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Renan Vega Cantor  
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## ***Renán Vega Cantor: "In Colombia the Cold War is never over"***

"No one imagined that there could be a social mobilization that would last for weeks and months."



*Author of books on the influence of imperialism on Colombian and Latin American life, Vega Cantor, was a member of the Historical Commission of the Armed Conflict and its Victims, appointed in Havana; and winner of the Libertador Prize for Critical Thinking, version 2007-2008, with the book Un mundo incierto.*

Renán Vega Cantor, independent researcher and professor at the National Pedagogical University in Bogotá, participated in Tertulias en Cuarentena, where he was interviewed

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by Wafica Ibrahim, journalist and director for Latin America of the Al Mayadeen channel, Sebastián Salgado, former director of Information of the TVC channel in Mexico, former director of Information of TeleSUR in Venezuela and correspondent of the HispanTV Channel of Iran; and Txema Sánchez, member of the Network of Intellectuals and Artists in Defense of Humanity REDH chapter Spain, who directs the channel and the program TECs Tertulias en Cuarentena with Juanlu González.

Author of books on the influence of imperialism on Colombian and Latin American life, Vega Cantor, was a member of the Historical Commission of the Armed Conflict and its Victims, appointed in Havana; and winner of the Libertador Prize for Critical Thinking, version 2007-2008, with the book *Un mundo incierto*.

Tertulias en Cuarentena, is a phenomenon of global Social Networks and an effective device of internationalist struggle thanks to its ability to bring together collectives in struggle from the five continents, with information and analysis of media members of the International Network of Media in Defense of Humanity.

On this occasion, Renán Vega Cantor, was interviewed by the participants of this broadcast of Tertulias en Cuarentena, on important current issues in Colombia.

"We can take stock of what has happened and glimpse some of the possibilities that are coming for this country and the impact it can have for the continent.

"When you talk about Colombia, you can fall or be a prisoner of the immediate, and the immediate thing that must come are the elections that are going to be held in two rounds, elections for parliament and presidential elections that can take place in two rounds.

"Sometimes processes are not understood if we concentrate on short deadlines. In the short term, they appear as loose and decontextualized events, and in that sense, I want to reach the elections, but in the end, after making a series of general proposals about what is happening today in Colombia and about the dynamics of what happened in the year that has just ended.

"2021 for Colombia has been like what we can consider a hinge year, a fundamental year of great transformations and I want to concentrate on three aspects."

"First of all and perhaps the most outstanding event of 2021 and for what Colombia appeared in the international news, is the protest that originated at the end of the first

semester and that lasted for several months, and that can even be said that it has not ended, because it has effects. And the mobilizations continue to occur today.

"This fact, this great protest can be considered as the most important social mobilization in all of Colombian history, a history of two hundred years, and in all of history there has never been a mobilization of these extraordinary dimensions."

On this crucial fact in the history of Colombia, the analyst pointed out the importance of key elements such as permanence over time "because in Colombia there have been important mobilizations, but none lasted so long in time", another element is the diversity of sectors that participated. And a third element is that it served to expose the state terrorism prevailing in Colombia.

*"No one imagined that there could be a social mobilization that would last for weeks and months."*

"2021 laid bare state terrorism in Colombia. And he stripped him naked, both inside our country and outward. It is not that state terrorism in Colombia has arisen as a result of the strike, it is a terrible mistake. No, state terrorism in Colombia is as old as the terrorism of the State of "Israel", which converge even chronologically.

"In Colombia, it has been going on for the last 75 years. The ruling classes of this country, the intellectuals and the state, have always been very adept at presenting themselves as an exemplary democracy. And so they present Colombia as an exemplary democracy."

The specialist pointed out the fact that the media hides the genocide that is happening in Colombia under the banner of an "exemplary democracy."

"When we talk about state terrorism we are not only referring to repressive and military actions, which is the most important and most visible component. When we talk about State terrorism in Colombia, we are talking about gears in which operates, for example, the jurisdictional power, the judiciary, the media power; that all to one, they have created the image of the internal enemy, of the communist coconut.

*"In Colombia, the Cold War is never over."*

The unemployment we are talking about is directly related to the pandemic, here, in each place, in each country, the effects have been different, but the strategies have been similar. When the pandemic occurred, when the first cases arrived in Colombia, there was a

delayed reaction that led to the spread of the pandemic. That fell to the government like a ring to the finger precisely to stop the popular protest.

In December 2019 in Colombia there was an important demonstration, a popular strike, which was suspended due to the pandemic, the analyst recalled.

Everything indicated that it was going to be extended for 2020, he said, while recalling that the quarantine of more than six months allowed the government of Iván Duque to take a series of anti-popular measures.

#### Increase repression

"While the country was paralyzed the Colombian state continued to act, its military forces continued to massacre, they continued to bomb the confined people who at a certain moment came out to protest because they were starving, they also launched the mobile squads of the police.

"He went out to repress the people, even under mayors, like the mayor's office of Bogotá.

"There was a violent outbreak on September 9, 10, 2020 that is, as we say, the first step of unemployment."

About the CAI he said: "they have a very bad reputation, because they have been centers of repression, of torture, of rape of poor women, of repression of the most defenseless in the neighborhoods."

The Immediate Attention Commands (CAI) are units of minor jurisdiction of the Colombian National Police. Located in the urban perimeters of the municipalities, localities or communes of the cities of the country and subordinated to police stations in the case of Bogotá.

*"People's protests were suppressed with blood and fire."*

Renán Vega referred to a report with statistical data that accounts for an "official massacre" carried out by the Colombian state and police forces. The analyst recalled that Duque disguised himself as a policeman.

*"All this shows that the coronavirus served to demonstrate the existing inequality in Colombia"*

"Colombia is among the most unequal countries in the world in terms of concentration of income, ownership, land. And that fact came to the fore during the quarantine because

people were forcibly confined and had no income. Many sectors that were employed were left without work.

COVID-19 and its relationship to protest

"Literally many were starving. During the quarantine many stopped eating three times a day.

"At the same time the television showed the images of the rich of this country in their spas and having a great time during the quarantine. And these images generated an awareness of the terrible inequality.

That is one of the causes of the social outbreak: "the pandemic is a trigger, because it shows the levels of inequality, the levels of repression, the concentration of wealth and how the policies of the Colombian state favor the most opulent sectors of this country."

*"When people needed the indispensable resources to live, President Iván Duque gave subsidies to companies like Avianca that is not even of Colombian capital."*

"This became a catalyst for processes accumulated over decades that erupted in 2021. So here there are immediate demands for the pandemic, but there are also more lasting demands that go against neoliberalism, against free trade, against the privatization of health, against the privatization of education."

"All this explodes and instead of doing a procedure as would be given to any protest, of dialogue to assume the demands, immediately comes the repression, which is the Colombian style that replicates the Israeli style where they have learned most of these repressive techniques.

"They use helicopters to directly suppress demonstrations, that here has never been seen in the urban world. It is a practice that has been going on for many decades in the rural world to repress the peasants, to repress the insurgent movement.

"That led many Colombians to wonder what was going on, what was really going on in what world they really lived in.

*"The people questioned the democracy in which they lived."*

"If it is a democracy in which prohibited weapons are used, lethal weapons, they aim that point to the eyes, because in the Chilean style, many Colombian eyes were also blinded.

"The government used it to curtail popular mobilization."

On the assassination of Suleimani, the analyst recalled the visit made by the US secretary of state to meet with Duque, just 8 days after the martyrdom of the Iranian leader.

In the speeches that were delivered that day on terrorism, against terrorism, the Secretary of State and Iván Duque, endorsed and applauded that murder, Vega says.

"That was applauded here. That was like the fact that endorsed the anti-terrorist alliance in which the Colombian state participated and whose headquarters were here Bogotá."

*"Colombia practically declared war on Iran."*

On the Colombian electoral context, the analyst said: "Now politics is not classical politics, of the leader who is made working in a neighborhood, because he is a union leader, because he is a peasant leader and from there he climbs to another regional or national level, no, now politics is media, so the candidate who is chosen is the one who has the most followers on YouTube."

Current President Ivan Duque won the presidency from Petro as a result of electoral fraud, he said, while pointing out the fact that today "there is no social base that one says is going to support this movement."

"Iván Duque is a president who got to where he is as a result of electoral fraud."

He also recalled the assassination of presidential candidates: "in the last 30 years four presidential pre-candidates have been assassinated, three of them from the left."

"It's a fact that needs to be taken into account."

"Senators, representatives to the chamber, deputies have been murdered."

At the end he said: "Our perspective is not to leave a taste of hopelessness, it is to show the difficulties that arise in the current situation, the multiple paths, and remember similar moments that have been sealed with the blood of Colombians."

"If something happened in 2021 it was the breakdown of the Uribe model, the legitimacy of Uribism was shattered. What follows from that is what remains to be seen."

Renan Vega Cantor

Edited by [María Piedad Ossaba](#)

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