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Latin American Revolutions Under Attack

The World is Turning, Don't Let it Turn Away

by ANDRE VLTCHEK

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Do not take the Latin American revolutions for granted.

They inspired the entire Planet. They brought hope to every corner of our scarred Earth. But now they are themselves in need of our support.

If left alone, they would thrive for decades and centuries. But the Empire is once again on the offensive. It is shaking with fury. It is ready to invade, to smash, burn to ashes all the hopes, all that which had been achieved.

Don't believe in the "common wisdom" which proclaims that the rulers of the world simply "closed their eyes" more than a decade ago; that George W. Bush was "too busy" ravishing the Middle East, therefore "allowing" most of the Latin American countries to "sneak away" from the iron grip of the Empire.

Such "analyses" are as patronizing as they are false. The Empire never sleeps! What Latin America now has was built on its daring, its sweat, its genius and its blood – it fought against the Empire, courageously, for decades, losing its best sons and daughters. It fought for freedom, for justice and socialism.

The Empire was not “looking the other way”. It was looking straight south, in fury, but for some time it was too confused, too astounded, too shocked at what it was witnessing. Its “slaves” had risen and taken power back into their own hands. They showed to the entire world what freedom really is.

For some time, the Empire was paralyzed by rage and unable to act.

The Empire’s undeniable property, Latin America, inhabited by “un-people” born only in order to supply cheap labor and raw materials to the rich part of the world, was suddenly, proudly and publicly, breaking its shackles, declaring itself free, demanding respect. Its natural resources were now used to feed its own people, to build social housing, create public transportation systems, construct hospitals, schools and public parks.

But after the first wave of panic, the Empire began to do what it does the best – it began the killings.

It attempted to overthrow Venezuelan government in 2002, but it failed. The Venezuelan people rose, and so did the Venezuelan military, defending then President Hugo Chavez. The Empire tried again and again, and it is trying until now. Trying and failing!

“We are at war”, I was told by one of the editors of Caracas-based television network, TeleSUR, for which I made several documentary films. “We are literally working under the barrel of cannon”.

Ms. Tamara Pearson, an Australian revolutionary journalist and activist, who recently moved from Venezuela to Ecuador, explained the difficult situation in Venezuela, a country that is under constant attack from both the US, and the local comprador elites:

“People are suffering a lot. Basic food prices are high, much medicine is unavailable, and various services aren’t working. On one level, people are used to this – the business owners would cause shortages and blame the government before each of the many elections. But usually it’s less intense and lasts just a few months. But this has been going on and getting worse, since Chavez died – over two years now. There is no doubt that the US, and more so, Venezuelan and Colombian elites and business owners are a huge or even the main factor...”

All of revolutionary Latin America is “screaming”.

As I described in two of my recent books, “Exposing Lies Of The Empire” and “Fighting Against Western Imperialism”, the Empire is using similar destabilization strategy against all countries that are resisting its deadly embrace.

Its propaganda is mighty and omnipresent. CNN and FOX TV are beamed into almost all major hotels and airports of Latin America, even in some revolutionary countries like Ecuador. Almost all major newspapers of the continent, including those in Venezuela, Ecuador, Chile and

Argentina, are controlled by the right wing business elites. Almost all of the foreign news coverage comes from European and North American sources, making the Latin American public totally confused about Islam, China, Russia, South Africa, Iran, even about their own neighbors.

The local elites continue to serve foreign interests, their loyalties firmly with North America and Europe.

Every left wing Latin American government has been facing bizarre protests and subversion actions conducted by the elites. Destabilization tactics have been clearly designed in far away capitals. They were mass-produced and therefore almost identical to those the West has been using against China, Russia, South Africa, and other “rebellious” nations.

Propaganda, disinformation and spreading of confusion have been some of the mightiest tools of the fascist right wing.

“Economic uncertainty” is an extremely powerful weapon. It was used first in Chile, in the 1973 coup against socialist President Salvador Allende. Pro-Western Chilean elites and businessmen created food shortages, and then blamed it on the socialist government, using El Mercurio and other daily newspapers as their propaganda tools.

Peter Koenig, former World Bank economist and now prominent dissident and critic of the world neoliberal regime, wrote for this essay:

“Today Madame Bachelet, the socialist President of Chile has a hard time fighting against the Mercurio inspired Chilean oligarchs. They will not let go. Recently they invited the World Bank to assess the school reform package proposed by Bachelet, basically to return universities to the public sector. Of course, the ‘upper class’ of Chileans knew that the World Bank would come up with nothing less than predicting an economic disaster if the reform is approved. As a result, Bachelet made concessions – which on the other hand are not accepted by professors and teachers. It’s the first step towards chaos – and chaos is what the empire attempts to implant in every country where they strive for ‘regime change’.”

But one of the “dirtiest” of their weapons is the accusation of corruption. Corrupt pro-Western politicians and individuals who misused tens, even hundreds of millions of dollars of the peoples money and destroyed the economies of their countries by taking unserviceable loans that kept disappearing into their deep pockets, are now pointing their soiled fingers at relatively clean governments, in countries like Chile and Argentina. Everything in “Southern Cone” and in Brazil is now under scrutiny.

Peter Koenig (who co-authored a book “The World Order and Revolution!: Essays from the Resistance” with leading Canadian international lawyer Christopher Black and me) shows how important is, for the Empire, destabilization of Brazil, one of the key members of BRICS:

“Brazil being a member of the BRICS is particularly in the crosshairs of the empire – as the BRICS have to be destabilized, divided – they are becoming an economic threat to Washington.

Brazil is key for the non-Asian part of the BRICS. A fall of Brazil would be a major blow to the cohesion of the BRICS.”

There are totally different standards for pro-Western fascist politicians and for those from the Left. The Left can get away with nothing, while the Right has been getting away literally with mass murder and with the disappearance of tens of billions of dollars.

It is, of course, the common strategy in all the client states of the West. For instance, one of the most corrupt countries on earth, Indonesia, tolerates absolute sleaze and graft from former generals, but when progressive socialist Muslim leader, Abdurrahman Wahid, became the President, he was smeared and removed in a short time, on “corruption” charges.

After centuries of the Monroe Doctrine, after mass murder committed in “Latin” America first by Europeans and then by North Americans and their rich local butlers, it will take long decades to fully eradicate the corruption, because corruption comes with the moral collapse of the colonial powers and the local elites. Financial greed is only its byproduct.

The great pre-colonial cultures of what are now Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia did not have corruption. Corruption was injected by Western colonialism.

And now, corruption under left wing, revolutionary governments still exists, since it is difficult to root out all the rats at once, but it is incomparably smaller than under the previous fascist right wing cliques!

The rich in Latin America are heartless, servile (to the Empire) and greedy in the extreme. Latin America has still the most unequal distribution of wealth on earth. True, it is much richer (and even its poor are richer, with some exceptions of Central America, Peru or Paraguay) than Africa or even in Southeast Asia, but this cannot be used as an excuse.

Even the most progressive socialist governments now in power would ever dare to touch, to slap the private enterprises too hard. From this angle, China with its central planning and controlled economy is much more socialist than Ecuador or Bolivia.

A few days ago, as I was flying from Ecuador to Peru, I read that the number of multimillionaires in Latin America was actually increasing, and so is the social gap between the rich and the rest of the societies. The article was using some anecdotal evidence, saying that, for instance, in Chile alone, now, more Porsche sports cars are sold than in entirety of Latin America few years ago. As if confirming it, I noticed a Porsche auto dealership next to my hotel in Asuncion, the capital of the second poorest country in South America. I asked for numbers, but Porsche manager refused to supply them, still proudly claiming that his company was “doing very well”.

So what do they – the elites” – really want? They have money, plenty of money. They have luxury cars, estates in their own countries, and condominiums abroad. What more?

As in Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia or Kenya, and all over the West, they want power. They want to feel unique. They want to be admired.

The Socialist governments allow them to stay rich. But they force them to share their wealth and above all, they shame them. They are also trying to minimize the gap – through education, free medical care and countless social projects.

That is, of course, unacceptable to the elites. They want it all, as they always had it. And to have it all, they are ready to murder, to side with the darkest foreign interests, even to commit treason.

Increasingly, the interests of the local elites are very closely linked to foreign interests – those of the Empire and those of the private sector.

As I was told in Ecuador, by Ms. Paola Pabón, Assembly Member representing Pichincha area:

“Behind the involvement of the US, are some ex-bankers such as Isaiah brothers, who lost power here, escaped courts and went to live in the United States, but there are also huge economic powers such as Chevron. It means that there are not only political interests of the US, but also private, economic ones.”

Predominantly, the local elites are using their countries as milking cows, with very little or zero interest in the well being of their people.

That is why their protests against Latin American revolutions are thoroughly hypocritical. They are not fighting for improvements in their countries, but for their own, selfish personal interests. Those shouts and the pathetic hunger strikes of the “opposition” in Venezuela may appear patriotic, but only thanks to propaganda abilities to the Western mass media.

The elites would do anything to make all revolutions, all over Latin America, fail and collapse. They are even spending their own money to make it happen.

They know that if they manage to remove progressive forces from power, they could rule once again, totally unopposed, as their counterparts do in all other client states of the West – in the Middle East, Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and Oceania.

The temptation is tremendous. Most of the elites in Latin America still remember well, how it feels, how it tastes – to control their countries unopposed, and with full support from the West.

Eduardo Galeano, the great Uruguayan writer and revolutionary thinker, once told me: “I keep repeating to all those new leaders of Latin America: “Comrades, do not play with poor people’s hopes! Hope is all they have.”

It appears that hope has finally been taken seriously, in Bolivia, Uruguay, Venezuela, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Nicaragua and elsewhere.

It was also taken seriously in Honduras, but hope was crushed by the US-orchestrated coup. In Paraguay, under a semi-progressive priest who preached liberation theology, hope was taken semi-seriously, but even that was too much in the country that had been ruled, for decades, by fascist cliques. In 2002, a constitutional coup followed by an appalling massacre of predominantly indigenous people, and fascism returned.

After these two setbacks, Latin America shook, but kept moving forward. Hugo Chavez died, or was murdered by the North, depending which theory you subscribe to. His demise was a tremendous blow to the entire continent, but still, the continent kept moving. “Here, nobody surrenders!” Chavez shouted, dying, but proud.

“President Correa of Ecuador is one of very few leaders of the “original project””, said Paola Pabón. “Lula in Brazil will not be able to stand for reelection, anymore, mainly due to corruption scandals. Mujica is not in power, anymore, and Cristina Fernandez will be retiring. Evo Morales does not have regional influence, and even Maduro does not have... For this reason, Ecuador is so important, strategically. If ‘they’ hit us, if there is a successful coup, it would be tremendous victory for them, to destroy a President with regional importance; who speaks for the region... and also, because Ecuador is one country where the government actually functions well.”

Walter Bustos, who used to work for this government, is alarmed by developments in Ecuador and the entirety of Latin America. Both he and Paula Pabón realize how fragile the Latin American revolutions are. While driving with me to an indigenous area of Riobamba, Walter lamented:

“In case there is a military coup in Ecuador, the difference between here and Venezuela would be enormous: while in Venezuela, Chavez incorporated the military into his revolution, in case of citizens revolution in Ecuador, we have no security; we cannot count on support of the military in case there is some armed, political or economic attack against us.”

Hugo Chavez was not only a great revolutionary, but also a tremendous strategist. He knew that any great revolution has to be fought, won, and then defended. Winning the battle is never enough. One has to consolidate forces, and uphold the victory. Chavez was first thinker, and then soldier.

Correa, Morales, Fernandez go forward, brave, proud but unprotected. Under their governments, the lives of ordinary people improve tremendously. That is what matters to them. They are decent and honest beings, unwilling to dirty themselves with intrigues, speculations and conspiracy theories.

But their great success will not gain them any recognition from the Empire, or from their own elites. The success of socialism is the worst nightmare for rulers of the world and their local butlers.

This is how President Salvador Allende died in 1973. He dismissed all rumors, and then all warnings that the coup was coming. “I am not going to arrest people just because of some suspicion that they may do something”, he used to say. After the coup took place, he died proudly, a true hero, committing suicide by marching towards the helicopter gunships and fighter jets that were bombarding the Presidential Palace of La Moneda. But he was not the only victim. As a result of the coup, thousands of Chilean people died, and tens of thousands were savagely tortured and raped. Chile did not die, but went to horrific coma, from which it only recently manages to recover.

Henry Kissinger summarized the moral corruption/collapse of his country’s regime when he uttered his memorable phrase:

“I don’t see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its people. The issues are much too important for the Chilean voters to be left to decide for themselves.”

Despite his great intentions, President Salvador Allende failed his people. He underestimated the bestiality of the Empire, and the result were millions of broken lives.

Since then, the Empire’s selfishness and brutality only evolved. The more successful leaders like Correa become, the more real is the danger of a coup – of a devastating, deadly attack from the North, and subversion from within.

The fragility of Latin American revolutions is obvious. The elites cannot be trusted. They showed on many occasions how far they are willing to go, committing treason, collaborating with the West against their own nations: in Chile, Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Honduras, Venezuela, Paraguay and Bolivia, to name just a few cases.

Appeasing both the elites and the Empire, while fighting for social justice and true independence, is impossible. The elites want to have full control of their countries, while the Empire demands full submission. No compromise could be reached. The history speaks clearly about that. And the Empire demonstrated on countless occasions that Latin American democracy would be respected only if the people vote the way that suits Washington.

Latin America has to learn how to defend itself, for the sake of its people.

Its closer and closer cooperation with China and Russia is essential. Coherent regional defense agreement should follow.

The next few years will be crucial. The revolutions have to be institutionalized; they cannot depend only on charisma of its leaders.

Constant sabotages and coup attempts, like those in Venezuela, should not be tolerated. They lead to chaos and to uncertainty. They break countries economically and socially.

It is clear what the Empire and its servants are doing: they are trying to push Latin American revolutionary countries against the wall, as they pushed, in the past, North Korea. They are trying to make them “react”, so they could say: “You see, this is true socialism, this defensive, hermitic and paranoid system.”

The path will not be easy. It will be dangerous and long.

Latin America can only survive through international cooperation and solidarity. It would also have to fight legally, at home and abroad. Those who are committing treason and those who are interrupting development of the country should face justice.

The left wing governments that are ruling South American countries won democratic elections: much more democratic than those in Europe and the United States. If the individuals and groups act against the expressed will of their own people, they should be taken to courts.

If a powerful country tortures other countries and shows total spite for their people, it should face an international legal system. The United States demonstrated, countless times, that it considers itself well above the law. It even forced several governments in Latin America and elsewhere, to give its military personnel immunity. One of these countries is Paraguay, historically flooded with CIA, DEA and FBI agents.

In order to legally restrain the Empire, huge international pressure would have to be built. Like in the case of Managua, which legally sued the US for many acts of terror committed against Nicaragua. The Empire will most likely refuse to accept any guilty verdict. But the pressure has to be on!

All this would be meaningless without dedicated, constant coverage of the events by independent or opposition media, be they huge new state-funded networks like RT, TeleSur, CCTV or Press TV, of progressive independent media like Counterpunch, VNN, or ICH. It is essential that Latin Americans demand information from these sources, instead of consuming the toxic lies spread through CNN en Español, FOX, EFE and other right wing Western sources.

The battle for the Latin American people and for their freedom is on. Do not get fooled, it has been on for quite some time, and it is very tough fight.

Latin America is one of the fronts of the integrated fight for the survival of our Planet.

People who admire this part of the world, all those who have been inspired by Latin American revolutions, should participate in the struggle.

The best sons and daughters of this continent are now fighting in their own, quixotic way, as they always did: frontally, with exposed heart, totally unprotected. But their fight is just, and they are in this battle in order to defend the people.

Their opponents are rich, deceitful and brutal. But they are also selfish and they fight only for their own interests. They are not loved by their nations. If they lose, Latin America will win!

Those countries defending themselves against the Empire should unite, before it's too late. Now as Latin America is rising from its knees, it becomes clear who are its foes and who are real friends, real brothers and sisters!

This scarred but stunning continent of courageous poets, of dreamers and revolutionaries should not be allowed to fall. In Caracas, Quito and La Paz, they are fighting for entire humanity.







