

NOBODY WANTS TO TAKE THE BULL BY THE HORNS

On March 28, less than two months ago, when Bush proclaimed his diabolical idea of producing fuel from food, after a meeting with the most important U.S. automobile manufacturers, I wrote my first reflection.

The head of the empire was bragging that the United States was now the first world producer of ethanol, using corn as raw material. Hundreds of factories were being built or enlarged in the United States just for that purpose.

During those days, the industrialized and rich nations were already toying with the same idea of using all kinds of cereals and oil seeds, including sunflower and soy which are excellent sources of proteins and oils. That's why I chose to title that reflection: "More than 3 billion people in the world are being condemned to a premature death from hunger and thirst."

The dangers for the environment and for the human species were a topic that I had been meditating on for years. What I never imagined was the imminence of the danger. We as yet were not aware of the new scientific information about the celerity of climatic changes and their immediate consequences.

On April 3, after Bush's visit to Brazil, I wrote my reflections about "The internationalization of genocide."

At the same time, I warned that the deadly and sophisticated weapons that were being produced in the United States and in other countries could annihilate the life of the human species in a matter of days.

To give humanity a respite and an opportunity to science and to the dubious good sense of the decision-makers, it is not necessary to take food away from two-thirds of the inhabitants of the planet.

We have supplied information about the savings that could be made simply by replacing incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent ones, using approximate calculations. They are numbers followed by 11 and 12 zeros. The first corresponds to hundreds of billions of dollars saved in fuel each year, and the second to trillions of dollars in necessary investments to produce that electricity by merely changing light bulbs, meaning less than 10 percent of the total expenses and a considerable saving of time.

With complete clarity, we have expressed that CO2 emissions, besides other pollutant gases, have been leading us quickly towards a rapid and inexorable climatic change.

It was not easy to deal with these topics because of their dramatic and almost fatal content.

The fourth reflection was titled: "It is imperative to immediately have an energy revolution." Proof of the waste of energy in the United States and of the inequality of its distribution in the world is that in the year 2005, there were less than 15 automobiles for each thousand people in China; there were 514 in Europe and 940 in the United States.

The last of these countries, one of the richest territories in hydrocarbons, today suffers from a large deficit of oil and gas. According to Bush, these fuels must be extracted from foods, which are needed for the more and more hungry bellies of the poor of this Earth.

On May Day 2006, I ended my speech to the people with the following words:

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"If the efforts being made by Cuba today were imitated by all the other countries in the world, the following would happen:

"1st The proved and potential hydrocarbon reserves would last twice as long.

"2nd The pollution unleashed on the environment by these hydrocarbons would be halved.

"3rd The world economy would have a break, since the enormous volume of transportation means and electrical appliances should be recycled.

"4th A fifteen-year moratorium on the construction of new nuclear power plants could be declared."

Changing light bulbs was the first thing we did in Cuba, and we have cooperated with various Caribbean nations to do the same. In Venezuela, the government has replaced 53 million incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent in more than 95% of the homes receiving electrical power. All the other measures to save energy are being resolutely carried out.

Everything I am saying has been proven.

Why is it that we just hear rumors without the leadership of industrialized countries openly committing to an energy revolution, which implies changes in concepts and hopes about growth and consumerism that have contaminated quite a few poor nations?

Could it be that there is some other way of confronting the extremely serious dangers threatening us all?

Nobody wants to take the bull by the horns.

Fidel Castro Ruz

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5: 10 pm

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