

# Report From Havana: Cuba Suffering but Unbroken | K.E. Ekman

On the ground report from Havana, by Swedish journalist and activist, Kajsa Ekis Ekman. Support us on Substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> Or get merch on our store: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Thanks for your support!

## #Pascal

Two weeks ago, I received a video report from Kajsa Ekis Ekman, a Swedish journalist and activist who went to Cuba and reported on life there. I'm sharing it with you now so that you get a bit of an insight into how Cuba feels to her, someone who visited from the outside, knows Cuba well, and got to talk to people there.

## #Kajsa Ekis Ekman

Thank you, Pascal, for the question. So, it's been a week. I'm here in Havana, as you can tell. And prior to coming, I was extremely worried about a U.S. invasion. I basically couldn't sleep for thinking about it. And the strange thing is that coming here, talking to people—I've been talking to normal people from all over the place, officials, journalists—and it seems like people are not that worried about an invasion. They don't think it's going to happen for various reasons. They think Cuba's too close to the United States, and an invasion could actually be dangerous, potentially dangerous even for the U.S., because if Cuba were to respond, it would hit very close to Florida.

And second of all, Cuba doesn't really have any resources such as oil, gold, diamonds, minerals, or anything else worth taking. So the return on investment of an invasion would be basically pride, and lots of investment for U.S. capitalists, which, if they wanted to, they could achieve by just, you know, taking away the blockade. Because there is nothing that stops U.S. investors from coming here and investing right now, except for U.S. laws. And the other reason why people don't think an invasion is possible is because the U.S. has this dilemma that they don't want to go in with troops, as we could see in Havana, for example.

And to find somebody like Delcy Rodríguez in Venezuela is not possible here. They have been trying, but Marco Rubio himself said that they are not finding anybody here who's willing to sell out. So that option wouldn't be happening. It seems like the strategy that the U.S. has opted for is basically to strangle the country economically—not only to make the economy scream, because that's what they've been doing for the past seven decades, but to make the people scream. And the people are screaming. I met people who haven't eaten for days, people who haven't even been drinking water.

People who don't have electricity in their house because the electricity, for lack of oil, goes on and off. Sometimes it's off for more than 24 hours. Sometimes it just goes on for a little while, then it goes off again. It means the Wi-Fi signal doesn't work. You can't call anybody. You can't send messages. You can't put your air conditioner on at night, which, of course, is terrible because the heat is so bad that, you know, you can't sleep the whole night, and you're going to work tired, and you haven't eaten anything. So people are really tired of this. I've even seen people looking in the trash for food. It's just terrible, man.

It breaks you apart because this is part of the crisis. Like, this is totally man-made. It wouldn't have to be like this if they just stopped this blockade. Like, Cuba would be great. But having said that, I don't subscribe to the narrative that they're trying to paint in the Western media—that Cuba is a failing state, nothing is working, everything is terrible, it's always dark. I mean, Cuba is still Cuba, man. It's a beautiful country. Despite the crisis, you know, there's still dancing, there's still partying, you know, there's still life. There are still the beaches. You know, I've walked by beaches, people there just, you know, relaxing, swimming, having a good time. And this is the very same strategy.

So I think the strategy they're opting for is trying to make the situation so impossible and then try to provoke protests and somehow that way try to provoke a change. It doesn't seem like it's working, though. I haven't seen any protests. People are more just complaining, but, you know, in their personal way. And some people are blaming the government, other people are blaming the sanctions. Most people, I think, are blaming both. Now, as a response to that, the government yesterday announced a number of measures that are really remarkable, that are hopefully going to bring foreign capital. So these measures allow not only Cubans in the exterior but also foreign nationals to come in and invest like never before. So it allows you to open a bank here, to open a chain of restaurants, or any other type of business.

Hopefully, this is going to bring in foreign capital, and when the U.S. finds out that other countries are investing in Cuba, that other countries are making money off of Cuba, and that they're lifted, maybe there is going to be a cost to take away the sanctions. So I've been asking people, officials also, like, how are they preparing for a possible invasion? And the answer I've got is that the rumor that they're just handing out rifles to everyone doesn't seem to be true. I haven't heard anybody receive a rifle. However, people that are enlisted know that when the time comes—if a conflict hopefully doesn't come—they know where the rifle is to go and get it. So they're opting for a people's war, meaning that even if the country is occupied, they're going to fight. The whole country is going to fight. And they're not going to sell out. What everybody keeps repeating to me is that Cuba is not Venezuela.

## **#Pascal**

You're not going to find a traitor in Cuba.

## **#Kajsa Ekis Ekman**

Even people I've talked to who are blaming the government say that if the U.S. went in here and bombed a school, of course they would defend their country. So, as you can see, there are still cars. But, of course, if somebody has an electric car, you know, that's the best bet right now, because when you do have electricity, you don't really pay for it. So you can charge your electric motorbike or electric car at home. And most people now have opted for solar panels. So there are a lot of people who have solar panels at home to charge their TV or phone or anything. And, yeah, what else can I tell you? Cuba is a great country. You should all come to Cuba, come see Cuba. I know that the U.S. is pressuring the airlines to stop flying here and spreading the program that you can't come here, and a lot of countries have also not recommended it.

There are citizens in Cuba, which I think is totally strange, because as you can tell, this is a very safe retreat. Nothing will happen. I mean, the hotels are functioning, restaurants are functioning, bars are open, there are still festivals even, so there is no problem coming down. No, no, no, no, no, estoy hablando. Gracias. And, yeah. So if somebody's thinking of coming to Cuba, I think now is the time. The taxi driver will pick me up at the airport. Yeah, just so you know, if anybody comes here, you just land at the airport and there will be taxis waiting for you to take you to town. The taxi driver that took me, he had been waiting about 30 hours before a customer because so few people are coming. So he said he had been drinking only water, eating at 30. Now I see the cars just waiting. So Cuba really needs you more than ever. So I would just recommend for everybody to come.