

Covid-19 in Cuba: The Other Movie

By: Vladia Rubio / CubaSi
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Those blockbusters, those catastrophic, incredible films have just come true.

We are actually starring one of those movies. But, unlike the goals of featured films produced in Hollywood, this time the main characters are not from America — surrounded by the gentle breeze of demigods saving the world.

Nor they are from another planet. Neither have supernatural powers. But they are helping us.

There are many people who are trying hard every minute of their lives, risking their own, to fight against this pandemic.

This small island in the world, named Cuba, sent over fifty brave doctors to help citizens in Lombardy, Italy. It is such remarkable their contribution that the WHO Director-General himself put into a graphic

video via Twitter the arrival of the Cuban doctors in Italy.

“Solidarity among nations, health workers, us, is the only way to stop the pandemic,” stated Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

Rafael Correa, former President of Ecuador, pointed out clearly moved: "Someday we will tell our children that after decades of films and propaganda, at the moment of truth, when humanity needed help at a time when the great powers were in hiding, Cuban doctors began to arrive without asking anything in return."

Within our Borders

Human solidarity is also lighting up these dark hours within our borders. We have to see and listen to these doctors, and all health personnel working every single day risking their lives, and most importantly, they do it quite naturally with a unique sense of duty.

Just few days ago, colleague from Villa Clara Lourdes Rey published an interview with one of those doctors directly working with coronavirus-infected patients. This doctor, Ernesto Díaz Padrón, head of the medical staff caring for patients infected with Covid-19 at the Manuel Fajardo Hospital, had stated:

“My greatest pain is not to hold my six years-old daughter. My two boys understand. They are 11 and 14 years old. But it has been hard with her. I try not to talk about the disease at home. Everything is fine within family. We are not heroes. We just do our duties. If there is any heroism, in my case, is just to avoid kissing and holding my children tight.”

We all shall bow showing respect and admiration. It moves you to the bones. That’s the way Cuban doctors are.

White coats are not the only ones showing this mindset. It is fair to show gratitude to the work already done by Cuban journalists.

Journalist Lourdes Rey put herself in an enormous risk — she was well-protected though — to write about “anonymous leaders in this war against death,” as she said.

But there are lots of journalists doing their best, taking risks to keep informed the people: those who reported the cruise ship docking, or attend everyday — sometimes using public transportation — to the news conferences to update on the disease, or gather testimonies, first hand, about those people who are already in the front line facing the Covid-19.

There are many Cuban workers doing the same as well: customs, port, airport workers, or drivers...If Italian citizens applaud doctors from the balcony, we must do the same from the bottom of our hearts.

Take care of yourself, take care of them, and take care of us all

Some wrote about what the Cuban government should do, and actually does. Verbs like to prohibit, to secure, to strengthen...are repeated again and again.

But each of us is now the government and those verbs shall start at home. Personal responsibility is now paramount.

It is so sad to get sick due to our own irresponsibility and then claim responsibility on others, including our health personnel, which is fighting in the front line. And they have family too, and a life to safeguard.

Did you kiss and hug everyone out there? Did you get out the bus and did not wash your hands? Did you go to a crowded place? Did you go to the doctor in hurry once you felt bad? Such irresponsible behavior has a name: selfishness.

Yes, we will overcome this nightmare and new movies will be screened telling how and who fought. I just hope a few people might regret their behavior, those playing to indifference and lack of solidarity.

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff
