

NATO'S INEVITABLE WAR (Part Two)

When at just 27 years old Gaddafi, colonel in the Libyan army, inspired by his Egyptian colleague Abdel Nasser, overthrew King Idris I in 1969, he applied important revolutionary measures such as agrarian reform and the nationalization of oil. The growing incomes were dedicated to economic and social development, particularly education and health services for the reduced Libyan population living in the immense desert territory with very little available farm land.

Beneath that desert was an immense deep ocean of fossil waters. I had the impression, when I learned about an experimental farming area, that this would be more beneficial in the future than oil.

Religion, preached with the fervour that characterizes the Muslim peoples, was helping in part to balance the strong tribal tendency that still survives in that Arab country.

The Libyan revolutionaries drew up and applied their own ideas in regards to the legal and political institutions which Cuba, as a norm, respected.

We refrained completely from giving opinions about the conceptions of the Libyan leadership.

We see clearly that the basic concern of the United States and NATO is not Libya, but the revolutionary wave being unleashed in the Arab world, something they would like to prevent at any cost.

It is an irrefutable fact that relations between the US and its NATO allies with Libya in recent years were excellent, before the rebellions loomed up in Egypt and Tunisia.

At senior level meetings between Libya and the NATO leaders, nobody had any problems with Gaddafi. The country was a sure supply source of top-quality oil, gas and even potassium. The problems arising between them during the first decades had been overcome.

Strategic sectors such as oil production and distribution opened their doors to foreign investment.

Privatization reached many public corporations. The World Monetary Fund exercised its beatific role in the orchestration of these operations.

As logic would have it, Aznar piled lavish praise on Gaddafi and on the heels of Blair, Berlusconi, Sarkozy, Zapatero and even my friend the King of Spain, they paraded under the mocking gaze of the Libyan leader. They were happy.

Although it may appear that I am being facetious, that's not the case; I merely wonder why they now want to invade Libya and haul Gaddafi up in front of the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

They are accusing him, 24 hours a day, of shooting against unarmed demonstrating citizens. Why don't they explain to the world that the weapons, and especially all the sophisticated repressive equipment Libya possesses, were provided by the United States, Great Britain and the other illustrious hosts of Gaddafi?

I am against the cynicism and the lies that they are now using in an attempt to justify the invasion and occupation of Libya.

The last time I visited Gaddafi was in May of 2001, 15 years after Reagan attacked his rather modest

residence where he took me to show me how it had been left. It received a direct air hit and was considerably destroyed; his little three-year-old daughter died in the attack: she was murdered by Ronald Reagan. There was no prior agreement by NATO, the Human Rights Council, not even the Security Council.

My earlier visit had taken place in 1977, eight years after the start of the Libyan revolutionary process. I visited Tripoli; I participated in the Libyan Peoples' Congress in Sebha; I toured the first experimental farms using the waters extracted from the immense sea of fossil water; I saw Benghazi and I received a warm reception. This was a legendary country that had been the stage for historic battles in the last world war. At the time the population barely reached six million, nor were they aware of the enormous volume of light oil and fossil water. By then the former Portuguese African colonies had been liberated.

In Angola, we had fought for 15 years against the mercenary gangs organized by the United States on tribal bases, the Mobutu government, and the well-armed and trained racist apartheid army. That army, following instructions of the United States, as we know today, invaded Angola to prevent its independence in 1975, reaching the outskirts of Luanda with their motorized troops. Several Cuban instructors died in that brutal invasion. With the utmost urgency we sent resources.

Ejected from the country by internationalist Cuban troops and the Angolans, right up to the border with Namibia that was occupied by South Africa, for 13 years the racists received the mission of liquidating the revolutionary process in Angola.

With the backing of the United States and Israel they developed nuclear weapons. They already had that weapon when Cuban and Angolan troops defeated their land and air forces in Cuito Cuanavale and, confronting the risks, using conventional tactics and weapons, advanced to the Namibian border where the apartheid troops wanted to put up resistance. Twice in their history our troops have been under the risk of being attacked by these kinds of weapons: in October 1962 and in southern Angola, but on that second occasion, not even using the weapons that South Africa possessed would they have been able to prevent the defeat that marked the end of the odious system. The events occurred under the Ronald Reagan government in the United States and that of Pieter Botha in South Africa.

No one speaks about that, and about the hundreds of thousands of lives that were the toll of the imperialist exploit.

I regret having to remember these facts when another great risk hovers over the Arab peoples, because they do not resign themselves to continue being the victims of pillage and oppression.

The revolution in the Arab world, so feared by the US and NATO, is the revolution of those who lack all their rights in the face of those who wield all the privileges, thus called the most profound revolution since the one which burst on Europe in 1789 with the storming of the Bastille.

Not even Louis XIV, when he proclaimed that he was the State, had the privileges that King Abdul of Saudi Arabia possesses, and much less than the immense wealth that lies beneath the surface of this practically desert-covered country where Yankee transnationals determine extraction and thus, the price of oil in the world.

Starting with the crisis in Libya, extractions in Saudi Arabia reached a million barrels a day, at a minimal cost and, as a result, for just this reason, the incomes of that country and those controlling it are reaching a billion dollars a day.

Nobody imagines, of course, that the Saudi people are swimming in money. It is heartrending to read about the living conditions of many of the construction workers and those in other sectors, who are forced to work 13 and 14 hour days for miserable salaries.

Alarmed by the revolutionary wave that is shaking the prevailing system of plunder, after what has

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happened in Egypt and Tunisia with the workers, but also because of the unemployed youth in Jordan, the occupied territories in Palestine, Yemen and even Bahrain and the Arab Emirates with their higher incomes, the Saudi upper hierarchy is under the impact of these events.

Unlike other times, today the Arab peoples receive almost instant information about what is happening, even if it is being extraordinarily manipulated.

The worst thing for the status quo of the privileged sectors is that the stubborn events are coinciding with a considerable increase in the price of foods and the devastating effect of climate change, while the US, the biggest producer of corn in the world, uses up 40 percent of that subsidized product and a large part of soy to produce biofuel to feed automobiles. Surely Lester Brown, the American ecologist who is the best-informed on agricultural products, can give us an idea about the current food situation.

Bolivarian President Hugo Chávez is making a brave attempt to seek a solution without NATO intervention in Libya. His possibilities of reaching his objective would be increased if he would attain the feat of creating a broad movement of opinion before and not after the intervention happens, and the peoples don't see a repetition in other countries of the atrocious Iraqi experience.

End of the Reflection.

Fidel Castro Ruz

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