



Rafael Cancel Miranda

**Message for the activity
Cuba-Palestine Friendship
Toronto, Canada, March 29th, 2015**

Once, in an activity of Palestinian brothers and sisters in New York, where I had been invited to speak, a Palestinian sister came up to me and called me by an Arabic name. She had mistaken me for one of her compatriots. I told her that it would be an honour for me to be Palestinian but that, actually, I was Puerto Rican, which is also an honour for me. Our struggles are the same struggle.

The Anglo-Saxon imperialist U.S. Navy bombed Puerto Rico from offshore on May 12th, 1898, killing Puerto Ricans on the streets and in their homes. Two months later, the U.S. Army invaded our homeland and, since then, unfortunately, we have been a colony of the elite that controls the U.S.

In March of 1917, they imposed their citizenship on Puerto Ricans, even though the Puerto Rican parliament had rejected it. Two months later they imposed conscription which, over time, has cost the lives of thousands of young Puerto Ricans.

We Puerto Ricans have resisted. Those of us that have defended the independence of our country, have been subjected to harassment, persecution, kidnapping, murder and even massacres (the murder of Río Piedras, October 24th, 1935, under Colonel Elisha Francis Riggs' command; the murder of Ponce, March 21st, 1937, under Military Governor Blanton Winship's orders). They have destroyed our agriculture and economy, and they have been displacing Puerto Ricans from their homeland, while Anglo-Saxon Americans have been taking over our land. If this tendency continues, within 30 years Puerto Ricans we'll have lost our homeland.

Many Puerto Ricans have been imprisoned for defending what is theirs, including their dignity as a people. Even right now, patriot Oscar López Rivera is spending his 34th year of incarceration in the empire's prisons. I, myself, along with a group of young Puerto Ricans, was imprisoned in Yankee jails from 1949 to 1951 for refusing to be a part of the army that invaded my country. They wanted me to kill Koreans in their war against the brotherly people of Korea. If I had participated in that war, it would have been on the Koreans' side, as today it would be on the Palestinians' side, on the Venezuelans' side, on the Cubans' side.

From March 1954 to September 1979, I was incarcerated in imperialist prisons because of an armed demonstration outside the U.S. empire's Congress, along with three other young Puerto Ricans –among them, a woman– protesting the colonialism and abuse against my people. On one occasion, about six or seven gringo prison guards broke my teeth from kicking me, but I'd rather lose teeth than to lose by shame; I prefer to lose even my life in defense of my people, in defense of Palestine.

Together we will save ourselves, divided we will perish. Onwards forever!

MI GUERRA NO ES LA DEL YANQUI

<p><i>Si he de jugarme la vida me la juego por los míos, jamás por el enemigo que ante el mundo nos humilla.</i></p> <p><i>Jamás tiraré un tiro, ni siquiera una pedrá, contra Siria o contra Irak, o el pueblo palestino.</i></p> <p><i>Mejor combato con ellos contra el común enemigo, y así podamos unidos liberarnos del imperio. No nos dejemos coaccionar los unos contra los otros, marchemos codo con codo o la bestia nos matará.</i></p> <p><i>Al invadir a Corea los gringos me encarcelaron, no quise matar coreanos, hoy se alegra mi conciencia.</i></p>	<p><i>Yo que soy puertorriqueño víctima del coloniaje cómo podría explicarme ser un ratón del imperio.</i></p> <p><i>Cómo justificarse atacar a mis hermanos, sirviendo de gatillero a los genocidas yanquis.</i></p> <p><i>Acaso no son los mismos que invadieron a mi tierra, nos deforman la conciencia y nos fuerzan al exilio.</i></p> <p><i>Yo combato contra ellos, jamás contra sus víctimas, soy de Gaza, soy de Libia, porque soy puertorriqueño.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>11 de febrero de 2012</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>16 de marzo de 2015</i></p>
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