

IF I WERE VENEZUELAN

Tomorrow is an important day for Venezuela. The elections to choose 165 members of Parliament are taking place, and around this important event an historic battle is being waged.

But at the same time, news about the weather is unfavorable. Heavy rains are drenching the land that was the birthplace of the Liberator.

Excessive rains affect the poor more than anyone. They are the ones with much more modest homes, living in historically neglected neighborhoods, with difficult access, poor roads and less traffic. When the waters invade their homes they lose everything. They do not have the safe and comfortable homes of the rich, broad avenues and ample means of transport.

This is not a presidential election. In the exclusively parliamentary elections, the population does not mobilize and often plays it down.

In general, where imperialism dominates and the opportunistic oligarchy receives a juicy part of the domestic goods and services, the masses have nothing to gain or lose and, as a rule, are not worried about a damned election. In the United States, even for a presidential election, hardly more than 50% of those entitled to vote turn out.

Why, on the other hand, are the US mass media turning this time against Venezuela and subjecting it to a relentless barrage of lies and slanders against the Bolivarian revolutionary government?

I will not try to build up arguments to persuade a brave and worthy nation like that of Venezuela. I've seen the popular mobilization and the fervor of millions of people, especially the most humble and combative, who have had the privilege of experiencing a new era in the history of their country, and have had the great resources of Venezuela returned to the people. And their homeland is no longer a nation of illiterates, where millions of men, women and children survived in extreme poverty.

I will not talk of the experience that Cuba lived through, talking of 50 years of heroic resistance against the blockade and the hideous crimes of the United States Government.

I am simply telling them what I would do if I were Venezuelan.

I would face up to the rains, and would not let the empire profit from them; I would fight together with my neighbors and family to protect people and property, but would not fail to vote as a sacred duty: whatever time it is, before the rain, when it's raining, or after the rain, as long as there is a polling station open.

These elections are of enormous significance and the empire knows it: it wants to weaken the revolution, limiting its ability to fight, to deprive it of the two-thirds majority of the National Assembly to facilitate its counterrevolutionary plans, increasing its vile media campaign and continuing to encircle Venezuela with military bases, surrounding it more and more with the lethal weapons of international drug trafficking and violence.

If there are mistakes, I would never give up the opportunity that the Revolution offers to rectify and overcome obstacles.

If I were Venezuelan, even under thunder and lightning, I would fight to the limit to make September 26

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a great victory.

Fidel Castro Ruz

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