

## **BUSH'S LIES AND CONS**

I don't like the idea of seeming to be a vengeful person, someone wishful to relentlessly pursue an adversary. I had promised myself to wait a bit and see how the contradictions between Bush and his European allies would unfold on the vital subject of climate change. But George W. Bush went too far when he made a declaration that we read in an AP piece last Friday. The President of the United States stated that he would go to the Vatican "with a very open mind and...ready to listen" to the Pope, and he assured that they share a "common respect for human life and human dignity" and freedom.

"History has demonstrated that democracies don't go to war with each other and therefore the best way to reinforce peace is to promote freedom," he added.

"This will be the American leader's first visit to Pope Benedict XVI. His last trip to Italy was in April 2005 for the funeral of Pope John Paul II", the agency reported.

In one of my reflections I said that I wouldn't be the first or the last person that Bush would order or authorize his agents to remove. Having seen his unusual declaration, I think that if Bush had ever read any history book, he would be aware that there, in Rome itself, an empire was born that nourished the vocabulary of political language for almost two thousand years; the Vatican City was also born there as time went by, after Constantine's Edict of Milan which officially removed obstacles to the practice of Christianity at the beginning of the fourth century A.D.

Historians tell us that the Caesar Nero who ordered the capital of the empire to be set on fire was heard to exclaim in satisfaction while the tragedy was in progress: "What a great poet is perishing!"

If only the historians were right! If only Bush were a poet! If only the inhabitants of the planet were those belonging to those times! If only nuclear, chemical, biological and mass destruction weapons did not exist! Even though it was a sad occurrence, including the death of the poet, who would be alarmed by a fire consuming what today would be just a great village?

Evidently Rome is not yet included among the 60 or more dark corners of the world that the United States military must be ready to pre-emptively attack, as Bush proclaimed at West Point on June 1, 2002.

Bush would now like to con Pope Benedict XVI. The Iraq War doesn't exist, it doesn't cost a cent, not one drop of blood has been spilled, nor have hundreds of thousands of innocent people died as part of a shameless bartering of lives for oil and gas, imposed by force of arms on the peoples of the Third World. Nor does the danger of another war against Iran exist, including possible tactical nuclear strikes to impose the same infamous formula. We are all required to believe that Russia does not feel threatened by a possible shower of annihilating and accurate nuclear missiles giving rise to a new and ever more dangerous arms race.

Following the chronic course of his rude lies, we might well wonder: why did Bush free an infamous, self-confessed terrorist like Posada Carriles on the same day that the 46th anniversary of the imperialist defeat at the Bay of Pigs was commemorated? Worse still, would he feel even a smidgen of pain about the injustice of keeping 5 Cuban heroes prisoners, some serving two life sentences, because they were informing their country about terrorist plans? Banish the thought that Bush didn't know who funded the countless assassination plots on Castro!

We have seen Bush making strange and disturbed grimaces while making official speeches to United

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States senators and representatives, boasting about the enemies he has had removed by issuing personal orders. He created official torture centers in Abu Ghraib and at the Guantánamo Naval Base; his agents, acting illegally, kidnapped people in many countries where CIA planes would secretly fly in, with or without permission from the corresponding authorities. Information would have to be extracted with well-studied physical torture methods.

How could he possibly think that Pope Benedict XVI would share values with him about respect for life, human dignity and freedom?

What does the Spanish language dictionary tell us?

Tall tale: an artfully disguised lie.

To con: to deceive, to hallucinate, taking advantage of someone's naiveté.

I promised brief reflections and I am keeping my word.

**Fidel Castro Ruz**

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