

# The Heroes of Our Time

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*There is much to say about these difficult times for humanity. Today, however, is a day of special interest to us and perhaps for many people. Throughout our brief revolutionary history, from the cunning coup March 10, 1952 sponsored by the empire against our small country, quite often we saw the need to make important decisions. When there was an alternative, other young people of any other nation in our complex situation, doing or about to do the same as us, although in the case of Cuba the chance, as so often in history, played a decisive role. From the drama created in our country by the United States at that time, no other goal than curb the risk of limited social advances that could encourage future of radical changes in the Yankee property that had been converted Cuba, our Socialist Revolution engendered.*

The Second World War ended in 1945, consolidated the power of the United States as the largest economic and military power, and became the country “whose territory was far from the battlefield” the most powerful on the planet. The landslide victory of 1959, we can assert without a shadow of chauvinism, became an example of what a small nation fighting itself can also do for others.

Latin American countries, with a minimum of honorable exceptions, were launched after the crumbs offered by the United States; for example, Cuba’s sugar quota, which for nearly a century and a half supplied to that country in his critics, was divided between producers eager markets in the world.

The distinguished American general who presided over that country then, Dwight D. Eisenhower, had led the coalition troops in the war in which they released, despite having powerful means only a small part of Europe occupied by the Nazis. The replacement of President Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, turned out to be the traditional conservative than the United States, such policies typically assume responsibilities in difficult years.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics “which formed until the end of the twentieth century, the greatest nation in the history of the fight against the ruthless exploitation of human beings” was dissolved and replaced by a Federation reduced the area of the great State multinational in no less than five million 500 thousand square kilometers. Something, however, could not be dissolved: the heroic spirit of the Russian people, who joined his brothers in the rest of the USSR has been able to preserve such a powerful force that along with the People’s Republic of China and countries like Brazil, India and South Africa are a group needed to stop the attempt to recolonize the planet.

Two illustrative examples of these realities of living in the People’s Republic of Angola. Cuba, like many other socialist countries and liberation movements, worked with her and others who fought against Portuguese rule in Africa. This was exercised direct administrative

form with the support of its allies. Solidarity with Angola was one of the main points of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Socialist Camp. The independence of the country was inevitable and was accepted by the world community. The racist state of South Africa and the corrupt government of the former Belgian Congo, with the support of European allies, carefully prepared for the conquest and division of Angola.

Cuba, which for years cooperated with the struggle of the people, was asked to Agostinho Neto to train its armed forces, installed in Luanda, the capital, should be ready for inauguration officially established for November 11, 1975.

The Soviets, faithful to their commitments, had supplied them with military equipment and expected only independence day to send instructors. Cuba, meanwhile, agreed to send instructors requested by Neto. The condemned and despised by the world opinion, racist regime of South Africa decided to bring forward their plans and sends motorized forces in armored vehicles, equipped with powerful artillery, after breaking hundreds of kilometers from its border, attacked the first camp instruction, where several Cuban instructors died in resistance. After several days of sustained fighting for those instructors brave with the Angolans, managed to stop the advance of South Africans towards Luanda, capital of Angola, where he had been airlifted a battalion of Special Troops of the Interior Ministry, transported from Havana in old Britannia aircraft of our airline. Thus began that epic struggle in this country of black Africa, bullied by white racists, in which motorized battalions and brigades of tanks, armored fighting media suitable artillery, infantry rejected the racist South African forces and forced to retreat the very edge of where they started. It was only in 1975 that the most dangerous stage of that struggle. This took place about 12 years later, in southern Angola.

So what appeared to be racist adventure in southern Angola was only the beginning, but at least been able to understand that those revolutionary forces of black and white Cubans, and mulattoes, along with Angolan soldiers were able to swallow dust of defeat the supposedly invincible racist. Maybe then relied on its technology, wealth and support of the dominant empire. Although it was never our intention, sovereign attitude of our country was not without contradictions with the USSR itself, who did so much for us on really tough days when cutting fuel supplies to Cuba from the United States would have led to a long and costly conflict with the powerful Northern power. Missing that danger or not, the dilemma was deciding to be free or resign themselves to be slaves of the powerful neighboring empire.

In so complicated as access to Angola's independence situation in direct struggle against neocolonialism, it was impossible not differences arise in some aspects that could have enormous consequences for the objectives, which in the case of Cuba, as part in that struggle, had the right and duty to lead it to success. Whenever we believe any aspect of our foreign policy could collide with the strategic policy of the USSR, did his best to avoid it. Common objectives required of everyone respecting the merits and experiences of each. Modesty is not incompatible with the serious analysis of the complexity and importance of each situation, although in our policy we were always very strict with all that concerned the solidarity with the Soviet Union. In decisive moments of the struggle in Angola against imperialism and racism occurred one of those contradictions, which was derived from our direct involvement in that war and the fact that our forces not only fought, but also instructed each year thousands of Angolan fighters, whom we supported in their struggle against the forces pro and pro Yankee racist South Africa.

A Soviet military was the government advisor and planned employment of Angolan forces. Disagreed, however, on one point and certainly important, repeated often the wrong standard to use in that country the best Angolan troops trained nearly 1500 kilometers from Luanda, the capital, the very conception defended other war, nothing like the subversive and counterrevolutionary guerrilla Angolans. Actually there was no capital UNITA, Savimbi had not resist a point where it was a lure racist South Africa serving over there just to attract the best and Angolan troops supplied to beat them at will. Therefore we opposed to this concept more than once was applied to the last in which he claimed hit the enemy with our own forces that led to the battle of Cuito Cuanavale.

I will say that this prolonged military engagement against the South African army occurred following the latest offensive against the alleged "capital of Savimbi" "in a far corner of the border of Angola, South Africa and Namibia busy" to where the brave Angolan forces starting from Cuito Cuanavale, former military base off NATO, although well equipped with the newest armored cars, tanks and other means of combat, began their march hundreds of miles to the alleged counterrevolutionary capital. Our daring fighter pilots supporters with Mig-23 when they were still within their range. When exceeded those limits, the enemy struck heavily Valiant FAPLA soldiers with combat aircraft, heavy artillery and well equipped ground forces, causing heavy casualties in dead and wounded. But this time they were going, in pursuit of battered Angolan brigades to the former NATO military base.

The Angolan units retreated on a front of several miles wide with gaps of miles of separation between them. Given the severity of the losses and the danger that could result from them, with the usual application of security advice to the President of Angola to appeal to the Cuban support would occur, and it did. The strong response this time was that such a request would be accepted only if all the forces and means of Angolans fighting on the Southern Front were subordinated to the Cuban military command. The immediate result was that this condition is accepted. Forces quickly mobilized depending on the battle of Cuito Cuanavale, where the South African invaders and their sophisticated weapons crashed into the armored units, artillery and conventional Mig-23 piloted by the brave pilots of our aviation. The artillery, tanks and other Angolan media located at this point that lacked staff were put on combat readiness by Cuban personnel.

The Angolans tanks retreating could not overcome the obstacle of the mighty river Queve, east of the old NATO base "whose bridge had been destroyed weeks ago by a South African drone laden with explosives" were buried and surrounded by antipersonnel and antitank. South African troops advancing ran a short distance to an impassable barrier which crashed. That way with a minimum of casualties and advantageous conditions, the South African forces were decisively defeated at the Angolan territory. But the fight was not over, imperialism in collusion with Israel to South Africa had become a nuclear country. In our army we played a second time the risk of becoming a target of such a weapon. But that point, with all relevant evidence, is for developed and perhaps we can write in the coming months.

What events occurred last night that this extended analysis led?

Two facts, in my opinion, of particular importance:

The first game of the Cuban Medical Brigade to Africa to fight Ebola. The brutal murder in Caracas, Venezuela, the young revolutionary deputy Robert Serra.

Both facts reflect the heroic spirit and the ability of the revolutionary processes taking place in the homeland of José Martí and the birthplace of American freedom, the heroic Venezuela Simon Bolivar and Hugo Chavez. Many lessons contained in these amazing events! Just the words enough to express the moral value of such events that occurred almost simultaneously. Could never believe that the crime of the young Venezuelan deputy is by chance. It would be so amazing, and so adjusted to the practice of the worst Yankee intelligence agencies, the real chance outside the disgusting fact not been done intentionally, even when it absolutely fits as planned and announced by the enemies of the Venezuelan Revolution.

Anyway I think it is absolutely correct the position of the Venezuelan authorities to raise the need to investigate the nature of the crime. The people, however, expressed his deep conviction touched on the nature of the brutal fact blood.

Sending the first medical brigade to Sierra Leone, noted as one of the major points of presence of the cruel Ebola epidemic is an example of a country which can boast, it is not possible at this time to reach a place of highest honor and glory. If anyone had the slightest doubt that the hundreds of thousands of fighters who went to Angola and other countries in Africa or America, lent to mankind an example that can never be erased from human history; least hesitation that the heroic action of the army of white coats occupy a high place of honor in that story.

There are manufacturers who reach lethal weapons deserved honor. May the example of Cubans march to Africa also garment in the minds and hearts of other physicians in the world, especially those with more resources, practice one religion or another, or the deepest conviction of duty of human solidarity.

It does the work of those who go into battle against Ebola and the survival of other human beings, even at the risk of his own life. We must not stop doing everything possible to ensure, to fulfill such duties, the maximum safety in performing tasks and measures to take to protect them and our own people, in this or other diseases and epidemics. The staff marching to Africa is also protecting us who were here, because the worst that can happen is that such an epidemic or other worst extend our continent, in the midst of the people of any country in the world, where a child , a mother or a human being can die. There are enough doctors on the planet so that nobody has to die for lack of attendance. It's what I want to express.

Honor and glory to our brave fighters for the health and life!

Honor and glory for the young Venezuelan revolutionary Robert Serra with companion Mary Herrera!

Write these ideas on October 2 when I heard two news, but preferred to wait another day for the international opinion is well informed and ask Granma to publish it on Saturday.

*Fidel Castro Ruz*

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