

Two hungry wolves and little red riding hood

A basic idea had occupied my mind since my days as a utopian socialist. I had begun from scratch, from the simple notions of good and evil that society inculcates into every newborn, replete with instincts and lacking in the values that parents, particularly mothers, have imbued children within all societies and throughout history.

Lacking a political precursor, chance events were to play a constant and decisive role in my life. I began forging an ideology, on my own, the very moment I had a real opportunity to observe and reflect on the world around me, as a child, teenager and young student. Education became, for me, the instrument par excellence to bring about change in the time it was my lot to live in, an instrument on which the very survival of our fragile species would depend.

With many years of experience under my belt, what I think today about this sensitive issue is totally congruous with that idea. I need not excuse myself, as some choose to do, for speaking the truth, no matter how ugly it is.

Speaking at public squares over two thousand years ago, Demosthenes, a renowned Greek orator, fervently defended a society in which 85 percent of its denizens were slaves or individuals whose unequal status and lack of rights were considered a natural condition. The philosophers of the time shared this viewpoint. This is how the word democracy was born. No one could expect more from them at the time. Today, when a wealth of knowledge is at our disposal, humanity's productive forces have proliferated incalculably and the mass media deploys messages aimed at millions of people. The immense majority, tired of traditional politics, wants to know nothing about it. Public figures are devoid of credibility, at a time the people, facing dangers that threaten their survival, need them most.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Francis Fukuyama, a U.S. citizen of Japanese origin, born and educated in the United States, where he received his university degree, wrote his book *The End of History and the Last Man*, a work many doubtless have read, for it was amply publicized by the leaders of the empire. He had become a neoconservative hawk and a promoter of the one-idea system.

According to him, only one class, the U.S. middle class, would remain. All others, I surmise, would be condemned to vagrancy. Fukuyama was a staunch supporter of the invasion of Iraq, as was Vice-President Cheney and his entourage. For him, history comes to an end in what Marx saw as the "end of human prehistory".

At the opening ceremony of the EU-Latin America and the Caribbean Summit held in Peru this past 15th of May, essential parts of the speeches delivered in English, German and other European languages were not translated by television broadcasters into Spanish or Portuguese, as though the native, black, mixed blood and white people of Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and other countries —over 550 million people, most of them poor—spoke English, German or another language foreign to them.

Now, however, the great meeting in Lima and its final declaration are referred to with praise. There, among other things, we were told that the weapons a country acquires under the threat of extermination by the Empire, as Cuba has been for many years and Venezuela is today, are no different, from an ethical point of view, from those employed by repressive forces to oppress the people and defend the interests of the oligarchy, an ally of that same empire. A nation cannot become yet another commodity, nor can we place the present and future of new generations at risk.

The 4th Fleet, of course, was not referred to as an interventionist and dangerous force in the speeches

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delivered and televised during the meeting. One of the Latin American countries represented there has just concluded joint manoeuvres with a U.S. Nimitz-type aircraft carrier fitted with all manner of weapons of mass destruction.

Not many years ago, that country's repressive forces disappeared, tortured and murdered dozens of thousands of people. The victims' children were expropriated by the defenders of the properties of the wealthy. Their main military leaders collaborated with the empire in its dirty wars. They had faith in that alliance. Why fall into the same trap once again? Though it is easy to infer what country I am alluding to, I don't wish to mention it directly, so as not to offend a sister nation.

The Europe that called the tune at that meeting is the same Europe that supported the war on Serbia, the United States' appropriation of Iraqi oil, the religious conflicts in the Near and Middle East, the imprisonments and secret landings, and the horrendous torture and assassination plans hatched by Bush.

This Europe applies the same extra-territorial laws the United States does, laws which, encroaching on the sovereignty of their own territories, intensify the blockade on Cuba and hinder the supply of technologies, components and even medications to our country. Their advertising mechanisms are linked to the empire's powerful mass media.

What I said at the first Europe-Latin America Meeting held nine years ago in Rio de Janeiro has lost none of its relevance today. Nothing has changed since then, save for objective conditions, which make today's atrocious forms of capitalist exploitation even less sustainable.

The host of the meeting almost drove the European crazy when, at the closing ceremony, it referred to some of the points advanced by Cuba:

1. Cancelling Latin America's and the Caribbean's foreign debt.
2. Investing 10 percent of military spending each year on Third World countries.
3. Putting an end to the generous agricultural subsidies which compete with our countries' agricultural production.
4. Allocating the portion of the 0.7 % of the GDP agreed to which is due to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Observing the look on the faces of the European leaders, and the glances they exchanged, I could tell they bit their lips for a few seconds. But, why upset oneself? In Spain, it would be even easier to deliver emotive speeches and marvellous closing declarations. Much work had gone into this. The banquet was next. This table would show no signs of a food crisis. There would be no shortage of proteins and liqueurs. Only Bush was missing, Bush who was working tirelessly for peace in the Middle East, as is customary for him. He was excused. Long live the market!

The prevailing spirit of the rich representatives of Europe was a sense of ethnic and political superiority. All were of a bourgeois capitalist and consumerist mindset, and they spoke or applauded on its behalf. Many were accompanied by the entrepreneurs who are the pillars and the foundation of their "democratic systems, which guarantee freedom and human rights". One must be an expert in the world of clouds to understand them.

Currently, the United States and Europe compete among and between each other for oil, essential raw materials and markets. In addition to this, all of this is cloaked under the pretext of the struggle against terrorism and organized crime which they themselves have spawned with their voracious and insatiable consumer societies. Two hungry wolves dressed up as kind-hearted grannies and one little red riding hood.

Fidel Castro Ruz

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