



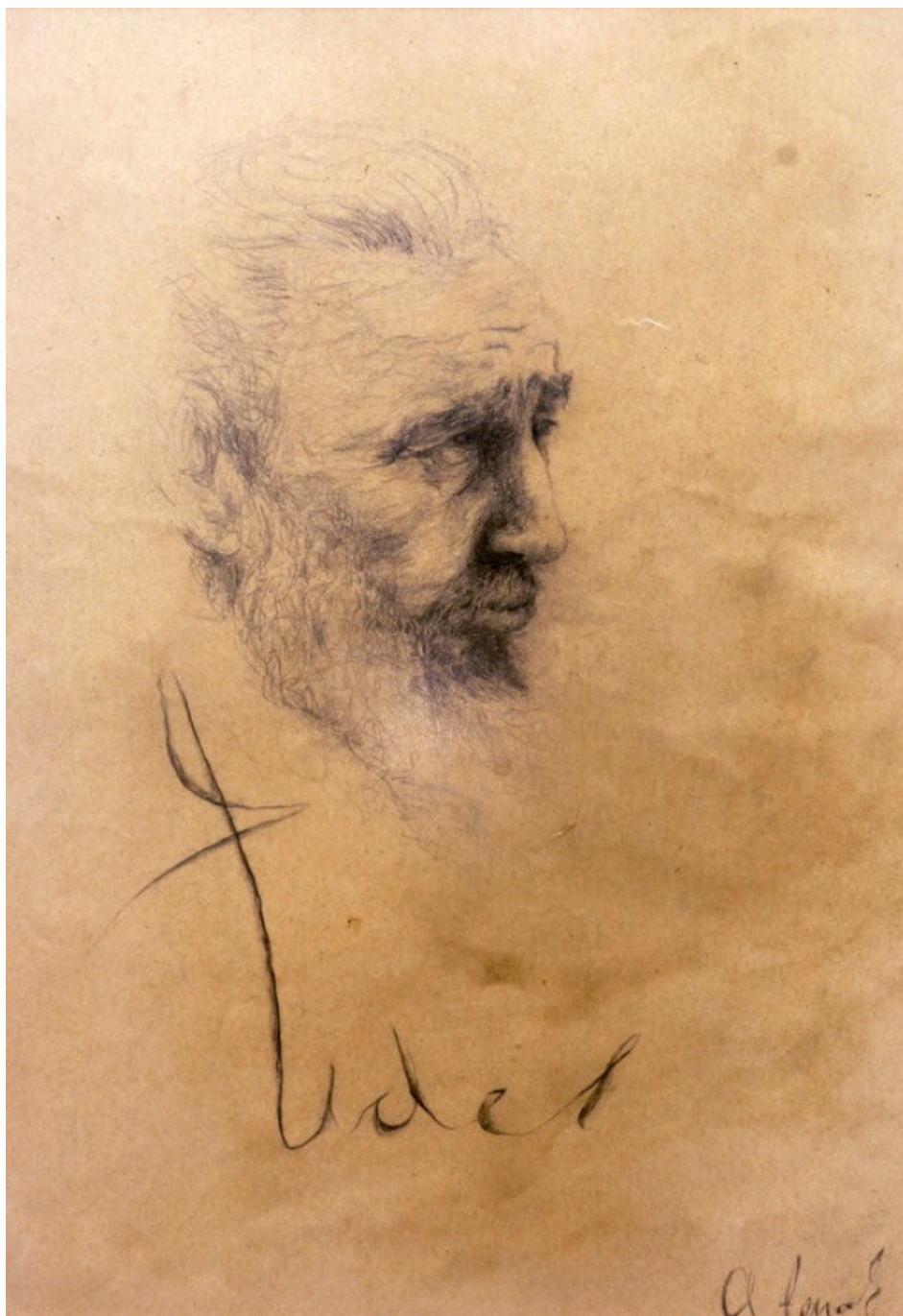
Fidel, Comrade, Red Salute

by

Farooque Chowdhury

on

[Dissident Voice](#)



You embodied humanity's struggle for a free, dignified life, a life free from exploitation, a life full of love and with flowering of humane living.

You are alive in our struggle. You are alive in humanity's struggle against all forms of exploitation, against all forms of bondage, all forms of indignity.

Your stand made you friend and comrade of all struggling parts of humanity around the world. You wrote in April 15, 1954: "I am sure that all the people could be happy, and for them I would be ready to incur the hatred and ill will of a few thousand few individuals, including some of my relatives, half of my acquaintances, two-third of my professional colleagues, and four-fifths of my former school-mates."¹ A US intelligence report in the later part of the 1940s said about you: "[A] typical example of a young Cuban of a good background who, because of lack of parental education or real education, may soon become a fully-fledged gangster." The imperialists considered you their arch enemy, a gangster. And to us, you are the hero, a bright star.

Your stand made you enemy of the enemies of humanity - the capitalists, the bourgeoisie,

the imperialists, the forces that plot to pull back the planet to a position hostile to humanity. But they hatch plot after plot in futility as humanity never moves backward, as the planet never revolves in a path opposite to its forward moving journey, as history never repeats.

Fidel, you embodied hopes and dreams of all of humanity. With your resolute stand and struggle for decades you held high all our dreams, aspirations and struggles.

The red flag of struggle you unfurled was stained with blood of martyrs – lives laid for the cause of humanity, for the downtrodden, for the exploited, for the deprived. In July 1953, at the age of 26, you led your comrades in an assault on the Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba. It was a heroic journey you initiated. The journey continued for years, for decades.

The journey began in the 20th century. You continued with the struggle, and carried it in the 21st century. It was a new millennium. Your struggle thus transpired centuries, from one century to the next. We are proud of your struggle. It turned out humanity's ceaseless struggle. It turned out part of the struggle the working people began in Lyon, in Paris, in Chicago, in Petrograd, in Sholapur.

Your struggle showed the working people's commitment to humanity, its commitment to organize a humane life. Your struggle thus made us proud and honored.

Comrade, we have not forgotten the struggle you have organized and led. It was unprecedented in human history in many aspects. None imagined that geographically a small island-state would face the longest ever economic blockade in world history imposed by the strongest ever imperialist power. With you at the helm, Cuba successfully faced the blockade without surrendering a grain of dignity.

It was the Cuban people's struggle under your leadership. You wrote in April 15, 1954: "how pleased I would be to revolutionize this country from top to bottom!" We feel proud.

We recollect all the conspiracies and interventions the imperialist forces organized, and at the end, they had to retreat in indignity, in disgraceful way, in shameful way, experience humiliating blows. You led in facing and foiling all those conspiracies. You have showed: People everywhere can successfully face and defeat the imperialists.

Fidel, dear, yours was the dignified approach. Yours was the approach of fraternity. Countries around the globe experienced this approach by Cuba, the country you led. Your approach teaches never to surrender to the imperialists. Your approach teaches people are to be mobilized, are to be made aware.

We have not forgotten your courageous saying: "I can tell you that in 1956 we shall obtain freedom or become martyrs." You made this courageous utterance in New York at a meeting held against Batista. The world saw the way you implemented your words.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez wrote about you: "A man of austere ways and insatiable dreams, with an old-fashioned formal education, of cautious words and simple manners, and incapable of conceiving any idea which is not out of the ordinary."

Marquez depicted you in the following words: "He dreams that his scientists will find the cure for cancers, and has created a world power foreign policy on an island without fresh water, 84 times smaller than its main enemy."

Comrade, we have not forgotten the hard days that began with the rising of white flag of much-touted Perestroika in Moscow. That was act by the outright betrayal by the enemies of the working people. You, along with Raul, took a steadfast stand in those hostile days. Those were lone days of courage. You and the people in Cuba denied taking a vanquished position, the position taken by the group of turncoats. We the exploited of the world felt honored with your position. You brightened the star on the sky of Havana. You reiterated you friend Hemingway's world-famous saying: "And man is born not for defeat. A man can be destroyed, but not defeated."



We know, comrade, you stood for world peace, for a nuclear arms-free world.

Comrade, we have not forgotten your unflinching support to the peoples struggling in countries in Africa, in Latin America. We have not forgotten the Cuban diplomats were the last diplomats to leave Baghdad during the US-led invasion of Iraq. You showed the way of fraternity among peoples in countries. The medical mission Cuba sent to countries, from Haiti to Pakistan, bear yours teaching the people in Cuba uphold. The successes in the areas of health care, medical research, education, ecological agriculture Cuba attained was under your guidance. The world learned the possibilities in the struggle for a dignified life in the face of hostile forces.

Today, we face a world with intensified competition and contradictions among the capitalists. The capitalist camp is in a state of decadence. This makes the camp more arrogant, more reckless. The camp is bent on intervention and assassination. Drone someone is their first thought as they come across any person they consider hostile to them. This situation makes your path more relevant.

Fidel, dear comrade, with your life and struggle, you have dignified the entire human society as you have never accepted indignity and dishonor, as you have never relinquished the struggle of the exploited, of the poor masses, a struggle for a free life. Thus you stand as a leader of free comity. Thus human society shall never forget you. Rather, you will remain with a bold presence in all our struggles. The presence will be bolder and bolder the more our struggles spread wide, the more these intensify.

So, comrade, Comandante, red salute, red salute.