

## The envy of Goebbels

Yesterday I was listening to the Round Table TV program when it analyzed, among other topics, Operation Peter Pan, one of the most repugnant acts of moral aggression carried out against our country. Patria potestas is an extremely sensitive issue. That was a repugnant low trick. One of the novels by Mikhail Sholokhov that I read some years later included a reference to that kind of slander which had already been used against the Revolution of October, 1917.

The mastermind behind that operation against Cuba was Monsignor Walsh, an American Catholic priest who worked under the orders of the bishop of Miami.

The operation began in 1960. As is known, our Revolution had not placed any obstacles whatsoever to prevent those who wanted to leave the country from doing so. The work of the Revolution had to be voluntarily made by a free people. The imperialist response, among many other serious aggressions, was Operation Peter Pan.

When Taladrid was making his comments on that event, he mentioned the name of Ángel Fernández Valera, a professor of Economics. I remembered that when I was on my last senior high school year at Colegio de Belén, a lay professor used to teach us one of the subjects: Political Economy. Obviously, this was not about a Marxism-Leninism course, which was the ideological issue resorted to 18 years later in order to expel Cuba from the OAS. Those were simple and quite elemental classes on bourgeois political economy. What else were we, the white pupils who studied there? The professor who taught those classes two or three times a week was very punctual and never missed a class.

I was surprised by what I heard during the Round Table program. I wonder if that man was the same professor I had met. I called Taladrid and asked for more information. I checked that with him, because I knew that man had been a professor at Colegio de Belén. Luis Báez equally asserts that I had met with that professor somewhere in Havana in 1959 and that I had criticized his attitude, but I did not remember that detail.

Some days ago, Walsh was decorated post mortem for having worked the “feat” of Operation Peter Pan. A few years before he had declared that he had received some telephone calls for him to start with the operation and that he had made some arrangements with the CIA.

By the end of May, Álvaro F. Fernández, the son of Fernández Varela, declared to the digital magazine Progreso Semanal that “...a few years before he died in Miami, my father brought us together in front of my mother, my sister María, her husband and myself, and told us that he had been one of the persons responsible for the drafting of the false Law that gave rise to the hysteria that surrounded the ‘elimination of the patria potestas’. That is why I know, without a shadow of a doubt, that Operation Peter Pan was a sinister and immoral maneuver designed and longed for by the CIA before the Bay of Pigs invasion...”

A CIA agent brought the false bill to Havana from Miami. Ángel Fernández Varela himself told to the magazine Contrapunto that he had worked for the CIA between 1959 and 1968.

Each of the 14 000 children involved in that tragedy followed their own traumatic path. They were mostly from middle class families. They were not the children of landowners or the wealthy bourgeois; there was no reason why they had to be dragged into that tragedy. By that time there was a Yankee embassy that granted the permits to enter the United States. The Peter Pan children application forms were sent to Cuba in packages and afterwards they were filled up here with the names of the children.

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None of them required to be saved. Throughout many years the Revolution has allowed the exit of around one million persons. Most of them have left for the United States, the richest country of all, which incentivates the brain drain and the stealing of cultivated persons and skilled labor force.

The United States would not be in the position to do the same with any other country of Latin America. Who else could have been benefited from that diabolical clandestine operation?

María de los Ángeles Torres, an associate professor of Political Sciences at the DePaul University in Chicago, was a Peter Pan child. Although she is not a revolutionary, she called for the CIA to declassify around 1 500 documents about Operation Peter Pan. The CIA has refused to declassify them under the pretext of national security. This whole issue smells so bad that some are reluctant to unveil it.

Despite that refusal, professor Torres asked and succeeded in that the Presidential Library Lyndon B. Johnson could grant her access to a document issued by the US government in which it refused a proposal made by the High Commissioner of the United Nations whereby the United Nations would cover the transportation costs for the parents of the children who had been sent to the United States. That material was published by the press of that country more than 15 years ago.

Operation Peter Pan was a cynical publicity maneuver that would have been the envy of Goebbels himself, the Nazi minister of Propaganda.

**Fidel Castro Ruz**

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