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Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara: Chronicle of a “sham” foretold

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The “*resurrection*” of Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara has stirred up the Cuban counter-revolutionary nest on the Internet to paroxysm.

72 hours ago, the opposition, driven by fits of fury, was blaming the Cuban government for the alleged, imminent death of the hunger striker—who, in agony, showed his cracked skin and parched lips after spending five days without eating or drinking water.

So much so that even Julie Chung, Acting Assistant Secretary for U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs., was moved by the denunciation and wrote in her Twitter profile:

*“The U.S. is deeply concerned for the well-being of Cuban activist @LMOAlcantara and urges the Cuban government to take immediate steps to protect his life and health.”*

Something that is actually pretty similar to what Cuban authorities did once they entered the hunger striker's home and took him to the hospital in Havana.

A video broadcasted Sunday afternoon at Cuba's National TV News featured the arrival of the hunger striker to the Calixto García Hospital, walking on his own, to visually vouch for a note released earlier by Havana's Public Health authorities where it read that *“the physical examination revealed no signs of malnutrition, with the presence of normal clinical and biochemical parameters,”* and added *“the results of the complementary tests carried out upon Alcántara, which indicate normal parameters (hemoglobin, 16.8), do not correspond to an individual in hunger strike, thus proving there was food and hydration.”*

What should have been a great news for those who, theretofore, were begging for saving the life of the hunger striker became, nonetheless, a very discouraging situation.

Someone has actually been fooled with so much mess. Caught red-handed amid another blatant lie, the counter-

revolutionary media mourners are now casting doubts on the veracity of the video, which they say it is another trickery of the Cuban government.

They now say the video shows a previous hunger strike, or the video was shot by a film producer because it has several cuts. They similarly question the results released by the doctors at the Calixto García Hospital: questioning the hemoglobin parameter, which rises once you are amid a hunger strike, or they just say that journalists working for **Cubadebate** or **Granma** newspaper know nothing about medicine.

In short, those people who were yesterday in solidarity with Alcántara are now disappointed with the facts he is still alive and his death cannot turn into that “spark” that would finally light up the so much longed freedom of the people in Cuba.

Apparently, none of those who want to see the hunger striker dead watched anyway another video made public by Cuba’s National TV News where Alcántara’s “godmother”, Karla Velázquez —Venezuelan woman residing in Mexico and head of the National Democrat Institute (NDI)’s *Programa Cuba*— issuing instructions to her protégé about how to proceed in a fake hunger strike.

At 1m:50s in the video, Karla Velazquez said to her subordinate: *“You do everything to request to the formal power, but behind the scenes, you start a series of strategies to persuade those who are in power. So, that is the context, all right? Then, you weigh on the two options. I gave you the ideas, contexts... Well, I actually lead you, hahaha...”*

At 4m:27s in the video, the boss gave her employee the following message: *“First thing is hunger strikes have some demands. So a hunger strike may be a successful method if done right. To do it successfully, you have to have demands, being the first of them the easiest to meet. Why so? Well, so you do not die of starvation. Because you do not want to die, right? Therefore, I will write and deliver to Afrikk your three demands.”*

Although the play script does not contemplate the protagonist’s death, why the audience in social networks, which dream of a social outburst in Cuba, insist on his death?

There is no need to be a genius to realize who would really be the ones taking advantages of a sudden change in the end of this sham foretold.

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff**

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