



**René González
Sehwerert**

**Message to
the American
People from
Five Cuban
Patriots:**

We are five loyal Cubans who for 33 months and five days have endured a severe imprisonment in the jails of a nation where hostility by its authorities against our own is obvious. After a long and infamous trial directed by blatantly political objectives, methods and procedures, and overwhelmed by a deluge of maliciously concocted propaganda, we have decided to address the American people to let you know the truth, that we are the victims of a terrible injustice.

We have been accused of endangering the security of the United States and indicted of numerous charges, including crimes such as conspiracy to commit murder that could not, and cannot, be proven for they are false but for which we could be sentenced to dozens of years of imprisonment and even to life sentences.

A body of Miami jurors — and that explains it all — declared us guilty of all charges. But we are just Cuban patriots and it was never our intent to cause any harm to either the values or the integrity of the American people.

Our tiny nation, which has heroically survived four decades of aggression and threats to its national security, of subversive plans, sabotages and destabilization, has every right to defend itself from its enemies who keep using U.S. territory to plan, organize and finance terrorist actions, breaking your own laws in the process.

Our country is also entitled to peace, respect for its sovereignty and for our most sacred interests. In the four years that we have spent in this country, we have never stopped wondering why it is that our two peoples cannot live in peace. How is it possible for the interests of the extreme right — including terrorist groups made up of Cuban Americans — to strain relations between two peoples who are so close geographically and who could easily maintain relations based on respect and equality.

In our prison stay we have had the time to reflect on our behavior in this country. We can say, without the shadow of a doubt, that neither with our attitude nor our actions have we in any way

Free the Five!

Cuban Political Prisoners unjustly held in U.S. prison

WHO ARE THE FIVE?

They are five Cubans, **René González Sehwerert**, **Ramón Labañino Salazar**, **Fernando González Llort**, **Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez**, and **Gerardo Hernández Nordelo**, who were wrongly convicted in June 2001 in U.S. federal court for defending their country of Cuba from terrorists based in Miami. After their arrests by the F.B.I. in September 1998 they were placed in solitary confinement for 17 months. After being declared guilty they were again placed in solidarity for a time.

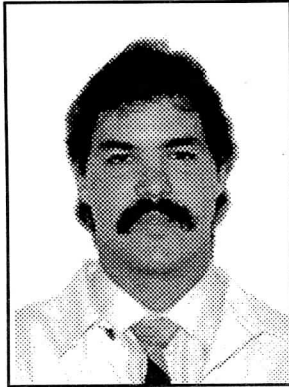
The five Cubans were convicted after a politically-charged trial, in which the U.S. government claimed the five Cubans were engaged in espionage against U.S. military bases and threatening “national security,” along with other charges. But as the Five pointed out vigorously in their defense, they were involved only in monitoring the actions of the Miami-based right-wing groups.

In fact Cuba has shared information with the U.S. government when dangerous actions were planned by the terrorist groups.

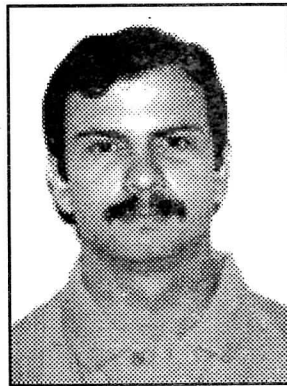
THEY ARE JUSTIFIED IN DEFENDING CUBA FROM U.S.-BASED TERRORIST ACTIONS

For more than 40 years, Cuban right-wing groups based in Miami have engaged in numerous terrorist activities against Cuba, and Cuban-Americans and other people who advocate a normalization of relations between the two countries and an end to the blockade.

These actions — by such groups as Alpha 66, CORU, Brothers to the
see WHO page 2,



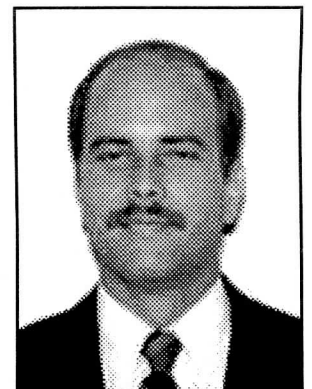
**Ramón Labañino
Salazar**



**Fernando González
Llort**



**Antonio Guerrero
Rodríguez**



**Gerardo Hernández
Nordelo**

Message from the Five Cuban Political Prisoners

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interfered with, or jeopardized the security of, the American people. What we have certainly done is contribute to exposing terrorist plans and actions against our people, thus preventing the death of innocent Cubans and Americans.

Why is it necessary for Cuban patriots to stay away from their loved ones and postpone an otherwise joyful life with their families and people to carry out the honorable duty of protecting their homeland?

Why are the U.S. authorities tolerant with these terrorists who act against our country? Why don't they investigate or take action against the terrorist plans denounced by Cuba or try to prevent the numerous attempts against the life of our leaders?

Why is it that the professed authors of these and other terrorist actions are still loose in South Florida as was clearly established during the trial?

Who trained them and who is allowing them to carry out their plans?

Who is really endangering the security of the United States of America?

They are the terrorist groups made up of Cuban Americans and their political and economic mentors in the U.S. who erode the credibility of this country, giving this nation an appearance of ruthlessness and misleading its institutions to an inconsistent, prejudiced and erratic behavior. They are the same individuals who are an obstacle to a serious and sensitive approach to Cuba-related issues.

Such groups and their mentors have joined in a coordinated drive to bring about conflict between our two countries. To that end, they keep promoting in the legislative and the executive branches of government increasingly aggressive measures against Cuba.

They want to continue a long-standing history of invasions, sabotages, biological aggressions and other similar actions, while sparing no effort to create situations that might lead to incidents of grave consequences to both our peoples.

The result of such aggression against Cuba is that 3,478 people were killed and 2,099 were maimed between 1959 and 1999, not to mention very costly material losses.

They persist in their propaganda campaigns offering the U.S. people a distorted image of Cuba and trying to prevent with different pretexts, laws and regulations, Americans from traveling freely to Cuba to know firsthand the real situation there. They also set every obstacle in areas of common interest such as illegal migration and drug-trafficking that brings so much pain to the American people.

All this is compounded by their constant requests for larger amounts of money from the government, thus affecting U.S. taxpayers, simply to finance their actions against Cuba. The enormous amount of money that keeps pouring into radio and TV broadcasts, as well as financing their contacts on the island, take away resources that could better be used to solve social problems affecting Americans.

There are recent examples of these groups' clout and pressures on the Miami community, its government agencies and even its judicial system.

It would be in the best interest of the American people to be free of the bad influence of such extremists and terrorists who cause so much damage to the United States by breaking its own laws.

We have never done anything for money. We have always lived modestly and acted humbly, living up to the sacrifices of our own people.

We have always been moved by a strong sentiment of human solidarity, love for our homeland and contempt for that which goes against the dignity of the human being.

The defendants in this trial are in no way repentant of what we have done to defend our country. We declare ourselves not guilty and simply take comfort in the fact that we have honored our duty to our people and our homeland. Our loved ones understand the depth of the ideas that guide us and they will take pride in our sacrifices for Humanity in this struggle against terrorism and for the independence of Cuba.

René González, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González Llort, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández June 17, 2001

Ever since U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower established a covert action program against Cuba on March 17, 1960, there has been a close relationship between the CIA and Cuban-American groups, to target Cuba's citizens and supporters by terrorist actions. Below is a very brief summary of some of these acts. This does not begin to cover the biological warfare, economic blockade, and other U.S. acts committed against Cuba. Notable is the link with the Cuban American National Foundation, established in 1981 to provide a cover of "legitimacy" for a range of violent operations.

- On Dec. 23, 1963, a CIA commando unit transported by sea from the U.S., using underwater demolition devices, sinks the Cuban Navy's LT-385 torpedo boat on the Isle of Pines (now Isle of Youth), killing 2nd lieutenant Leonardo Luberta Noy and midshipmen Jesús Mendoza Laresa, Fe de la Caridad Hernández Jubón and Andrés Gavilla Soto.

- Orlando Bosch, a notorious counter-revolutionary Cuban and longtime CIA operative, forms CORU (Coordination Committee of the United

The connection between the U.S. C

Revolutionary Organization) in 1976, whose activities have included several dozen bombings, mass murders and assassination attempts.

- On October 6, 1976, Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles hire two Venezuelan mercenaries to plant bombs on a Cubana Airlines plane flying from Barbados, killing all 73 passengers.

- Despite extradition requests from the Cuban government, the U.S. government allows this international terrorist Bosch to reside freely in the U.S. On July 17, 1990, U.S. President George H. Bush releases Bosch from prison with a presidential pardon, after lobbying by Florida Congresspersons Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Connie Mack.

- In 1985, members of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) raise money to bribe prison officials to get Posada out of Venezuelan

Who are the Five?

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Rescue, Brigada 2506, Omega 7, and Comandos F4 — have caused death and injury to hundreds of individuals.

Because neo-fascist, anti-Cuba organizations continue to operate with impunity from within the U.S. — with the full knowledge and support of the FBI and CIA — the Cuban government made the careful and necessary decision to send Cuban security agents to Florida to monitor the activities of the terrorists. They infiltrated the terrorist organizations to inform Cuba of imminent attacks.

The aim of such a clandestine operation by the Cuban security — at great risk for the Cuban agents who infiltrate — was to prevent criminal acts that would endanger the lives of Cubans and others.

A FAIR TRIAL WAS IMPOSSIBLE IN MIAMI, THE CENTER OF CIA-BACKED ANTI-CUBA FORCES

With the trial based in Miami, a virtual witchhunt atmosphere existed. Defense attorneys' motions for a change of venue were denied, although it is clear that intense pressure and intimidation by the Cuban right-wing groups would make a fair trial impossible.

The judge, prosecution and U.S. government officials conspired to force witnesses from testifying for the defense, and to refuse key defense evidence.

For example, U.S. District Judge Joan Lenard denied a request by defense attorneys to use as evidence information from the Justice Department that summarized terrorist acts by Orlando Bosch. Bosch, a Cuban fascist living in Miami, is responsible for the bombing-murder of 73 passengers on a Cubana jetliner in October 1976. Today he lives in Miami.

A NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN THE U.S. HAS BEEN LAUNCHED TO DEMAND THEIR FREEDOM

The International Action Center has initiated the "Free the Five! National Committee to Free the U.S.-Held Cuban Political Prisoners," to demand their freedom.



A bulletin board of the five Cubans in Havana, during a mass rally demanding their freedom.

Not only were the five Cubans justified in carrying out their duty of defense to the country, future terrorist actions from the United States are bound to continue if their convictions are upheld. They are not the ones who belong in prison.

In the struggle to return Elián González to his father in Cuba, the Miami right-wing forces revealed their threatening and terrorist

nature to millions of Americans, who saw what they would do to keep a 6-year-old boy from joining his father.

GET INVOLVED — JOIN THE SIDE OF JUSTICE!

We cannot rely on the courts or the U.S. government to let justice prevail for the five Cubans. The only justice would be to free them and let them return home, and for the U.S. government to stop financing and supporting the Cuban right-wing in the U.S.

Instead, the U.S. government, by its prosecution of the Cubans who infiltrated the "Miami Mafia," is giving the terrorists a green light to continue their violent actions. U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft openly met with and declared his support for the Cuban American National Foundation at a Miami banquet during the trial.

It will take a national and international mobilization to help free the five Cuban political prisoners. We fully believe that the people of the U.S. — given the facts of the case — will understand the justified motives of the Cubans in defending their country and sovereignty, and call for their freedom. We ask you to join this critical and important struggle for justice.

FREE THE FIVE!

Government and anti-Cuba terrorists

prison, where he was being held for the plane bombing.

- On September 11, 1980, Cuban diplomat Félix García Rodríguez is murdered on a New York City street in broad daylight by the terrorist group Omega 7.
- Since 1981, Jorge Mas Canosa has managed to obtain almost \$200 million from the U.S. federal government to sponsor different actions to overthrow the Cuban government.
- In 1982, Mas Canosa leads a lobbying campaign for a bill creating the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a program that gives federal money to private organizations promoting counter-revolution abroad.
- In 1988, Prof. John Nichols at Penn State University reveals that the CANF has received a total of \$390,000 from the NED, which prohibits "lob-

bying or propaganda that is directed at influencing public policy decisions of the government of the U.S." Over the same five years, Mas Canosa's Free Cuba PAC distributed an almost-identical sum to politicians to push anti-Cuba legislation. By 1991, the NED has given \$462,132 to seven anti-Cuba projects, bringing the total to more than \$1 million in monies to projects or persons connected with the CANF.

- In 1982, the U.S. government creates Radio Martí to broadcast anti-Cuba propaganda into the island. Over the years, its federally funded budget has grown to over \$16 million annually.
- Additionally, in 1990, U.S. federally-funded TV Martí goes on the air with a budget that grew to \$18.1 million by 1992. Even though Cuba jams TV Martí's signal, making it impossible for anyone in Cuba to receive the station, TV Martí continues to operate. It is in violation of international laws

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A History of Terrorism

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concerning sovereignty and television broadcasts.

- May 15, 1991, José Basulto, ex-Bay of Pigs mercenary and CIA agent, founds the so-called Brothers to the Rescue. After a public campaign by Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, George H. Bush grants the group three U.S. Air Force type O-2 planes (see *Miami Herald*, July 19, 1991). Basulto's group conducts numerous flights that deliberately violate Cuba's airspace. After warning "Brothers" repeatedly, Cuba shoots down three planes that fly into Cuban territory Feb. 24, 1996.
- In the *New York Times*, July 12, 1998, Luis Posada Carriles admits he organized a series of bombings in 1997, targeting various hotels, restaurants, and clubs across Cuba, including an attack September 4, 1997 killing Italian tourist Fabio Di Celmo.
- Posada further reveals that he had received \$200,000 to carry out

these attacks from Jorge Mas Canosa.

- On Saturday, November 18th, 2000, Luis Posada Carriles and three other anti-Cuba terrorists are arrested in Panama after their assassination plot against Cuban President Fidel Castro is exposed before the opening of the Ibero-American summit. Traveling with false passports, they smuggle in weapons from El Salvador for the action.
- April 26, 2001, three terrorists of Miami-based Comandos F-45 and Alpha 66 try to land on the coast of Villa Clara province, Cuba, armed with four AKM rifles, one M-3 rifle, 3 handguns, etc. They are arrested by Cuban authorities.
- SOURCE: 1. "Washington on Trial, The people of Cuba vs. the U.S. Government," Ocean Press; 2. "The Cuban Revolution and the U.S., A Chronological History," Jane Franklin, Ocean Press; 3. "Who is Jorge Mas Canosa?" Gaeton Fonzi, *Esquire*, Jan. 1993; 4. *New York Times*; 5. *Workers World*, July 19, 2001 "A case not of espionage but of self-defense," Gloria La Riva; 6. Webpage: <http://cubaofia.vze.com>

Initial List of Endorsers of the "Free the Five!" National Committee to Free the U.S.-held Cuban Political Prisoners"

Ramsey Clark, former U.S. Attorney General; International Action Center/International Peace for Cuba Appeal; IFCO/Pastors for Peace; National Lawyers Guild; National Network on Cuba; Casa de las Américas-NY; U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange; Venceremos Brigade; Brigada Antonio Maceo; Haiti Support Network; Cuban American Alliance and Education Fund (CAAEF); Vieques Support Campaign; Pro-Libertad/Faltan 6 Campaign for Puerto Rican Political Prisoners; Women for Peace in Vieques; December 12th Movement; Jane Franklin, Historian; Michael Parenti, Ph.D., author; U.S.-Cuba Infomed; WILPF Cuban Action Committee; Caribbean and Latin American Support Project; CISPES-DC; California-Cuba Cultural Exchange; Goods for Cuba Victoria; Los Angeles Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba; Dominican Sisters of San Rafael; Carlos Baliño Inst. for Advanced Cuban Studies; Marin Interfaith Task Force; San Francisco Bay Area Friendship; Colorado Hands Off Cuba; The Tear Down the Walls Conference; Jericho Movement; Pastors for Peace-D.C.; Peace Network; Peace and Freedom Party; Comité Argentino por la Libertad de los Cinco Patriotas Cubanos; Movimiento Mexicano de Solidaridad con Cuba; Irish Republican Socialist Committees; No. America; Casa de la Amistad Argentina—Cubana de la Pampa; Cuba Solidarity Campaign, England; Liga Argentina por los Derechos del Hombre; Casa de la Amistad con Cuba — El Bolson-Patagonia-Argentina; Swedish-Cuban Friendship Association, Jokoping, Sweden; Association France-Cuba, Comité du Lyonnais; Partido de la Liberación (PL) de Argentina; Merseyside Cuba Solidarity Campaign; Association québécoise de Amis de Cuba; Agrupación Venceremos de La Plaza - Corriente Patria Libre; Aprendimos a quererte, Sáenz Pena-ChacoCátedra de Sociología de la Salud, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, Universidad de Buenos Aires; Grupo de Solidaridad hoy por Cuba—Córdoba-República Argentina; APDH de Ecuador; Cátedra de Sociología de la Salud, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, Universidad de Buenos Aires; Claudia Cambia; Casa Amigos de Cuba, Rosario, Argentina; Padre Rubén Capitanio, Parroquia Virgen de los Lagos, Neuquén; Asociación de Periodistas de Internet, Santiago del Estero, Argentina; NDP Socialist Caucus in Canada; Luís Talamantez, former Political Prisoner; Scottish Republican Socialist Movement; Rev. Fr. Geoffrey Bottoms, Chair of Preston and Fylde Cuba Solidarity Campaign; CAEEF-Santa Barbara; Roberto J. Mercado, Partido Nacionalista de Puerto Rico; Blanca Santucho

Local Contact:

For updated information on the Cuban patriots, check out the webpage: <http://cubaofia.vze.com>, and sign up on the Free the Five list-serve: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/freethefive/>

Free the Five Committee, 2489 Mission St., Room 24, San Francisco CA 94110

415-821-6545

e-mail: freethefive@actionsf.org

web: www.iacenter.org

In New York: 39 W. 14 St., Room 206, New York NY 10011 • 212-633-6646

Yes, we/I want to get involved to help free the Five Cuban Political Prisoners!

Send us more information on the case

Add our name as an endorser. List as:

Enclosed is a donation to help publicize their case and for organizing costs.

(Make check payable to: Free the Five!)

Name _____

Address _____

City/St./Zip _____

Phone(s) _____

e-mail: _____