

Two Earthquakes

A strong 8.9 on the scale earthquake shook Japan today. The most worrying is that early news reports were talking about thousands dead and missing, figures really unheard of in a developed country where all constructions are quake-proof. They were even talking about a nuclear reactor that was out of control. Hours later, it was informed that four nuclear plants close to the most affected area were under control. There was also information about a tsunami 10 metres high that had the entire Pacific area on tidal wave alert.

The earthquake originated at a depth of 24.4 kilometres and 100 kilometres from the coast. Had it happened at a lesser depth and distance, the consequences would have been more serious.

There was a shift in the earth's axis. It was the third phenomenon of great intensity occurring in less than two years: Haiti, Chile and Japan. Man cannot be blamed for such tragedies. Every country, surely, will do everything it can to help the hard-working people who were the first to suffer an unnecessary and inhuman nuclear attack.

According to Spain's Official College of Geologists, the energy released by the earthquake is equivalent to 200 million tons of dynamite.

The most recent information, from AFP, states that the Japanese electric Company, Tokyo Electric Power, informed that according to government instructions, they had released some of the vapour containing radioactive substances...

"We are following the situation. Until the present there is no problem..."

"They also indicated that there were breakdowns related to the cooling of three reactors in a second nearby plant, Fukushima 2.

"The government ordered the evacuation of surrounding areas for a radius of 10 km in the case of the first plant and 3 km in the case of the second one."

Another earthquake, a political one and potentially more serious, is the one taking place around Libya, and it affects every country, one way or the other.

The drama that country is living through is in full swing and its outcome is still uncertain.

A great hubbub broke out yesterday in the US Senate when James Clapper, Director of National Intelligence, stated before the Armed Services Committee that he didn't believe Gaddafi had any intention of leaving; because of evidence at their disposal, it seems that he is "in this for the long haul".

He added that Gaddafi has two brigades that "are very loyal".

He pointed out that the air attacks carried out by the army loyal to Gaddafi "mainly" caused damages on buildings and infrastructure rather than civilian casualties.

Lt. Gen. Ronald Burgess, Director of the Defence Intelligence Agency, at the same hearing before the Senate, said that it seemed Gaddafi had staying power unless some other dynamic changes at this time.

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"The opportunity the rebels had at the start of the popular uprising has 'begun to change', he assured.

I have no doubt whatsoever that Gaddafi and the Libyan leaders committed an error in trusting Bush and NATO, as it can be inferred from what I wrote in my Reflection on the 9th.

Nor do I doubt the intentions of the United States and NATO to intervene militarily in Libya and abort the revolutionary wave shaking the Arab world.

Countries that are opposing NATO intervention and defending the idea of a political solution without foreign intervention harbour the conviction that the Libyan patriots shall defend their Homeland until their dying breath.

Fidel Castro Ruz

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