countries, among them the US and several of its most important allies, made some embarrassing statements over the publication by Wikileaks of secret documents about the war in Afghanistan. Although Barack Obama admitted to be 'concerned' about the leak, [...] he pointed out that the information is old and contained nothing new."

That was a cynical statement.

"The founder of Wikileaks, Julian Assange, said that the documents are an evidence of the war crimes committed by the US troops."

And they evidenced them so accurately that they have shaken the very foundations of American secrecy. Such documents refer to the "deaths of civilians, which were never accounted for publicly". This has created conflicts among the parties involved in the commission of such atrocities.

As for the risks of methane emanations from the wells that are not in production, there is a complete silence.

July 29: AFP reports the unimaginable. Osama Bin Laden used to be a man of the US intelligence services: "...Osama Bin Laden appears in the secret reports published by Wikileaks as an agent that is active, present and praised by his men in the Afghan-Pakistani border."

It was known that, during the Afghan war against the Soviet occupation, Osama collaborated with the United States, but the whole world thought that in his struggle against the foreign invasion he had accepted the support offered by the United States and NATO out of necessity and that, after that country was liberated, he refused foreign interference and created Al Qaeda to combat the United States.

Many countries, Cuba among them, condemn his terrorist methods which do not exclude the death of countless innocent victims.

Just imagine how surprised the world's public opinion was when it learned that Al Qaeda had been a creation of the government of that country.

It was the justification used to launch the war on the Taliban in Afghanistan and one of the motives, among others, for the invasion and occupation of Iraq by the US troops later on. These have been two countries where thousands of American youths have been killed and a great number of them have been maimed. More than 150 000 American soldiers -joined by the members of the units of the belligerent NATO and other allies such as Australia and South Korea- have been indefinitely deployed in these two countries.

On July 29, the picture of a 22 year-old American youth, Bradley Manning, an intelligence analyst who leaked 240 000 classified documents to the website Wikileaks, was published. He has not pleaded guilty or innocent. However, nobody will be able to lay a finger on him. The Wikileaks members have sworn they will spread the truth throughout the world.

On July 30, the Brazilian theologian Frei Betto published an article entitled "Grito de la Tierra, Clamor de los Pueblos" (Cry of the Earth; Clamor of the Peoples).

Two paragraphs summarize the essence of its content: "The Greeks of ancient times had already noticed it: Gaia, the Earth, is a living organism. We all come from it, after 13 700 million years of evolution. However, during the last 200 years, we have not learned how to take care of it; we turned it into a merchandise in exchange for which we hope to get maximum profits."

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"Today, all forms of life in the planet, including the human species -two thirds of the world population survive under the poverty line- and the Earth itself are threatened. To prevent the anticipation of the Apocalypse it is necessary to question the myths of modern times -such as market, development, nation States- all of them based on an instrumental rationale."

On that same day, AFP published the following: "The People's Republic of China disapproves of the unilateral sanctions adopted by the European Union against Iran, said today Juang Yu, the spokesperson of the Chinese chancellery."

Likewise, Russia strongly protested against the condemnations that resulted from the sanctions adopted by that region that is in close alliance with the United States.

On July 30, AFP reported that the Minister of Defense of Israel stated the following: "The sanctions that the United Nations adopted against Iran [...] will not force that country to suspend its uranium enrichment activities aimed at manufacturing an atom bomb."

On August 1st, AFP reported that "a top military official of the Guardians of the Revolution warned the United States today against a future attack against Iran."

"Israel did not rule out the possibility of a military action against Iran aimed at halting its nuclear program."

"The international community headed by Washington recently increased its pressure on Iran, which is accused of trying to equip itself with a nuclear weapon by means of a covert civil nuclear program."

"Javani's assertions preceded a statement by the Chief of the US Joint Chiefs of Staffs, Michael Mullen, who reaffirmed this Sunday that the US has a plan to attack Iran to prevent it from getting nuclear weapons."

On August 2, a news published by AFP, whose content was similar to the ones published by all other news agencies, read as follows:

"I have to travel to New York on September to attend the UN General Assembly. I am ready to sit down with Obama, face to face, man to man, to talk freely about world issues in front of the media and find the best solution", said Ahmadinejad during a speech broadcast by state television."

"But President Ahmadinejad warned that the dialogue should be based on mutual respect."

"If they think they can swing around a wand and tell us that we should accept everything they say, this will never happen", he added. Western powers 'do not understand that things have changed in the world', he said."

"You are supporting a country that has hundreds of atomic bombs; but you say you want to stop Iran, which could eventually have them some day..."

The Iranians have declared that they would shoot one hundred missiles against each of the US and Israel ships that blockade Iran as soon as they start inspecting an Iranian merchant ship.

Thus, by the time Obama gives the order to comply with the Security Council Resolution, he would also be ordering the sinking of all US warships in that area.

No other US President has been faced with such a dramatic decision. He should have foreseen that.

On this occasion, for the first time in my life, I address myself to Barack Obama, the President of the

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United States:

You should know that it is in your power to offer humankind the only real possibility of peace. Only once will you be able to make use of your prerogatives to give the order to open fire.

It is quite possible that later on, after this traumatic experience, the solutions found will not lead us again to this apocalyptical situation. Every citizen in your country, even your worst left wing or right wing adversaries, will most certainly appreciate it, as will the people of the United States, which is in no way to blame for the situation created.

I am asking you to deign to listen to this appeal I am making to you on behalf of the Cuban people.

I understand that a quick response is not to be expected; nor will you ever give one. Think it over and consult your specialists; ask your most powerful international allies and adversaries for their opinion about the subject.

I am not interested in honors or glory. Just do it!

The world could truly get rid of both nuclear and conventional weapons.

The worst variant of all will be a nuclear war, which is already virtually inevitable.

PREVENT IT!

Fidel Castro Ruz
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