

# Fidel Castro's Historical Legacy: Defiance of US Imperialism

"All the Glory in the World Fits in a Kernel of Corn" José Martí

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*The last week of January holds special significance for Cubans, and indeed for the progressive men and women around the world. This year, January 25 marks the second month since the passing of Fidel Castro (who can forget November 25, 2016?). On January 28, which marks José Martí's day of birth, Cubans pay a special tribute to his legacy.*

On December 27, 2016, the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power held a debate on how to legislate the will of Fidel to reject any tendency toward the "cult of personality." The law expressly bans the use of Fidel's name "to denominate institutions, plazas, parks, streets, avenues and other public places, as well as any type of decoration, recognition or honorary title."

Likewise, it is forbidden to use denominations or images of, or allusions of any nature to, his figure "to erect monuments, busts, statues, commemorative strips and other similar forms of homage," as well as to use it as a trademark or for other distinctive signs, domain name and designs for commercial or advertising purposes, except when it comes to the use of his name to denominate any future institution that might be created according the law to study his invaluable trajectory in the history of the nation. [1]



There were a variety of opinions expressed in the Parliament on how to honour Fidel's desire as expressed to his brother Raúl Castro; at the same time, deputies stressed the need to maintain, study and propagate Fidel's legacy for the benefit of present and future generations not familiar with Cuba when the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution was still alive. However, the debate was largely censored by the U.S. corporate media.

Nevertheless, while Raúl Castro's public announcement of Fidel's will on December 3, 2016 in Santiago de Cuba was mentioned by the media, it was presented as a footnote with some commentaries even questioning the sincerity of this desire. Perhaps these U.S. media and ruling circles did not believe that it would be institutionalized in the form of law.

Fidel defeated the U.S. twice since November 25. First, he was victorious the day he passed away because he was never defeated by the U.S. Second, in the Cuban parliament, one month later, on December 27, he quashed the preconceived notion that revolutionaries are involved for money and glory, like any status quo political figure in the U.S.

The media were not aware – but even if they were, they did not take it seriously – that Fidel often quoted the champion of Cuban Independence José Martí that “All the glory in the world fits in a kernel of corn.” Fidel put this into practice, as he did with all his precepts. Thus, they could not defame the persona of Fidel on this issue as they would have liked to do as an essential part of their ongoing disinformation campaign against Fidel and the Cuban Revolution.

What is it in Fidel that attracts so much animosity from the U.S., while he has enjoyed so much devotion from the Cuban people and millions of people around the world, who consider him a hero? What is this imperialism that he, along with the Cuban people, defied from 1953 to his last breath?

Let us take only the period toward the end of World War II, at a time when Fidel initiated his political development and action. Aside from the U.S. neocolonial domination of Cuba, including periods of dictatorship, the U.S. is responsible for Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

A recent vivid French television documentary based on interviews with survivors shows how, during WWII, the U.S. armed forces arriving in Cherbourg, France, supposedly as liberators, used their firearms to rape and aggress French women and their families.

This was symptomatic of a larger problem in that country and elsewhere in Europe. This is not to deny the crucial and courageous role of the U.S. and its armed forces to defeat fascism, nor to pretend that other powers did not carry out the same type of activities or worse, such as the Japanese fascists against the Chinese people.

However, viewing this documentary from the perspective of 2017, one has to keep in mind that the U.S. presents itself as the most civilized country on the planet with the burden of bringing “democracy” and “American values” to the world.

The documentary brings home the fact that this negative feature from WWII proved to be a hint of how U.S. atrocities would play out after WWII. Furthermore, this same documentary also deals with the French Resistance during the war, showing how Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill attempted to keep Charles De Gaulle and the Resistance out of the liberation of France.

The fabricated excuse is very familiar to us today: De Gaulle, the allies claimed, was a military person and therefore a “dictator.”

After WWII, the U.S. carried out aggressions against Korea and Vietnam. A recent visit to Vietnam reinforced the common knowledge that some American armed forces carried out atrocities similar to Nazi Germany. Such was the horror that many U.S. soldiers courageously resisted this barbarism by revolting against their officers and by other means.

From 1948 to date, Israel, with the assistance of the U.S., has been carrying out genocide without let-up against the Palestinian people. Cubans know about genocide, as the U.S. blockade against Cuba consists of genocide in that the U.S. has explicitly declared since

1961 that its goal is to starve Cubans into submission.

Cuba and Fidel not only challenged the U.S.-backed racial segregation of apartheid in Africa, but went there to help Africa to liberate itself. In Latin America, the U.S. intervention and atrocities are too long to list: for example, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and, more recently, Honduras in 2009, Brazil in 2016 and Venezuela in 2002 and since April 2013.

Fidel stood up to all this and was an outspoken opponent of current American aggression through drones and other means in seven countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Pakistan and Somalia. Washington has dropped many bombs in that area of the world, including on civilian populations.

It is well-known that the U.S. has 800 military bases in 150 countries around the world. While Cuba is not among them, one cannot overlook the fact that Guantánamo as part of Cuban territory was taken by force by the U.S. as a result of the Platt Amendment, a shameful law adopted by the U.S. Congress at the beginning of the 20th century by means of a one-sided and unfair treaty. [2]

All of this barely veiled bullying of the world's peoples did not make Cuba and Fidel bend. Nor did U.S. aggression and threats against Russia on Ukraine and other issues succeed in undermining Cuba's solidarity with Russia.

Fidel Castro challenged all this and more. Yet, instead of desiring recognition for the longest-lasting resistance to the biggest military and economic power in the world, he rejected such remembrance.

If ever there was a world political figure in the 20th century and into this century meriting statues, busts, plazas or parks named after him in this small country that gave birth to Fidel and the Cuban Revolution, it is Fidel; if anyone ever radiated the Cuban Revolution's anti-imperialist sentiment in admirers of the world, it was he. However, there was never any doubt that he would allow this to happen. By rejecting recognition and honours, he remained faithful to José Martí and his teaching "All the glory in the world fits in a kernel of corn."

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#### References

[1] "Cuba Passes Law on Use of Name and Image of Fidel Castro." Prensa Latina News Agency. December 27, 2016.

<http://en.escambray.cu/2016/cuba-passes-law-on-use-of-name-and-image-of-fidel-castro>

[2] The highest-ranking Cuban authorities have stated on many occasions that they will not accept any negotiations with regard to this illegally occupied territory, other than the unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops stationed there against the expressed will of the Cuban people. With equal seriousness, the Cuban government has ratified that it will not attempt to recover its legitimate rights by force and will wait patiently for justice to be imposed sooner or later.

Source: Prensa

Latina, <http://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=8989&SEO=marti-in-fidel-all-the-glory-in-the-world-fits-in-a-kernel-of-corn>

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