

Lessons of history



This president of the United States, Donald Trump, will be remembered by future generations as one of the most arrogant and ignorant men that has ever occupied the White House. And it seems that every day he resides there, he tries to consolidate that certainty before his fellow citizens and the rest of the world.

When referring to his ignorance, I am not saying he's stupid, but it can be properly said that his cultural education is full of gaps.

His recommendation to get injections of chlorine or any other industrial disinfectants to eliminate COVID-19 from infected people is legendary; or the assurance that one day, suddenly, as if by a miracle, the virus would disappear by itself and everything would return back to normal.

But when he tries to speak about history, a complex and detailed subject, then the president ranges from hilarious and pathetic.

So it was, for example, during his speech last year July 4th, organized at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, when he expressed: "Our army manned the air. It rammed the ramparts. It took over the airports. It did everything it had to do." With more imagination than even Jules Verne, the president was referring to the events that had occurred in 1776 -- long before the invention of the airplane.

In recent days, Trump wanted to give another free history lesson about the relationship between the influenza pandemic, the wrongly named "Spanish flu" and the current COVID-19. Here's what he said:

"The closest thing is in 1917, they say, the great pandemic. It certainly was a terrible thing where they lost anywhere from 50 to 100 million people, probably ended the Second World War, all the soldiers were sick."

Notice that, "the great pandemic," as he says, was detected for the first time in the United States in 1918, not in Spain, and lasted until 1920, that is, almost two decades before the start of World War II -- from 1939 to 1945.

There were soldiers that suffered from influenza, as well as typhus and other illnesses, but it was not exactly what ended this conflagration, but the enormous and extraordinary sacrifice of the Soviet people.

Finally, the deaths caused by the great pandemic amounted to 50 million, not between 50 and 100 million, as Trump said, who is urgently in need of a history teacher, especially from the country where he was born and which welcomed him, his mother and paternal grandparents -- all immigrants. Just in case he forgets that bit of history.

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