

Giving one's all

On May Day, still under the impression of the parade, the colors of our national flag -which is today a symbol of solidarity before the eyes of the whole world-, the young, intelligent and enthusiastic faces of our students, which closed the parade of that overflowing river, the words of the poet, so many times repeated during that day, came to my mind:

“For this freedom...we will have to give our all!”

I felt like wanting to know more about the life of Fayad Jamís. Hardly two hours after that Reflection was published on the International Workers' Day, I started to read some other materials. Just by chance, the first thing I saw was a message sent by our dear friend Stella Calloni. It was through her that we learned in detail about the conspiracies, the horrible crimes committed by the US governments as promoters and allies of the bloodiest dictatorships ever known by the peoples of this continent. But on this specific occasion, her message was about Fayad Jamís, the author of the poem, and it was intended to convey to us certain impressions about realities that are sometimes bitter, without allowing her enthusiasm to wane before anything, despite of that.

I hereby convey, word for word, the message I had the honor to receive on the evening of May 1st.

“Dear Commander:

“I was very moved by the fact that you quoted Fayad Jamís, whom I had met in Mexico and with whom I had a beautiful friendship and comradeship. He was a friend of all the exiles; a great poet and painter, an artist with great love for his homeland. He then served as Cultural Attaché. He was magnificent in everything he did. I even wrote a little poem to him. However, what I have found beautiful is the fact that you have rescued the phrase ‘giving one's all’, because today, when we are invaded by what I call the ‘fatal attraction’ of the neoliberal lack of culture that has thrived quite a lot, it is imperative to repeat it. Underdevelopment's post-modernism, which has caused so much damage and helped to justify so many individualistic attitudes, is pathetic.

“The ego -I, I before us, that constant attempt to find the way to win over the other- is something very distant from the concept of ‘giving one's all’, and has spread like a pandemic that lays waste to everything in its path -old friends and loyalties, paths that we have trodden together. There are some who, in order to do it better, have also resorted to the cynicism of making fun of those who stand firm on their principles, their faith in humankind, man, justice and dignity.

“Cuba has been an example of ‘giving its all’, even to those who could not recognize that attitude as the most revolutionary of the Revolution -if you will excuse the repetition-, which is permanent solidarity, like a blanket to protect others.

“I believe this is the time to recover the magic and the poetry, because Revolutions are made by all that. Hadn't it been by that, just tell me how would you have sailed on board the Granma, for instance? How would Cuba have managed to resist and defend itself while creating culture, education, ballet, and all that which was sprouting up from the embers of a true Revolution? Even now, when one watches those old documentary films showing the young boys and girls leaving for the mountains to teach people how to read and write, that was, and still is, ‘giving one's all’, because it was with that spirit that they went, and it is with that spirit that they still go.

“I lived through that experience myself at the time of the literacy campaign in Nicaragua, or most

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recently in Bolivia when, moved to tears, I witnessed the day when that country declared itself free from illiteracy (and in this case, they declared themselves free from illiteracy also in their original languages). Who can do that without the spirit of 'giving one's all'?

"And there are so many examples that sometimes, as they can't be seen altogether, they are not seen at all. They are just isolated and cold pieces of news. I met the Cuban doctors in a neighborhood in Venezuela, and I saw a woman who was bringing in her children to have them vaccinated. She told me: 'the fact is that they give their all here'. And, what to say about the Cuban Five? All of the rest is small, temporary and rootless.

"One day I told you that, besides, we will all have to write together the history of solidarity, because that day we will realize that the enemy that appears to be so big, so huge, is only an empty shell.

"Those who know what 'give one's all' means are invincible, because on and on they give their all through the times, shedding light, like our beloved Che.

"One big hug, and thank you, because you keep on giving your all.

"Stella."

Those were the beautiful words by Stella, for those who may want to know the true history of our times, which could never be erased with a stroke of a pen!

Fidel Castro Ruz

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