

This week in Cuba / November 24 to 30, 2019



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By Charles McKelvey

(1) Slanderous campaign against Cuba with respect to supposed human rights violations

The case of the mercenary counterrevolutionary José Daniel Ferrer, accused by various Cuban citizens of being a violent thug, continued to be in the news this week in Cuba. In last week's edition of This Week in Cuba, we noted that Ferrer is one of several salaried agents of the U.S. embassy in Havana, assigned the task of disrupting the public order; and that he has been detained pending trial with respect to allegations by a Cuban citizen of kidnapping and physical violence

Cuban news media reported this week that the European Parliament passed a resolution, approved with a 56% majority, asking for Ferrer's immediate release. The resolution was introduced by right-wing forces that previously have been involved in interventionist declarations against Venezuela. At the same time, the resolution was strongly denounced by a delegate to the European Parliament from Ireland, who criticized the imperialist interventionism of the United States in Latin America and praised her own government for maintaining friendly relations with what she described as the dignified and fraternal nation of Cuba.

Meanwhile, Cuban television news showed a video of Ferrer being visited in prison by his wife. Contrary to stories circulating internationally, he appears to be in good health with no visible signs of abuse by Cuban prison guards. A segment of one video showed him banging his head with force against a table, and declaring seconds later that he had been attacked by the guards. The segment, described by one Cuban journalist as a mediocre comedy, provoked indignant condemnation of Ferrer in Cuba.

Articles in the Cuban daily newspaper Granma on Wednesday and Thursday reported that in a television show in the United States, Ferrer himself acknowledged that he received \$50,000 from various sources, including the Cuban-American National Foundation, which receives funding from the government of the United States.

The November 28 article by Cuban journalists Enrique Moreno and Dilbert Reyes notes that the U.S. slanderous campaign against Cuba relies upon the control of the media of communication by international corporations as well as diffusion by the social media. The follow-up November 29 article by Reyes notes that the Cuban television report was not widely disseminated internationally by the mainstream media. Consistent with these interpretations, a Reuters report mentions that Cuba denies a violation of human rights with respect to Ferrer, but frames the story in a way that minimizes the credibility of the denial by the Cuban revolutionary government.

Distortions through omissions, false statements, and false presuppositions by the major media of communication have been a consistent historic and contemporary pattern with respect to Latin American and Third World revolutions. They function to give legitimacy to U.S. imperialist policies, which are designed to provide the United States with access to raw materials, cheap labor, and markets.

(2) A Cuban viewpoint: Aggressive imperialism is a reaction to U.S. commercial decline

An article in the November 27 issue of Granma by Raúl Antonio Capote notes that the recent aggressive imperialism of the United States with respect to Latin America is a reaction to its relative commercial decline and to the emergence of the greater economic independence of Latin America. Capote notes that economic projections indicate that China will be the number one world power by 2030, and Russia will not be far behind. He maintains that these two powers and their allies will become an influential alternative front to U.S. power. As of 2010, such allies included Latin American countries that possessed an integrationist orientation in opposition to U.S. imperialism, including Cuba, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, and Bolivia.

In response to this threat to its economic dominance, the United States began in 2010 to direct a project to restore the Latin American Right to power. The multifaceted strategy to restore neoliberalism included efforts to deny necessary economic goods, parliamentary coups d'état, judicial processes against leftist leaders, the organization of violent gangs, deceptive ideological manipulations, the enlistment of the police and the military, and in one case, a Trojan Horse. Under the impact of the policy, progressive presidents fell in Paraguay, Honduras, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, and most recently, Bolivia. In these advances of the Right, Capote blames in part the Latin American progressive governments, who made significant advances in elevating the standard of living of the masses and in expanding education, health, housing, and nutrition, but who invested insufficient resources in the political education of the people. Parenthetically, to provide a more complete picture of the period, we should note that the

previous progressive advances were politically limited in the cases of Paraguay and Honduras, that the progressives have returned in Argentina and have captured an additional country in Mexico, and that there is significant popular opposition and rebellion to the illegitimate governments of the Right in Brazil, Ecuador, and Bolivia.

Capote maintains that the restoration plan of the Right is condemned to failure, for a fundamental reason: The Right does not have much to offer. It seeks to return to neocolonial neoliberalism, which has been rejected by the peoples of Latin America. The source of the problem is that the plan is conceived and directed by elements of the extreme Right in the United States, who possess a primitive ignorance. He writes: "The empire is now a crouched animal, launching jabs to the left and to the right, its machinery of destruction and subversion at full speed, and this machinery is directed by a band of cave dwellers, of dinosaurs anchored in the epoch of the gun boats, who have learned only from the comic books and the television series and not from history books. This carnivorous governing group is profoundly ignorant; its vision of the world has been constructed in very closed circles of fundamentalist opinion who do not know well even their own country."

With respect to those in the United States who oppose this ignorant group, Capote writes, "Those less bad in the northern nation intend to stop this group, not because of deep disagreements with their objectives, but because they see the group as a real danger to the interests of the United States itself and to the future of the empire." The opposition to the Trumpist clique, he maintains, has not attained the necessary unity, and its strategy of impeachment is a desperate measure that could lead to disaster, taking into account the internal fractures of the country.

For the empire, Capote concludes, the root of the problem is that it is confronting the vengeance of the peoples, whose history of struggle for liberation cannot be erased with money and arms.

If Capote is right, as I think he is, the duty of the Left of the United States is to attain the necessary coherence to take the nation away from its imperialist orientation, be it a soft or hard version of imperialism, and to lead the people toward cooperation with the anti-imperialist movements of Latin America, enabling attention to the common problems that all of humanity confronts.

(3) National day against violence toward women and girls.

Cuba observed the national day against violence toward women and girls. Non-governmental organizations, including the Federation of Cuban Women, the National Center for Sex Education, Multidisciplinary Cuban Society for Studies of Sexuality, announced a sixteen-day program of consciousness raising workshops in schools and work centers, presentations by research panels, fairs, concerts, and other activities.

(4) Student march to commemorate assassination of eight medical students in 1871

The Federation of University Students of the University of Havana organized a march in commemoration of the execution of eight medical students, falsely accused of profaning the tomb of a Spanish official, on November 27, 1871. Conducted during the first Cuban war of independence, the assassinations were intended to instill fear in the population, but it had the effect of stimulating further support for independence. The student march of remembrance is held every year.



Radio Habana Cuba