

## The US healthcare reform

Barack Obama is a zealous believer in the imperialist capitalist system imposed by the United States to the world. "God bless the United States," is the final phrase of his speeches.

Some events hurt the sensitivity of the world public which sympathized with the victory of the African-American over the far-right candidate in that country. On the basis of one of the deepest economic crises the world has known, and on the pain brought on by the young Americans who lost their lives or were injured or maimed in the genocidal wars of conquest unleashed by his predecessor, he won with the vote of the majority of the 50% of Americans who cast a vote in that democratic nation.

Out of an elementary sense of ethic, Obama should have refrained from accepting the Nobel Peace Prize when he had already decided on sending forty thousand troops to an absurd war in the heart of Asia.

The warmongering policy and the plundering of natural resources, as well as the unequal terms of trade of the current administration toward the poor countries of the Third World are no different from those of his predecessors, most of them from the far-right, --with few exceptions--throughout the past century.

The antidemocratic document imposed at the Copenhagen Summit on the international community, which had given credit to his promise to cooperate in the struggle against climate change, was another one of those events that disappointed many people around the world. The United States, the largest producer of greenhouse-gas emissions, was not willing to make the necessary sacrifices despite the flattering previous words of its president.

The list of contradictions would be endless between the ideas defended by the Cuban nation for five decades with great sacrifices and the selfish policies of that colossal empire.

Still, we don't feel any animosity toward Obama, much less toward the American people. We feel that the Healthcare Reform has been a significant battle and a success of his administration. However, it is really amazing that 234 years after the Declaration of Independence proclaimed in Philadelphia in the year 1776, which drew inspiration from the ideas of the great French encyclopedists, the government of that country has approved medical care for the overwhelming majority of its citizens, something that Cuba accomplished for its entire population half a century ago despite the cruel and inhuman blockade imposed --and still in force-- by the mightiest country that has ever existed. In the past, it was only after almost a century of independence and following a bloody war, that Abraham Lincoln could obtain the legal emancipation of the slaves.

On the other hand, I can't help but think of a world where over one-third of the population have no access to medical care or the basic medicines required to ensure health. And this situation will be aggravated as climate change, and water and food shortage worsen in a globalized world where the population grows, the forests disappear, the arable land decreases, the air is more polluted, and the human species inhabiting it --which emerged less than 200 thousand years back, that is, 3.5 billion years after the first forms of life on the planet--is running the real risk of annihilation.

Even conceding that the Health Reform comes as a success to the Obama administration, the current President of the United States cannot ignore that climate change poses a threat to health, and worse still, to the very existence of every nation in the world, as the rise in temperature --beyond critical limits which are already in sight--melts down the water of the glaciers, and the tens of millions of cubic meters contained in the enormous ice caps of the Antarctic, Greenland and Siberia melt down within a few decades leaving under water every port facility in the world and lands where a large part of the

world population lives, works and eats today.

Obama, the leaders of the wealthy nations and their allies, as well as their scientists and sophisticated research centers are aware of this; they cannot ignore it.

I understand the satisfaction expressed in the presidential speech and his recognition of the contribution made by the members of Congress and the administration to make possible the miracle of the Health Reform, which strengthens the government's position vis-à-vis political lobbyists and mercenaries that curtail the authority of the administration. It would be worse if those responsible for tortures, murders on contract and genocide were in charge of the US government again. As a man unquestionably smart and sufficiently well informed, Obama knows there is no exaggeration in my words. I hope the foolish remarks he sometimes makes about Cuba do not cloud his mind.

In the aftermath of his success in this battle for the right of every American to healthcare, 12 million immigrants, most of them Latin American, Haitian and from other Caribbean countries are demanding the legalization of their presence in the United States where they do the hardest work and the American society cannot do without them, but where they are arrested, separated from their families and sent back to their countries.

The overwhelming majority migrated to America escaping the tyrannies imposed by the United States on the countries of the region and the dire poverty these have endured as a result of the plundering of their resources and the unequal terms of trade. Their family remittances make up a high percentage of the GDP of these countries' economies. Now, they expect an act of basic justice. If the Cubans have been singled out with an Adjustment Act which promotes brain drain and the enticement of their educated youths, why are such brutal methods applied to the illegal immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean?

The devastating earthquake that battered Haiti –the poorest nation in Latin America, hammered by an unprecedented natural catastrophe that took the lives of more than 200 thousand people—and the terrible economic damage that a similar phenomenon brought on Chile are eloquent proof of the dangers looming over the so-called civilization and of the need for dramatic measures that can give the human species the hope to survive.

The Cold War failed to benefit the people of the world. The huge economic, technological and scientific power of the United States would be unable to survive the tragedy hovering on the planet. President Obama should look up in a computer the relevant data and talk to his most outstanding scientists; then, he will see how far his country is of being the model it promotes for humanity.

As an African-American, he suffered the offense of discrimination, according to his own narrative in the book "Dreams From My Father." He was acquainted with the poverty of tens of millions of Americans; educated in that country and as a successful professional he has enjoyed the privileges of the rich middle class and ended up idealizing the social system where the economic crisis, the lives of Americans uselessly sacrificed and his undisputable political talent gave him political victory.

Yet, to the most intractable right-wing Obama is an extremist; and they threaten to continue fighting in the Senate to neutralize the effects of the Health Reform and to openly boycott it in several States of the Union by declaring it an unconstitutional law.

The problems of our times are much more serious.

The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other international financial institutions strictly controlled by the United States –the creators of tax havens and the culprits of the financial chaos in the planet-- allow the bailout of the big American banks by their government every time one of the frequent and increasingly intense crises of the system hits that country.

The United States Federal Reserve capriciously mints the hard currency that pays for the wars of conquest, the profits of the Military Industrial Complex, the military bases distributed around the world, and the large investments used by the transnational companies to control the economy of many countries worldwide. Nixon unilaterally suspended the gold standard while the vaults of the New York banks keep seven thousand tons of gold, little over 25% of the world reserves in that metal, a figure that at the end of World War II was in excess of 80%. It is said that the US public debt exceeds 10 trillion dollars, which is more than 70% of its GDP and stands like a burden for the new generations. This is said when the truth is that the world economy is the one paying that debt with the huge amounts of US dollars spent in purchasing goods and services, the same dollars that the large transnationals of that country use to buy a considerable portion of the world riches and to sustain that nation's consumer society.

Anyone understands that such a system is unsustainable and also why the wealthiest sectors in the United States and their allies in the world advocate a system that can only be sustained with ignorance, deception and the conditioned reflexes created in the world public through the monopoly over the mass media, including the main networks of the Internet.

Today, the structure is crumbling with the accelerated advance of climate change and its disastrous consequences which are placing humanity face to face with an exceptional dilemma.

The wars between powers seem no longer a possible solution to the great contradictions as they were until the second half of the 20th century. Still, they have had such an impact on the elements that make human survival possible, that they could prematurely put an end to the existence of the current intelligent species that populates our planet.

A few days ago I expressed my firm belief that, in light of the scientific knowledge prevailing today, the human beings will have to solve their problems on planet Earth since they will never be able to cover the distance separating the Sun from its closest star located four light-years away, -one light-year equals 187,500 miles per second, as our high school students know—provided a planet similar to our beautiful Earth existed around that sun.

The United States invests huge amounts of money to confirm the presence of water on planet Mars, or if there was or is any elementary form of life there. No one knows what for, if not out of mere scientific curiosity. Millions of species are disappearing from our planet at a faster pace and its enormous water sources are constantly being poisoned.

The new laws of science -following Einstein's formulas on energy and matter, and the big-bang theory as the origin of the millions of constellations and infinite stars and/or other theories—have given rise to deep changes in such basic concepts as space and time, which draw the attention of and are subjected to analysis by theologians. One of them, our Brazilian friend Friar Betto, deals with the subject in his book "The Work of the Artist: A Holistic Vision of Universe," presented in the recent International Book Fair held in Havana.

The advancement of science in the past one hundred years has had an impact on the traditional approaches that prevailed through thousands of years in social sciences and even in Philosophy and Theology.

The most honest thinkers are paying significant attention to the new knowledge but we know absolutely nothing of how President Obama feels about the compatibility of consumer societies with science.

In the meantime, it is worthwhile meditating about these subjects now and then; this will certainly not prevent human beings from dreaming and from taking things with due serenity and steely nerves, but it is the duty of at least those who chose to become politicians and who sustain the noble and unwavering objective of a human society where justice and solidarity prevail.

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**Fidel Castro Ruz**

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