

An Elegy—Non-Partisan—for Fidel Castro

Fidel, we disagree with dictatorship,
But we agree with *Independence*,
For we've wanted that too:
Culturally, from the U.S. and U.K.;
Economically, from the U.S.;
Politically, from the U.K....

Fidel, we disagree with one-party-rule,
But we agree with the Cuban people,
Who send us rum and cigars,
Who invite us to sun, sea, sand,
When January is coldest,
When February is darkest....

Fidel, we disagree with *Adventurism*,
But we agreed on ending *Apartheid*,
For we liberated Holland and Italy,
And we defend free peoples from assault.
Like you, we didn't invade Iraq:
We think *Diplomacy* defeats *Force*.

Fidel, we disagree with revolution.
Yet, Diefenbaker kept ties with Cuba
And sold wheat to "Red China";
And Pierre Trudeau befriended Cuba
And opened doors to China:
Such are the luxuries of *Sovereignty*....

Fidel, we disagreed on much, really,
But you were an icon of these Americas—
A voice that championed Mandela
When others tolerated his jailing—
And you came to Pierre Trudeau's funeral,
And stood with ex-U.S. Prez Jimmy Carter.

So, as we were right to deplore your wrongs,
So, we are right now to mourn your passing.
You were our cultural ally
Because you symbolized *Independence*.
You were our psychological *alter ego*,
For our differences made us, strangely, friends.

Farewell, farewell, "Maximum Leader."
Hello, hello, free Cuban people:
In friendship, we can disagree;
We're different; *but and* we're American neighbours.

Long may we share a collaboration
In nation-building, elaboration
Of rights and freedoms, and *Liberation*
Of all peoples from all *Tribulation*.