

A New Special Period on the Horizon

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Lines for bread and nearly everything else are common these days in Cuba where people spend many hours a week, waiting.

HAVANA TIMES – With recent food shortages being a little more severe than usual, and the government announcement of an upcoming “Fuel and Energy Cuts Plan”, a real hullabaloo has developed on social media with people afraid that a new Special Period crisis is on the horizon for Cuba.

Memories of tragedies linked to the 1990–2004 period (known as the Special Period), which are always terrible, have most everyone frightened on the island. And, just thinking about sleeping again without a fan, carrying more water than normal, eating a lot worse than normal, or having to walk several kilometers per day because there just aren’t any buses... well, that sends a shiver down anybody’s spine.

It could be a lot worse if it happened now because it doesn’t seem like the US would admit a new immigration crisis with Trump in charge. Yep, the man sitting in the Oval Office doesn’t want Mexicans or Arabs, much less Cubans coming in their thousands on rafts. So, this time, Cubans will have to swallow extreme need at home, without being able to put land, or better yet sea, between them.

Pro-government economic analysts in Cuba, like former minister of the Economy, Jose Luis Rodriguez, and the journalist on economic affairs, Ariel Terrero, believe this won’t happen unless there is a disaster, “as Cuba has diversified its economy since, not like in 1989 when 78% of its imports came from the Soviet Union.” According to them, there are now trade relations with China and Venezuela. I

wonder: do these analysts not think the Venezuelan regime could fall? From their answer, it seems like they don't.

Will there be a new Special Period in Cuba? God willing there won't be, ordinary Cubans don't deserve to relive those horrible years I myself suffered; where I couldn't even take a photo of myself in those years to remember myself at that age.

The reality is that everyday scuffles in lines all over the country to be able to get a hold of some protein are as terrible as the ones we had in the early '90s (I remember a man taking out a sharp knife to cut anyone who cut in front of him in the line at a third-class restaurant in Santiago de Cuba). Now, on social media, we are seeing fights Cubans are having to get their hands on food, every day. It would seem that this time the Special Period will be filmed on Cubans' cellphones. If only, and if only that were as far as it goes. Cuba deserves something better, a Resurrection Period, for example.