

Young opportunists vs. socialist Cuba

Via [Comunistas](#)

Opportunists take advantage of moments of crisis to climb up the structure of the bureaucracy. Cuba is no exception.

Young opportunists know how to say what the bosses want to hear, when to say it, and where to say it. Some achieve such sophistication that they appear to be sincere. They may even be critical at times, but their criticisms will always be made in the abstract, saying that there are “problems” without detailing them, much less analyzing them, unless they receive guidance from their bosses. As you can see, the “criticisms” of young opportunists are not spontaneous. These “criticisms” are nothing more than guidance from their bosses to wash their faces or to silence those who are truly critical and cannot be controlled.

The young opportunists may even have been people uncomfortable for their political views who even had confrontations with some employees. However, once these young people start their career in opportunism, they try to demonstrate that they are unconditional. To do this, they do not hesitate to hand over the heads of former comrades who remain consistent with their thoughts and actions.

There is no need for the young opportunists to receive guidance in persecuting young dissidents. The young opportunists know that eliminating critical voices gives them political legitimacy in the eyes of their bosses and washes them of past sins.

The damage done by young opportunists does not only affect those they destroy, but also the country and the socialist project. They lie, flatter, and persecute in order to be

promoted, to get more benefits, or simply to keep them – often no more than a cell phone with free internet or the opportunity to publish in media of national reach.

Another motivation of young opportunists is to protect and develop their professional projects. In this way, young projects that were once uncomfortable because they developed autonomous and critical thinking, now drift into total docility. This is one of the main characteristics of projects that have degenerated bureaucratically: make as little criticism as possible and attack, even persecute those who criticize. The main virtue of a young opportunist is obedience, not talent, which they often lack.

Leon Trotsky described one of the bloodiest chiefs of the Stalinist political police, Genrij Yagoda, as a “diligent trifle.” To which he added, “Yagoda had been a pharmacist in his youth. In an era of peace, he could have died as a village pharmacy owner.” This is something that young opportunists are very clear about: their mediocrity. They know that, by their own talent, they are incapable of shining. Therefore, they have to rely on extreme obedience, discipline and flattery.

Obedience, because opportunistic bureaucrats do not forgive young people who disobey orders; discipline, because opportunistic bureaucrats, due to their own inefficiency, need those who can diligently carry out their orders; and flattery, because it is not just about flattery, but knowing how to flatter – opportunistic bureaucrats can be repelled by or perceive falseness in the ostensibly flattering young opportunists.

The danger is that the bureaucracy listens to the young opportunists who, in order to maintain their advantages, give a distorted picture of social reality. In times of crisis such as we are experiencing, if a government loses touch with reality, it will suffer consecutive crises. Even more so in a government that intends to build socialism and, therefore, its

strength is in supporting the working class.

The best metaphor we can find to understand the damage caused by young opportunists is that of a person who is sick with a serious illness and whose doctors, in order not to tell him that his state of health is complicated, not only hide the truth, but also miscalculate him. Needless to say, these doctors don't really care about the patient's health, but have a selfish motive. Either they want to kill the patient, as Yeltsin and company did to the Soviet Union, or they are simply profiting from the medicine they give the patient – as is the case with opportunists, who increasingly seek any kind of material or professional perk.

It doesn't take long for these young opportunists to be promoted. In the midst of this crisis, we have seen more than one incomprehensible appointment of young people who do not have the capacity to take on the roles they have been assigned. In reality, they know they do not have the capacity to hold the position, but the lure of power and advantages overrides any sense of coherence – which they have long since discarded. These promotions of young people – often unknown – are a “face wash” to show that young people have the power to make decisions.

Just because the bureaucracy promotes two or three opportunistic young people does not mean that young people have real decision-making power in the public sphere. Nor does it mean that institutions offer a space for debate where they can go for catharsis. When these debate spaces are attended by people other than those who have been planned and who bring with them a discourse that is not allowed, the young opportunists go into crisis, always looking for someone to take responsibility for their unwanted presence. They are not so much afraid of losing the debate – which tends to happen – as they are afraid of losing the trust of their bosses.

In general, these debate spaces only help the political resume

of the young opportunists. This is their real interest: to move up in the system. Whatever it takes. They know that to concentrate criticism in one space is to shut them down. However, the time has passed when these spaces were the only ones where one could express not only non-conformity, but also propose projects that were outside the established system. The massification of the Internet has broken the state monopoly on information and political propaganda.

The bureaucracy and its young opportunists are making a serious mistake if they believe that with these spaces for debate they can contain the discontent of an increasingly critical youth. The solution lies in dialogue, but not in meetings that are nothing more than an accumulation of catharsis where everyone goes home with the same level of dissatisfaction, the same accumulation of problems and no real answers. This is of no interest to young opportunists: they will feel that the day was a success.

The spaces for debate will be fruitful when they are organized by the youth who have nothing to lose, who have nothing to lose and who do not aspire to perks or public positions. In other words: the revolutionary youth.

In the July 11 protests, most of the protesters were young people. The numbers are not available, but just look at the photos and videos. Those of us who were arrested also know that the cells were full of young workers. The young opportunists deny all this. They also deny that at least in Havana – in the march from Parque de la Fraternidad to Parque Máximo Gómez – the demonstrations were peaceful during the first hours; the opportunists also deny that there were thousands of young people in the streets, they deny all the irregularities committed and any act of violence committed by the government. This opportunistic concealment of reality by the young opportunists only helps the Cuban government to distance itself from reality.

It is not the young July 11 protesters who can overthrow the government: it is the young opportunists from within the system who have the power to destroy the Cuban state. If this happens, in order to obtain quotas of political and economic power, the young opportunists of today, by then already bureaucratic opportunists, will make pacts with the ultra-right in Miami, introduce neoliberalism and hand over the country to the multinationals.

Most of the young people who took to the streets on July 11 did not do it to overthrow the government: they exercised their legitimate right to protest. Recently, it was emphasized in the state media that the right to demonstrate in Cuba is legal.

What would happen if hundreds of young people went out to demonstrate with red flags, demanding the construction of socialism in freedom? Where would the young opportunists be? Would they come out with sticks to beat the demonstrators or would they stand with those who demand more socialism and more freedom? Punishment is the best way to demonstrate obedience.

Both quotes are taken from the book "Stalin" by Leon Trotsky. An evaluation of the man and his influence". Editorial Fontamara, Mexico, 2017 p. 479