

CANNON FODDER FOR THE MARKET

Perhaps some governments are unaware of the concrete facts, and so for that reason Raúl's message setting Cuba's position seemed to us to be very timely. I shall be generous in the aspects that cannot be dealt with in a brief and precise official statement.

The government of Georgia would never have launched its armed forces against the capital of the Autonomous Republic of South Ossetia in the dawn of August 8th, engaged in what it called the re-establishing of constitutional order, without previous coordination with Bush who, last month in Bucharest, committed to support President Saakashvili for Georgia's admission to NATO; that is like plunging a sharpened dagger deep into Russia's heart. Many European states that are members of that military organization are seriously concerned about the irresponsible manipulation of the nationalities issue, fraught with potential conflict, which within Great Britain itself might result in the disintegration of the United Kingdom. This is how Yugoslavia was dismantled: Tito's efforts to avoid it proved useless after his death.

What need was there to light the powder keg of the Caucasus? How often is the jug taken to the well before it shatters? Russia continues to be a strong nuclear power. It has thousands of such weapons. On the other hand, I must recall that the Western economy illegally siphoned out more than 500 billion dollars from that country. If Russia today is no longer a Communist threat and it no longer has more than 400 nuclear launching-pads directly aimed at Europe's military and strategic targets since they were dismantled after the demise of the USSR, why do they seem determined to surround it with a nuclear shield? The old continent also needs peace.

The Russian troops stationed in South Ossetia were sent there on an internationally recognized peace mission: they were not shooting wantonly.

Why did Georgia choose August 8th, at the time the Olympic Games were being opened in Beijing, to occupy Tskhinvali, the capital of the Autonomous Republic? On that day, four billion people on the entire planet were watching on television the marvelous spectacle with which China was opening those games. Only the American people could not enjoy a live broadcast of the exciting festival of friendship among all the people of the world that was staged there. The monopoly over the broadcasting rights had been bought by a television channel that had paid 900 million dollars and wanted to earn maximum commercial dividends for every minute of broadcasting time. The rival corporations got even by covering news of the war in the Caucasus since this was nobody's exclusive. The dangers of a serious conflict were threatening the world.

Bush did enjoy the spectacle as an official guest. On Sunday the 10th, two and a half days later, he could still be seen waving flags, pretending to be a champion of peace and preparing to delight in the victories of the excellent American athletes, those which his eyes, accustomed to besmirching everything, were looking upon as the symbol of the power and superiority of his empire. In his moments of leisure, he held long conversations with his officials in Washington, threatened Russia and encouraged the humiliating speeches against that country given by the representative of the United States in the UN Security Council.

Some of the countries that had made up the socialist bloc or been part of the USSR itself are today acting as United States protectorates. Their governments, driven by a reckless hatred for Russia, --such as the case of Poland and the Czech Republic-- aligned themselves in positions of absolute support for Bush and for the surprise attack on South Ossetia by Saakashvili, an adventurer with a bizarre background who was born under Socialism in Tbilisi, the capital of the country, graduated as a lawyer

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from a Kiev university and took postgraduate courses in Strasburg, New York and Washington. He was a practicing lawyer in New York City. He comes off as a Westernized Georgian, greedy and opportunistic. He returned to his country supported by the Yankees and then went fishing in the tempestuous river of the USSR disintegration. He was elected President of Georgia in January 2004.

Following the United States and Great Britain, that is the country with most soldiers in the Iraqi war adventure; and not precisely out of internationalist sentiment. When Cuba, throughout almost two decades, sent hundreds of thousands of combatants to fight for independence and against colonialism and apartheid in Africa, they were not seeking fuel, raw materials or capital gains: they were volunteers. Thus our steel-like principles were forged. What are Georgian soldiers doing in Iraq if not supporting a war which has cost that people hundreds of thousands of lives and millions of victims? What ideals are they defending there? It is only natural that people from South Ossetia do not wish to be sent as soldiers to fight in Iraq or in other parts of the planet at the behest of imperialism.

Saakashvili, on his own, would never have jump to the adventure of sending the Georgian army into South Ossetia, where he would be clashing with Russian troops stationed there as a peace force. A nuclear war is not something to fool around with; and providing cannon fodder to the market cannot be rewarded.

This reflection was already drafted when Bush spoke at 5:30 p.m. Cuban time. But none of what he said changes what we are analyzing here: if only the U.S. government media war is today even much more intense. It is the same prefabricated maneuver that fools no-one.

The Russians have very clearly stated that the withdrawal of the invaders to their positions prior to the conflict is the only decent solution possible. Let's hope that the Olympic Games can continue without interruption by a very serious crisis. The women's volleyball match with a good U.S. team was great and baseball has yet to begin.

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