

The anguish of developed capitalism

Last Monday the 9th, like all the rest, was a marvellous day of contradictions for developed capitalism in the midst of its incurable crisis.

That day, the British news agency Reuters, not suspected of being anti-capitalist, printed: "Latin America will grow substantially less this year, hit by a strong deceleration or even by recessions in some of its main economies, after years of bonanzas distinguished by rises in the prices of raw materials.

"If indeed the IDB isn't making its own projections, Lora, an economist at the Industrial Development Bank, pointed out that 'now nobody is talking about the fact that the region is going to grow more than one percent (this year), even if one were to review the latest projections there are drops in practically all the great economies of Latin America. If one looks at the projections, one understands why all the great economies are crashing', said Lora.

"Deeply affected by the global financial crisis that has reduced the demand for its exports, the region will not be seeing any recovery soon, he pointed out.

"The crisis is not going to be something that lasts one or two years, for some Latin American countries it could last much longer', said Lora quoting a survey taken by the IDB among opinion leaders which showed that a great majority predicts stagnation or a drop in the per capita income in the countries of the region during the next four years".

That same day, the Spanish agency EFE informed:

"The production of cocaine has spread to several Latin American countries and has unleashed a tidal wave of violence and population shifts causing some to call for an approach of war against drug trafficking, the British daily The Guardian writes today.

"That industry which generates benefits of billions of dollars has forced many farmers to abandon their lands, has given way to wars between gangs and has corrupted state institutions, the newspaper states.

In Mexico alone, 6,000 people died last year because of that kind of activity and the violence is migrating northwards, towards the United States itself.

At the same time, a new drug trafficking highway has grown up so rapidly between South America and West Africa that the corridor which occupies ten degrees of latitude, linking the two continents, has been baptized 'Interstate 10'.

"Almost everyone interviewed by the newspaper agrees that the insatiable demand for cocaine in Europe and North America has frustrated efforts, led by the U.S., to strangle the offer and has caused great harm to Latin America.

"We believe that the war on drugs has been a failure because none of the objectives have been met', declared Cesar Gaviria the former president of Colombia and the co-president of the Latin American Commission on Drugs and Democracy.

"According to Gaviria, 'the prohibitionist policies based on eradication, prohibition and criminalization have not yielded the expected results. Today we are farther away than ever from the goal of wiping out drugs'.

“The strategy of the United States in Colombia and Peru consisting of fighting against the raw material has not worked, Col. René Sanabria, the Bolivian anti-narcotics police chief has acknowledged.

“A report by the Brookings Institution of the United States and an independent study by the Harvard economist Jeffrey Miron, supported by 500 of his colleagues, have added their voices to those who are calling for a change of approach”.

AFP Agency publishes:

“President Felipe Calderon of Mexico called on the United States this Monday to assume ‘with facts’ its share of the responsibility in the fight on drugs, whose activities concentrate especially on the shared border.

“‘On behalf of the hundreds of Mexican policemen who have died, it is fundamental that the United States assumes with facts part of the responsibility which corresponds to it in this fight against drug trafficking’, said Calderon at a press conference with President Nicolas Sarkozy of France who is on an official visit to Mexico.

“Moreover, Calderon asked Washington to share information about the activities of Mexican drug traffickers in the United States, the largest consumer market for cocaine in the world, chiefly supplied by cartels belonging to their southern neighbour.

“If the intelligence units or the special police or military agencies of the U.S. possess information about Mexican criminals in the United States, we want that information’, Calderon told journalists after meeting with Sarkozy in the National Palace.

“The Mexican government has unleashed a federal operation involving 36,000 soldiers in order to fight the drug cartels, embarked on a war because of the transporting of drugs to the U.S. which has left some 5,300 dead in 2008”.

That same day, Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, declared that she was a firm supporter of increasing up to 15% the amount of ethanol in fuel to reduce the country’s dependence on oil imports.

It is well known that ethanol in the United States is produced from the grain that holds a very important place in human development.

These very recent news items published by the agencies last Monday reveal the complete credibility of Atilio Boron’s conclusions that were summarized by Granma that very same day.

Fidel Castro Ruz

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