

# Remembering Fidel a Year after His Passing

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*Gone at age-90, his revolutionary spirit is eternal, the most redoubtable figure of the last century, successfully resisting yankee imperialism for 50 years, surviving hundreds of US attempts to kill him.*

*He outlasted 11 US administrations from Dwight Eisenhower to Obama - leading Cuba from January 1959 to his February 2008 retirement for health reasons, passing the baton to brother Raul while remaining intellectually active and influential to the end.*

Washington dominated Cuba from the William McKinley era to the Eisenhower administration. Fidel liberated it, transformed it from a mafia-infested brothel to a populist state serving all its people, providing benefits most Americans can't imagine.

He provided world-class healthcare and education to the highest levels for all Cubans. The country's most important exports are peace, goodwill, doctors and teachers.

Even self-styled "capitalist tool" Forbes magazine called Cuban healthcare expertise an invaluable export, providing free medical care for needy people worldwide.

Its educators focus on teaching, learning, and skills to become productive citizens, not teaching to the test, learning by rote and knowing like in America.

In one of his "reflections," Fidel said

"(w)e have a powerful...adversary, our closest neighbor: the United States...There is no greater price than capitulating to an enemy...(I)ts relegation to the dustbin of history will not be delayed."

"Would it not be preferable to struggle to produce food and industrial products; build hospitals and schools for billions of human beings who desperately need them; promote art and culture; struggle against epidemics which lead to the death of half of the sick, health workers and technicians, as can be seen; or finally eliminate illnesses like cancer, Ebola, malaria, dengue, chikungunya, diabetes and others which affect the vital systems of human beings?"

"Just ideas will triumph, or disaster will triumph," he stressed.

An earlier article said his intellect remained keen, his judgment sound and passion for keeping Cuba free from US dominance uncompromising to the end.

On November 25, 2016 at 10:29 PM Havana time, he drew his last breath. Now he belongs to the ages.

Months earlier at the VII Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, he delivered his last public address, highlighting his revolutionary ideology and spirit, saying:

“Cuban (ideas) will remain, as proof that on this planet, if we work with fervor and dignity, we can produce the material and cultural goods that human beings need, and we must fight without ceasing to obtain them.”

He said

“Marxism or scientific socialism is the revolutionary movement of the working class,” calling himself “a Marxist-Leninist...until the end of my life.”

He called capitalism “repugnant...filthy...gross...alienating...because it causes war, hypocrisy and competition” instead of peace, equity, justice and cooperation.

“Someday, the capitalist system will disappear in the United States, because no social class system has been eternal. One day, class societies will disappear,” he believed.

Millions of Cubans mourned his passing for an official nine-day period, paying their respects, honoring El Comandante until laid to rest last December 4.

Frail and weakened by earlier illness nearly taking his life, his passing didn't surprise. Yet in death, he remains larger than life.

He stood for what Frantz Fanon called “the wretched of the earth,” a revolutionary hero for millions worldwide.

A longtime friend of Palestine's liberating struggle, their flags were lowered to half-mast, honoring him after news of his death.

He supported anti-colonial struggles worldwide, considered Zionism a form of fascism and institutionalized racism - believing Palestinians “will prevail sooner or later in spite of the betrayal by Arab reactionaries, imperialist maneuvers and Israeli aggression.”

Against long odds, he accomplished what he set out to do, on January 7, 1959, triumphantly entering Havana, liberating the country from US-supported fascist rule.

Interviewed by **Edward R. Murrow** at the time, he said

“(m)y obligation (is) with the people. What I have to do now and in the future is...(for) what's good for my country, and if for my country it is necessary that I renounce any position, I would gladly renounce (it) because sincerely, I don't (have) ambition (for) power, money, nothing, only to serve my country.”

Indeed he did until drawing his last breath. America and other Western nations have no one his equal in stature.

After nine official days of mourning, Fidel was laid to rest in a private ceremony in Santiago's Ifigenia cemetery beside "Apostle of Cuban Independence" Jose Marti.

He's interred in a granite boulder, identified with the name "Fidel" in gold letters on a green marble plaque, the only official monument to his memory - in recognition of decades of service to his country and humanity.

I mourned his passing like millions of others worldwide. The flesh is gone. His redoubtable spirit remains.

Viva Fidel! Hasta Siempre, Comandante!

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*My newest book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."*

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