

### Imperialism and drugs

When I was arrested in Mexico by the Security Federal Police, which as fate would have it found some of our movements suspicious even though we took every precaution to avoid being hit by Batista's bloody hand, --as it was the case on January 10, 1929 when Machado's agents murdered Julio Antonio Mella in Mexico's capital-- the law enforcement agents thought that ours was one of those smugglers' organizations acting illegally along the border of that poor nation in their commercial dealings with the mighty, industrialized and rich neighboring power.

Drugs were not an issue in Mexico then. Only later would such a problem overwhelmingly affect and bring enormous damages to not only that country but also to the rest of the continent.

The countries of Central and South America invest a great deal of energy in the struggle against the invasive cultivation of the coca leaves used to produce cocaine, a substance obtained with very aggressive chemical components that are extremely harmful to health and the human brain.

Such revolutionary governments as those of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Bolivia are making special efforts to cut off its progress, as Cuba did timely.

Evo Morales had long ago proclaimed his people's right to drink coca tea, an excellent traditional infusion of the ancient Aymara-Quechua culture. Preventing them from drinking it is like telling the English they cannot drink tea, a healthy habit imported from Asia, a region the United Kingdom conquered and colonized for hundreds of years.

Evo's slogan was that "Coca is not cocaine."

It's odd that opium, a substance extracted from poppy, --the same as morphine-- and extremely harmful when consumed directly, --and which was the result of the foreign conquest and colonization of such countries as Afghanistan-- was used by the English colonialists as a currency that another country with an ancient culture, such as China, had to forcibly accept as payment for the sophisticated products that Europe received from China and that until then had paid with silver coins. An often cited example of that injustice, dating back to the first decades of the 19th century, is that "a Chinese worker who became an addict spent two thirds of his salary on opium leaving his family in dreadful poverty."

In the year 1839, opium was already within reach of Chinese workers and farmers. That same year, United Kingdom's Queen Victoria I imposed the First Opium War.

English and American tradesmen with strong support from the English Crown perceived the potential for major trade and profits. By then, many of the large US fortunes were based on that drug-trafficking.

It would be worthwhile asking the big power, the same that has almost one thousand military bases and seven fleets with nuclear aircraft carriers and thousands of combat planes used to exert tyranny on the world, how is it going to solve the drug issue.

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