

Cubazuela: Internal War Debriefing

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Joaquín Villalobos – a Salvadorian ex-guerrilla, at the time the leader of the People’s Revolutionary Army and now an international expert on security and conflict resolution issues – has been the most insistent exponent that Venezuela’s political, social and economic drama will not be resolved if Cuba is not explicitly taken into account in the negotiations.



Image from "Distasteful Collection of Tattoo Designs from the Land of Oil", Colectivo Cicatriz Venezuela.

In Villalobos’s own words, “The negotiations have failed because they assume the conflict is between Venezuelans, when in reality it is about a country intervened by Cuba.” In a recent and relatively unnoticed article, he describes a book, *The Consensual Invasion*, containing a collective research piece of investigative journalism showing hair-raising data and information on the depth and extent of the Cuban invasion of Venezuela. If you have the stomach to digest so much indignity, baseness and abject delivery of the Venezuelan Chavismo leadership to Castro's Cuba, I suggest reading it.

But beyond how our country has become a sort of continental enclave of the mother island, a sort of *Cubazuela*, it is interesting to study how the torture and elimination of the Cuban internal dissent have been deeply extended to their colony on the mainland. A hard to read but extremely illustrative book is *Sweet Cuban Warriors* by Norberto Fuentes, a communist loyal to the revolution until he was declared an "enemy of the State," and his ordeal began therefrom fortunately not ending at the firing squad. The Venezuelan military dissidence was the first to receive the treatment of torture, disappearance, and confinement that is now applied against the factors of internal discord within Chavismo. I copy verbatim a detailed report Ramón Muchacho showed on his webpage La Ceiba (08-24-2020), which illustrates in detail to what extent the practices against “critical Chavismo” have a distinct and clear Cuban flavor:

"Friends, last week a series of events took place that caught my attention, and I began to go over the headlines of the last few days:

"On Wednesday Maduro lashed out at the leftwing 'critical voices' who are always questioning and complaining. That same day we saw the Tupamaros crying because Maduro took away their party. The Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV) screamed because the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (SEBIN) showed up at their headquarters in Puerto Cabello, and the Motherland for All (PPT) political party because they were censored on the TV news channel Globovisión.

"On Thursday, Giovanni Urbaneja, a former regional deputy of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), was detained in Anzoátegui State for 'defaming the investiture and public institutions, including president Nicolás Maduro.' That same day, Maduro's Justice Supreme Tribunal (TSJ) officially took away the PPT, while the PCV declared itself 'totally in disagreement with Maduro's policies.' Much more seriously, that same day they found 'Sancocho Power,' a representative of collectives such as El Otro Beta, La Pandilla Ros and Es el Barrio, dead in his apartment in Sabana Grande who 'died in strange circumstances.'

"On Friday, the Special Action Forces (FAES) broke into the headquarters of the alternative TV channel GuacamayaTV in Cabimas and murdered the 'popular anchor' Andrés Eloy Nieves Zacarías and the outlet owner's son, Víctor Torres. That same day Esteban Trapiello made a statement on Twitter that he would never attempt against his own life.

"In the early hours of Sunday morning, the municipal authorities of Maracaibo raided the restaurant 'Muerde la Carne' associated to Fidel Madroñero (PSUV, VTV), taking 35 detainees and 15 vehicles. The restaurant had been 'untouchable' until now. Also, yesterday (Sunday), 'mango head' (Tupamaro) denounced death threats.

"All of the above occurs while Nicmer Evans (from the Marea Socialista party) and José Pinto (Tupamaro) are still in prison, and Carlos Lanz is missing.

"Maduro seems to have unleashed his fury against critical Chavismo. He only accepts total submission.

"Apparently, many of these characters, who helped Chávez and Maduro to dismantle the rule of law and democratic institutions, believed they were doing it only for the opposition and not for themselves. They come late to discover reality."

One should add to this bill list of internal feuds the death due to lack of medical attention of Nelson Martínez and the judicial harassment against Luis Fuenmayor, in addition to the attempt to undermine Diosdado Cabello's influence in the Bolivarian military force (FANB) during his coronavirus convalescence. It is irrelevant if some people are happy or not about these things. In my case, I think we should not allow ourselves to be taken over by revenge but by justice. But even if some may think of revenge, the damage Chavismo has done to Venezuela and its people is of such depth that there is no appropriate punishment for those who have perpetrated it.

Unlike the collaborationist regime imposed by the Nazis in Vichy France, the Venezuelan regime has been voluntarily colonized by the Cubans. In practice this means that Villalobos is right, and that the Venezuelan crisis can hardly be resolved without taking into account, through negotiations or in any other scheme, the real owners of the circus. This must also be considered in order to eventually advance along any electoral path, because under no circumstances are Cubans going to allow the Venezuelan regime to be displaced from power by elections if their survival is not guaranteed, especially the oil supply. Cubans are masters at holding elections without any choice, and obviously that same advice will be transmitted to their colony on the mainland.

Nothing written above means that there can be no negotiation that includes Cuba, simply that it is necessary to be alert and aware of who we are dealing with. Fortunately, it seems that Juan Guaidó's government is clear on the matter.