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**CASTRO'S CRACKDOWN IN CUBA: HUMAN RIGHTS
ON TRIAL**

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CASTRO'S CRACKDOWN IN CUBA: HUMAN RIGHTS ON TRIAL

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 1999

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m. in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jesse Helms (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Helms, Hagel, Dodd and Torricelli.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

Senator Dodd of Connecticut is on his way here, but I have been instructed to proceed in his absence. This town has slowed down this morning because of our snow.

This morning's meeting of the committee will focus on Fidel Castro's recent crackdown on courageous Cubans and independent journalists who seek freedom from the heavy-handed treatment imposed on them by the Castro Government.

Now, of course, there is nothing new about Castro's brutality. But the latest Castro crackdown is significant because it violates Castro's commitments to the Pope. The Pope asked Castro to "open up to the world" and to respect human rights. Castro's reply now has been heard. He gave a bloody thumbs-down to the Pope of Rome.

The latest crackdown also comes despite years of Canadian coddling and European investment in Cuba. The Canadians' self-described "policy of engagement" has served to prop-up the Castro regime; but it has done absolutely nothing to advance human rights or democracy.

Those who have urged unilateral concessions from the United States in order to nudge Castro toward change surely must now acknowledge that appeasement has failed, as it always does.

The United States response to this latest wave of repression must be resolute and energetic. We must invigorate our policy to maintain the embargo on Castro while undermining Castro's embargo on the Cuban people.

We should make no secret of our goal. I myself have declared over and over again publicly and repeatedly that, for the sake of the people of Cuba, Fidel must go, and whether he goes, ladies and gentlemen, vertically or horizontally does not matter to me at all.

Since the Pope's visit to Cuba, I have urged the administration to increase United States support for Cuban dissidents and independent groups, which include the Catholic Church. Once again I call on the Clinton administration to increase U.S. support for dis-

sidents to respect the codification of the embargo and to work with us in the Congress on this bipartisan policy.

Castro's recent measures make clear that he is feeling the heat from our efforts to reach out to the Cuban people, and that is why he is trying to crush peaceful dissidents and independent journalists who are daring to tell the truth about Castro's bankrupt regime.

This is why he has made it a criminal offense for Cubans to engage in friendly contact with Americans.

This cowardly brutality on the part of Castro, when one pauses to think about it, shows that he is a weak and frightened despot. His cruelty should make us more determined than ever to sweep Castroism into the ash heap of history.

Now each of our witnesses this morning has been in close and daily contact with friends and relatives on the island. They are, therefore, in a unique position to describe and analyze recent events.

One of our witnesses, Mr. Zuniga, spent 19 years in the jails of Castro, as prisoners of conscience have been held on so many occasions. Two other witnesses, Mr. Calzon—and I hope that is the way to pronounce your name—and Ms. Montaner were named last week in Castro's kangaroo court as collaborators with the four prominent dissidents on trial in Havana.

So I welcome the distinguished witnesses. Mr. Frank Calzon is executive director of the Center for a Free Cuba in Washington. Mr. Eloy Gutierrez-Menoyo.

Also we have Ms. Ruth Montaner, who has been delayed by the weather. She will be here later. She is the representative of the Internal Dissident Working Group in Miami, FL. Last, but not least, is Mr. Luis Zuniga, president of the Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba, Miami, FL.

Senator Dodd has arrived. I know he joins me in welcoming these distinguished witnesses to whom I will say again any enemy of Fidel Castro is a friend of mine.

Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Senator Hagel and witnesses. I am impressed that all of you have made it here with all of this rough weather we are having.

The CHAIRMAN. The witness whom I said was on her way has just arrived.

We welcome you, Ms. Montaner.

Senator DODD. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I will catch my breath as we start out. I thank you for holding these hearings.

It has been some time since the Foreign Relations Committee has had a hearing on the subject matter of Cuba, and I believe that each of us here this morning shares the common goal—I hope we all do, anyway—that a peaceful, democratic change take place in Cuba and take place as soon as possible.

Where we differ, I suspect—and we will maybe hear some of this this morning—is what is the best path on which we can travel to achieve that goal. Too often I think people have allowed their differences on how best to achieve their goals to confuse the desire and determination of what we all want to seek in the end, and that is a democratic government in Cuba.

So, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for bringing together an interesting group of individuals who will share their perspectives on the current state of human rights in Cuba.

Not surprisingly, each of our witnesses this morning has a different personal experience with respect to human rights in Cuba. They also have different views, I think, on how best to foster increased respect for human rights in that country.

I would like to call particular attention to my colleagues of one witnesses who is here with us this morning. He is Eloy Gutierrez-Menoyo, who is currently the president of Cambio Cubano, a non-profit organization based in Miami. But I am not sure that other witnesses here, who are going to be able to speak with knowledge about the human rights practices in Cuba, has had quite the same personal experience that Mr. Gutierrez-Menoyo has had with respect to this issue.

Eloy took up arms against Fidel Castro in 1964. He fought in the mountains against the Cuban Government, was captured, and subsequently spent 22 years in a Cuban jail, until his release in 1986. He lost the hearing in one ear during his incarceration, Mr. Chairman.

Following his release from prison, Mr. Menoyo went into exile in Spain and then came to the United States. He currently lives in Miami.

In 1992, Mr. Menoyo established an organization which I have mentioned, called Cambio Cubano. That organization has a message that differs from the message of other anti-Castro organizations. Cambio Cubano has a different view as to how best to advocate an increased respect for human rights and for the peaceful change and transition that we all hope will occur in Cuba.

In a number of his writings, Mr. Menoyo has described United States and Cuban policies as the two edges of the Sword of Damocles—each both in its own way an obstacle to creating the necessary conditions for democratic change to occur. I think this is a very apt description of where we find ourselves with respect to United States-Cuban relations.

Much of what happens with respect to the United States policy is orchestrated in Havana, and vice versa. Cuban authorities take certain actions knowing full well that we will respond in predictable ways. Rather than crafting a policy that serves the United States' long-term interests, in my view we simply too often act and react to events as they unfold from day to day.

None of these measures brings us any closer to the ultimate goal of fostering a peaceful transition on the island of Cuba.

I profoundly disagree with the recent crackdown by the Cuban Government on political and human rights activists. I think that it was counterproductive and uncalled for, to put it mildly.

Having said that, I do not believe that the United States response to such policies should be to isolate further the Cuban people, the 11 million of them, from contact with the United States. Nor do I believe that denying food and medicine to the 11 million people on the island of Cuba will improve the human rights practices of the Cuban Government.

Moreover, such restrictions are in and of themselves violations, in my view, of internationally recognized human rights.

I am pleased that, thus far, the Clinton administration's response to recent events in Havana has been measured. I am also pleased that Major League Baseball, the Orioles, the Players' Association for the Cuban Institute of Sports, and the Cuban National Team have recently reached an agreement to play two games this year—one in Havana on March 28 and the other at a later date in Camden Yards in Baltimore.

It is my understanding that the Clinton administration is prepared to approve the necessary licenses and visas to make it possible for the Orioles to travel to Havana and for the Cuban national team to enter the United States at a later date.

I believe that these kinds of people to people contacts between the United States and Cuba will do more to foster political, social, and economic change in Cuba than restricting trade or offering hundreds of resolutions in the United Nations condemning Cuba for its human rights practices, as justified as they may be.

I would also hope that members on both sides of the aisle in the U.S. Senate would see the wisdom of supporting projects and programs of this kind. They are not going to change the conditions in Cuba overnight. But it begins to help us shape a policy that is more deeply rooted than that which acts and reacts, and acts and reacts.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to this hearing this morning and hearing from our distinguished panel of witnesses. Again, I thank you immensely for having this hearing here today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Now the distinguished Senator from Nebraska, we are glad to hear from you.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I thank you, as well, for holding this hearing.

I welcome our witnesses and look forward to hearing from them.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Very well.

I believe I always like to move to the right.

Senator DODD. No one has ever questioned that, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Sir, you had to pronounce your name for me and I apologize for that. Mr. Menoyo, we will recognize you first and then we will move along to my right.

You are recognized.

Senator DODD. Mr. Menoyo, the chairman has recognized you first.

Mr. Chairman, he will be having this hearing translated for him.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well.

Do you need two microphones? If not, please take another.

Senator DODD. Why don't you use the two mikes? It will be a little easier for you.

Thank you, Mr. Calzon for yielding yours temporarily.

STATEMENT OF ELOY GUTIERREZ-MENOYO, PRESIDENT, CAMBIO CUBANO, MIAMI, FL, AS TRANSLATED BY LILLIAN NIGAGLIONI, STATE DEPARTMENT INTERPRETER

Mr. GUTIERREZ-MENOYO [as translated]. Ladies and gentlemen of the committee, honorable Members of Congress, I appear before you with the utmost respect and humility. For those of you who do

not know me, I assure you that I am a man absolutely committed to the concepts of freedom and democracy.

I am a Cuban due to conviction and through merits earned during the long and painful struggle against a dictator named Battista.

In the year 1959, I was the first revolution commander who entered Havana. It was a popular triumph, full of joy and hope.

I had led the second guerrilla front based in the central mountains of the island with over 3,000 rebel soldiers under my command. My brother, Carlos, had died heroically in the struggle against Battista.

My childhood had been marked by love for freedom and democracy. When the revolution triumphed, when I entered Havana, I was 25 years of age and these two terms were not new concepts to me or mere words with little meaning.

Freedom and democracy, the high price of sacrifice and pain that one must pay to obtain them—when we felt that the revolution was not inclined to honor these concepts, at least in the way that we understood them, we broke with the Government of Fidel Castro.

This is, in part, my background. Today, as you know, Cambio Cubano, the organization I represent, advocates a peaceful solution on the island and it believes that, for this to occur, it is essential that Washington policy change vis-a-vis Havana and that there be a change in the policy of Havana vis-a-vis Washington and vis-a-vis Cubans themselves.

Members of this committee, you who are again reviewing United States policy vis-a-vis Cuba, let us not fool ourselves. This shows that this policy has flaws and fundamental errors inherent in it, even for those who have defended the strengthening of the embargo.

But I will say, further, 40 years of isolation have failed. So, if you allow me, I will ask you what do we come here to do—to multiply ad infinitum the suffering of 11 million Cubans, to please a given lobby increasingly less powerful and more discredited in southern Florida?

You may have heard, you will hear the painful voices of some of my fellow countrymen—some of them respectable, although I think they are wrong, and others of questionable independence.

My fear is that out of this exercise in cacophony, we will return to the same policy of freezing which has only managed to attain two things. On the one hand, one is to give a very cunning politician, Fidel Castro, a great excuse; on the other is to allow him, shielded in this pretext or excuse, to prolong his control of the island.

This hearing takes place at a decisive moment. Cuba is in the midst of a social and economic crisis. It is perhaps the worst political moment for the Cuban Government. After seeming signs of opening after the hopeful visit of the Pope, there is an increased pressure against certain sectors of so-called dissidents.

There is, on the one hand, the reality of this conflict, and, on the other, the interested desire of some to amplify this episode.

If there is a political desire to connect these facts with the desire to promote the need for confrontation, it seems to me that this com-

mittee will have to watch for the best interests of the United States.

The confrontation is not desirable for the United States, nor is it desirable for anybody. If it is desirable for somebody, perhaps it would be for the Cuban Government, whose excuse would be furthered. In the expression "if we become entrenched," if we do not allow any opening, it is precisely due to pressure from Washington.

I appear before you so that my testimony might be useful in terms of a solution to the United States-Cuba conflict as well as a favorable solution for all Cubans.

Members of this committee, because I seek for my testimony to be useful, I have decided to make here some disclosures as far as my prudence will allow me to do so.

In June 1996, I was received in Havana by President Fidel Castro. This unusual encounter, apparently between two opponents to the death, turned into a frank dialog in which Castro disclosed some of his wishes, preoccupations, fears regarding what a political opening would involve in the island. But he left the door open to a serene and responsible diplomacy by Washington.

Those policies vis-a-vis Cuba since 1959 have not been exemplary. They have been characterized by a clear confrontation, paved with undercover operations, attempts, and conspiracies of different sorts.

This is in the public domain.

Castro said that he feared that this policy would be continued through other means. He is very cunning.

In recent weeks, we have been able to read reports that are significant and revealing in the press of this country. How much did United States authorities know regarding the danger involved in the flight of small aircraft over Cuba? Why were they authorized to fly over Cuba? What was intended and promoted with these risky provocations? Then why is there such an explainable synchronism between here and there?

With the downing of the planes—a crass mistake by Havana—there came to an end what we had achieved during our first meeting with Castro. It was said that it would be possible for a political space to be opened for *Cambio Cubano*. First an office would be opened and then we would see.

The downing of the planes brought with it the signing of the Helms-Burton law. It was unavoidable.

Excuse me, Mr. Helms and Mr. Burton, your law is an insult to Cubans. It offends the world and it places this country in the face of a paradox: how to change the Cuban Government with a law which serves as an instrument to invoke nationalism and perpetrate itself in power?

Constructive rapprochement was, is, and will be always the best way out in conflict.

Fidel Castro is awaiting clear signals to initiate an effective and serene diplomacy where it is clear that the United States renounces in words and deeds to any desire of hegemonic dominion over Cuba. Believe me, this is what he feels and this is what he wants.

And listen to me. I do not speak as a Cuban ambassador. I did not participate in the Moscow alliance nor in political killings. I have never been an instrument of the U.S. policy.

So, I am a Cuban of absolute independence, so much so that I rejoice in the thought of one day democracy reigning in Cuba, a day when Cubans and Americans will see themselves as good neighbors, without the fear of turning into masters some and some into servants.

Is this possible? We know that it is. But it is possible only leaving aside failed meddling policy. A little bit ago, a group of well known Republicans and Democrats proposed the creation of a bipartisan committee to assess the state of a new United States policy vis-a-vis Cuba and the possibility of seeking new alternatives therein. We support this initiative, which we thought was encouraging.

Is it possible to change the mindset of the most recalcitrant people? Yes, it is possible. In 1949, a young politician named Richard Nixon criticized the Truman administration and Democrats in general because they allowed for the defeat of the Chinese Nationalists.

I invoke the name of Richard Nixon, because his position in favor of a Taiwanese Government and his radical opposition to Communist China could not foresee what, in 1971, would be a true foreign policy feat headed by Henry Kissinger, who today is asking for a bipartisan committee or commission on Cuba.

In passing, I recall that the same Richard Nixon left in his memoirs a clear advice on the need to modify the foreign policy of the United States vis-a-vis Cuba.

The United States, through a rhetoric of confrontation and through its laws—first the Torricelli and then the Helms-Burton law—insists on the need to promote in Cuba a civil society.

The elements of harassment of such laws, however, tend to create conditions that would lead to internal conflict. What is the object? Is it a repeat of the events of Hungary of 1956? To make matters worse, the most recent law even violates the most elementary standards of extraterritoriality vis-a-vis other countries.

The CHAIRMAN. I believe you have had your say, sir. We will have further exchange. But I want the other witnesses to be heard from, too.

If you would, translate that for him, please. He is preaching now.

Mr. GUTIERREZ-MENOYO. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gutierrez-Menoyo appears in the appendix on page 31.]

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Calzon.

Senator DODD. Why don't we do this, Mr. Chairman? Why don't we take the balance of his statement and make sure it is included in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. We will be glad to do that.

Senator DODD. Then maybe when we get to the questions, we will have some for him.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. Calzon, you may proceed.

**STATEMENT OF FRANK CALZON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CENTER FOR A FREE CUBA, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. CALZON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. I am delighted to see not only Senator Helms, but Senator Dodd and Senator Hagel here.

I would like to take this opportunity, since I have not been successful until now, to ask Senator Dodd for an appointment. I would love to come by and see you at some point to talk about Cuba.

Members of the committee, my name is Frank Calzon. I am here on behalf of the Center for a Free Cuba, an independent, not for profit, organization based in Washington. I will not waste any of your time telling you about my life.

I have spent more than 20 years as a human rights activist. I would like to add, however, since I am sure Senator Dodd did not know when he made the previous presentation, that another witness here, Mr. Zuniga, spent 19 years in Castro's prisons. Although it is not as long a term as the 21 years of Commandante Menoyo, I think he also deserves some recognition by the committee for his suffering in Castro's prisons.

I will depart from the statement very briefly to say what I am not going to say here.

I am not here to question the integrity of any other witness nor to drag the committee into the exile politics of south Florida, nor to blame the United States for the suffering of the Cuban people, nor to transmit any messages from Castro to the United States Congress. I think the American people, the United States, have very able diplomatic representation in Havana, and they can certainly do that.

Now I would like to move on to my statement.

For almost 40 years, Castro's abuses have been reported by Amnesty International, Americas Watch, Freedom House, and many other organizations.

Since 1976, with the founding of the Cuban Committee for Human Rights in Havana, many Cubans have risked their lives and their freedom to report details of government repression to the outside world. They continue today their noble and courageous work, despite ever-increasing hardship and harassment.

The growing body of irrefutable evidence that they have gathered has been echoed by many world leaders, including John Paul II.

With the visit of the Holy Father to Cuba a year ago, there was great speculation, including here in the Congress, that the human rights appeals of foreign leaders were about to bear fruit and that Cuba would abandon its cold war stance.

The Holy Father called on the Cuban authorities to release political prisoners, to allow them to remain in Cuba, to work for a national dialog of reconciliation, to permit the emergence of civil society and the rule of law, to acknowledge the role of parents in the education of their children, and to allow the Church to play a role in that education.

To date, Castro's response has been very discouraging.

Some political prisoners were released and forced into exile in Canada. Also, by the time the Pope arrived in Cuba, the four prominent dissidents who authored the critical document "The Motherland Belongs to All," had been imprisoned without trial for

6 months. The “Havana Four,” as the Washington Post calls them, are the following:

Marta Beatriz Roque is an economist, who, according to the New York Times has been denied adequate medical attention for a serious breast condition.

Rene Gomez Manzano is an attorney disbarred for defending political prisoners who was honored by the American Bar Association in 1997.

Vladimiro Roca is a leader of a social democratic organization and the son of a prominent leader of Cuba’s Communist Party.

Felix Bonne Carcasses is a black teacher who was expelled from his college-faculty post for pro-democracy activism.

Their 1-day trial on charges of sedition was held 19 months after their arrest and 14 months after the Pope’s visit. The government has called for a 6-year sentence for Roca and 5 years for the others.

Presently, they await sentencing.

The trial has resulted in an outpouring of concern worldwide. The Economist, in a recent editorial, said that the trial confirmed Castro’s “unwavering addiction, after 40 years of power, to the basics of Stalinism.”

The trial came in the wake of a series of draconian statutes imposing sentences of up to 20 years for sending information abroad, information about human rights violations, information that could be sent to this Congress or to Amnesty International or to other international organizations.

The current cycle of repression, however, began shortly after the Pope left Cuba.

Human Rights Watch, in its latest report, the “World Report for 1999” says “As 1998 drew to a close, Cuba’s stepped up prosecutions and harassment of dissidents, along with its refusal to grant amnesty to hundreds of remaining political prisoners or reform its criminal code, marked a disheartening return to heavy-handed repression.”

Amnesty International, already on record during 1998, continues to issue appeals on Cuban cases.

On January 22, it focused on the case of Jesus Diaz Hernandez, 24 years old, a journalist, who was arrested on January 18, 1999, and sentenced the following day to 4 years in prison for “dangerousness.”

Amnesty quotes the Cuban penal code. For you who write laws here all the time, you might want to pay attention to what Cuban law says regarding this particular crime and how it is defined. The crime of “dangerousness,” according to Cuban law, is: “The special proclivity of a person to commit crimes as demonstrated by behavior that manifestly contradicts the norms of socialist morality.”

That is a piece of Cuban law that you might want to review at some point.

Amnesty lists other independent journalists who are either in prison or who have been charged: Bernardo Arevalo Padron, Juan Carlos Recio Martinez, Manuel Antonio Gonzalez Castellanos, and Mario Julio Viera Gonzalez. Regrettably, Cuban independent journalists continue to be forced into exile.

Then there is the case of Jorge Luis Garcia Perez. I always pay a lot of attention to what Senator Dodd says, particularly when he

talks about the issue of medical shortages in Cuba because here is a case where the Congress potentially could do some good.

According to Amnesty International, Jorge Luis Garcia Perez suffers from tachycardia, hypoglycemia, renal colic, and other ailments. According to Amnesty International, the medicine that his family has obtained from abroad is not delivered to him in prison. So the Cuban Government is denying him medicine that already exists in Cuba.

I would like to ask Senator Dodd and other members of this committee to urge the Cuban Government to permit the family to deliver that medicine that is so much needed to this Amnesty International prisoner of conscience.

While Castro attempts to stamp out civic opposition in Cuba, he continues to charm foreigners and even some Members of this Congress. The Washington Post, in an editorial a few days ago, says that Castro is achieving some success. But the Post warns: "If the four"—meaning these four that we have been discussing—"are convicted and sentenced, it will show that the regime will not permit any opposition at all. What then," the Washington Post asks, "will the international crowd have to say about the society-transforming power of their investments?"

In a similar vein, *Le Monde*, the French daily, said that the trial has "shattered the European illusions about Castro's revolution."

Finally, we come to the Canadians. Writing in the *Globe and Mail*, just a few days ago, Marcus Gee said that Canada's friendship to Cuba was a big asset for the Cuban Government. Then he says, "But, despite Canada's best intentions, the practical effect on human rights in Cuba has been zero. Mr. Castro's human rights record remains the worst in the Americas. Cuba is still a one-party state where elections are a sham, the judiciary is still a tool of state oppression, independent newspapers and free trade unions don't exist, and more than 300 Cubans still languish in jail for 'counter-revolutionary crimes.'"

Apparently, the Canadians are beginning to see the light about Cuba, and I think Senator Helms and his leadership ought to be credited for that.

I am afraid I might be running out of time. I will try to proceed quickly, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Very good.

Mr. CALZON. Given the situation with Canada, and the failure of Canada's constructive engagement policy as explained in the pages of the *Globe and Mail*, what can we expect from the forthcoming exercise in "baseball diplomacy?"

Let us keep in mind that Cuban athletes who question government policies are banned from the field. That is a fact. That is not an exaggeration from Cuban exiles. You can look it up.

Cuban athletes, Cuban baseball players who have expressed independent political views are not allowed to play ball in Cuba.

As was the case in Nazi Germany and the Communist Bloc, the regime's sports programs have a most definite political dimension. The Orioles mean well. They wanted to play in Havana. They also said that they wanted to donate the proceeds of the games to Catholic charities in Cuba.

I would be in favor of that. Unfortunately, as it stands now, the Church will not benefit and there is even speculation that American sports networks will pay Castro a sizable sum, which is not likely to reach Cuba's poor.

Given the sorry state of affairs, the defeat in Geneva last year of the American resolution condemning Castro's human rights abuses, the willingness of the business community to put narrow corporate agendas and potential profits ahead of U.S. national interests and those of the Cuban people, what can this Congress and the President do?

First, the Congress should join Amnesty International in asking for the immediate and unconditional release of the Havana Four.

Second, Congress should suggest to the President to urge America's friends, many of whom today ask the President to put American lives at risk around the world to defend freedom, to insist on the need for a United Nations investigation of human rights violations in Cuba.

Third, as the administration through Secretary of State Madeleine Albright—to her credit—said a few days ago, the United States ought to reaffirm its determination to stay the course in Cuba until there is substantive political reform.

Fourth, as in the case of Eastern Europe, breaking through the regime's censorship is paramount. I urge Congress and the President to review United States broadcasting efforts and Castro's jamming measures to provide the necessary technology and resources so that both TV and Radio Marti can effectively reach the Cuban people.

Fifth, Members of Congress and their staffs who travel to Cuba and meet with Cuban Government officials should also try to help Castro's victims.

Sixth, Members of Congress should urge fellow parliamentarians from around the world to condition their government's dealings with Havana on a substantial increase of freedom in Cuba.

In conclusion, let me say a word about the Cuban people.

The Cubans know about the indignities of political imprisonment. They know about the need for an independent labor movement. They are painfully aware of the insidious effect of segregation policies that bar them from hotels, stores, beaches, restaurants, hospitals, and other facilities set aside for foreigners. They celebrated the rebirth of freedom in Eastern Europe and elsewhere, and still await their own.

The Cubans, despite what you might hear from time to time, are no different from the Poles, the Czechs, the Chileans, and many others who have freed themselves from tyranny in our lifetime.

Despite Castro's repression, the Cuban people have embarked on a journey similar to that of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, the people power movement in the Philippines, the students who gathered around Vaclav Havel, the workers who joined Lech Walesa's Solidarity in Gdansk, and to that of Americans who joined hands with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, sir.

Now the third witness is Ms. Ruth Montaner, who is a representative of the Internal Dissident Working Group, whose four leaders, as I understand it, were tried last Monday for "inciting sedition."

I would ask staff to stand to the side because I want the hearing room to see this picture. Those four courageous leaders, who are pictured here on my right, have spent 19 months—is that correct—in jail for publishing a critique of Castroism entitled, "The Homeland Belongs to All."

Ms. Montaner, we would be glad to hear from you.

STATEMENT OF RUTH C. MONTANER, REPRESENTATIVE, INTERNAL DISSIDENT WORKING GROUP, MIAMI, FL, AND CUBAN DISSIDENCE TASK GROUP

Ms. MONTANER. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Senators. I am very grateful for the opportunity to be here in behalf of the Cuban Dissidence Task Group.

First of all, I would like to quote the group: "The world must know that we are desperately trying to contribute to the peaceful transformation of Cuba from a uni-party state to a democratic, pluralistic society under the rule of law."

My name is Ruth Montaner. Along with Pablo Llabre and Antonio Santiago, I represent the four persons who do comprise the Cuban Dissidence Task Group.

Let me tell you briefly who they are.

Felix Bonne Carcasses, the person on the right hand side of the picture, is a former University of Havana professor who was expelled from his work when he signed a letter in 1992 to the Council of State demanding more academic and political freedom. He organized the Corriente Civica Cubana, which is kind of a Cuban think tank of intellectuals.

Then on the left corner you have Rene Gomez Manzano, a very bright and talented jurist, who was a graduate of Patricio Lumumba University. Also, when he dared to oppose or present ideas contrary to the regime, he was expelled from his work. He formed then the Corriente Agramontista.

Next there is Vladimiro Roca Antunez. He could have been a prince of the revolution because of his father, because of who he was. He chose another path. An economist and a trained MiG pilot, he created the Partido Social Democrata Cubano, a political party that has allies throughout the world.

Finally there is Marta Beatriz Roque Cabello, the only woman in the group, an economist who was also expelled from her work at the University of Havana as a math teacher when she presented information as to mismanagement in some government groups.

Let me tell you now what the four did.

First of all, I am going to try to convince you that the problem in Cuba is not a problem between the Cuban Nation and the American Nation or United States policy. It is a problem between the Cuban regime and the Cuban people.

These four persons, right after the Concilia Cubanos group was destroyed, going back to the airplanes being shot down—I have to remind you, gentlemen and ladies, that the day that the airplanes were shot down was the day that the group of Concilia Cubanos, that were part of 100-some organizations in Cuba, tried to meet to

present some proposals to the Cuban Government for some political liberalization.

That meeting was denied. The permit for the meeting was denied by the Cuban Government.

After that, these four persons that we have here created, in the middle of 1996, a group that is called the Cuban Dissidence Task Group, and prepared a platform, a six point platform, asking for amnesty for the political prisoners, asking for participation of all Cubans in elections, for economic freedom, and respect for human rights, among other things.

In a 4-month span in 1997, these 4 people wrote several documents, and the list of recipients of these documents was headed by Raul and Fidel Castro themselves. This indicates that, really, they had a purpose of trying to talk to the government at all times.

Let me read just a little piece of one of the documents that is part of the indictment, the Cuban Government indictment, and is an appeal to the Cuban exiles. "We wish to point out the impact that the remittants"—they are referring to the moneys that the Cuban community sends to the people in Cuba—"may have upon the silencing of the many voices inside Cuba who disagree with the Communist regime."

This letter ends, first and foremost, with the same peaceful framework in which we carry out our activities.

Another of the documents they wrote in that time was the letter to foreign investors. It reads, "Resolving the disagreement between the Government of Cuba and our citizens is a fundamental short-term objective. Other existing conflicts, such as those related to the Helms-Burton legislation, are beyond the limited capabilities of the internal opposition and even of the international community to resolve."

In a span of time that is becoming even shorter, there will be a transition to democracy in our country and this leads to the need for measures that will avoid a situation where current foreign investment may be viewed in the near future as one form of complicity with the wrongs that now are suffered by the Cuban population.

With this in mind, the article's principles, a copy of which is attached, were promulgated.

We cannot be involved in the debate as to whether or not it is correct to invest in Cuba. Nonetheless, it is evident that observers of norms of equity and cooperation in labor relations, as well as respect for the Cuban people on the part of those wishing to invest, is the best for everyone.

A business strategy opposed, therefore, supporting implementation of the article's principles.

Then they wrote a letter to the people in Cuba asking them to abstain to go to the elections to vote in the upcoming elections in that year as a sign of protest for the conduct of the Cuban regime.

Finally, in June 1997, they wrote the document, "The Homeland is for All."

I will go a little later back to that and I am going to be brief.

In that document, the four asked for an internal dialog. They petitioned the Cuban Government for the opportunity to be heard. They presented a plan, how they thought it was incorrect, and

their proposal for correcting the mistakes of the government to the government itself.

For that reason, they were incarcerated on July 16, 1997. Just before their incarceration, they tried to hold a meeting with the international community to present those documents to the international community and to the Castro Government itself. In that meeting, only the Americans were there. Only Mr. Tim Brown and Michael Cosack were at that meeting. Absent was all of the international community.

In the documents these people wrote, in the bulletins they wrote throughout that year and with the help of the people of respected groups—economists, lawyers—they repeatedly stated that the problems of the Cuban Nation had nothing to do with United States' failing foreign policy; but, on the contrary, they were related to the lack of democracy that exists in the country today.

When the Pope visited Cuba in January 1998, everybody had the hope of a transformation, of a new life in Cuba. But, unfortunately, the facts are that repression increased tremendously and dramatically after the Pope visited—no matter the efforts of the international community that embraced what the Pope said: let's open up to the Cuban Nation and the Cuban Nation will open to the world.

This did not happen.

The release of political prisoners was not an unconditional release, but the prisoners were sent out of Cuba. They were not allowed to remain in the country. That is also not an amnesty.

Then, at the end of the year, United States policy changed or tried to change the embargo law, and the reply from Federal people that head the union syndicates in Cuba early in January 1999, indicated that that softening of the embargo measurements was an aggression to Cuba by the imperialist Yankees.

So I don't know how to interpret that, really. It goes beyond my comprehension.

In March of this year, they had the trial of the four Cubans who were accused of sedition.

I don't know how much time I have left.

Unfortunately, I don't have too much time, but for you lawmakers in a free country, to read the indictment of the Cuban Government against these people is a piece that probably those of you who read it will never forget what is there.

In the items confiscated from them you will find computers, pencils, books, notebooks, and items such as pieces of paper. These people are incarcerated for writing, again, four or five documents. But not only them, the whole Cuban Nation is incarcerated for thinking, for trying to present a different approach to the problems that are in the country today than those that the regime offers.

I do not see a frank solution or any solution to the problem, and also some organizations, such as the Federaciones Electrica de Cuba, the Centro no Gubernamental Jose de la Luz y Caballero, the Partido Pro Derechos Humanos de Cuba, the Comite Cubano Pro Derechos Humanos, the Cuban Workers Group, the Partido Demócrata Martiano and others—

Senator DODD. Our stenographer is having a very difficult time with these names. So why don't you submit the list and we will make sure it is included in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Exactly.

Ms. MONTANER. You have the list, and they sent you a letter almost reconfirming all of what has been said here.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Montaner and related material has been retained in the committee files.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Let's go to the next witness now.

We appreciate your testimony.

Next is Mr. Luis Zuniga, who spent 19 years in Cuba's prisons as a political prisoner. As president of the Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba, he monitors events on the island closely. He has testified before several sessions of the U.N. Human Rights Commission meetings in Geneva as a guest of the Nicaraguan delegation.

We are glad you are here, sir. We appreciate your coming and now we will hear from you, sir.

**STATEMENT OF LUIS ZUNIGA, PRESIDENT, FOUNDATION FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS IN CUBA, MIAMI, FL**

Mr. ZUNIGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, when addressing the issue of human rights in Cuba, we must start by pointing out that Fidel Castro has been in power for 40 consecutive years, longer than dictators Trujillo, Stroessner, and Francisco Franco.

Let us also recall that Castro monopolizes all of the important positions in Cuba—Chief of State, Head of Government, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, and Secretary General of the only permitted political party.

With this introduction, any individual, even without knowing anything about Cuba, would be able to easily conclude what Cuba has become under Castro.

One of the first actions Castro undertook after taking control of political power was to establish the death penalty and use it extensively as an instrument of terror. There is no question that the most outstanding characteristic of the situation in Cuba is the state of terror the population lives under.

This terror is not unfounded because Castro has never hesitated to kill or destroy anyone who opposes him and because, in contrast to former dictators in the Latin American tradition, Castro never had an independent judicial power he must answer to or one that could impede his arbitrary measures.

In fact, another of his first actions in government was to dissolve judicial power and create a new one, submitted to him by law and with judges appointed by him in order to insure impunity.

Note how last Friday, Cuba's foreign relations spokesman declared before Cuban television that the four dissidents recently tried were already sentenced, this without the judge having rendered a decision yet.

Mr. Chairman, Castro's dictatorship is not different from the many others Latin America had in the past. I do not remember

politicians asking those dictators to reform their systems or to allow a group to open an office. Everybody demanded the dictators to quit and allow democracy to reign.

Mr. Chairman, it is truly difficult to find respect in Cuba for any of the fundamental rights and freedoms. In my opinion, the most important of those rights is that to freely choose one's government because, using the electoral process, it is possible to remove from office anyone who places himself above the law.

The worst aspect of the Cuban situation is that the people do not have the legal right to choose their government nor to change the current political structure.

Article 5 of the socialist constitution establishes that: "The Communist Party is the guiding force of the Cuban society." Consequently, the highest authority of the country is the head of the Communist Party, and that individual is not elected but is chosen by the Executive Committee of the Party.

In other words, Fidel Castro chooses Fidel Castro.

This is the primary reason why, as long as Article 5 is not removed from the socialist constitution created by Castro, it is naive to expect changes in Cuba.

This message should be heeded by United States Senators who travel to Cuba and are misled by Castro with false hopes for change.

Mr. Chairman, the conditions inside the prisons are truly alarming. In fact, it has always been so. For Castro, the act of confining an individual who opposes his dictatorship is not sufficient punishment. Castro's view is that prison has to succeed in submitting the will of the enemy.

To accomplish this, he uses methods of systematic destruction—physical, such as hunger and malnutrition, beatings, and lack of medical attention, as well as psychological, such as walled in cells, confinement in psychiatric hospitals, torture with electronic sounds, and isolation for long periods of time.

Fear of being imprisoned is another instrument of terror used by Castro to maintain the population under control.

If there were at least a small amount of international concern, the request for the freedom of all political prisoners in Cuba would be a priority. And, by the way, it also would be worthwhile to call for putting an end to the usual petition of presidents or dignitaries who travel to Cuba asking the dictator to free some political prisoners because, while it is true that some are released, it is also true that it serves as an incentive to Castro to continue imprisoning individuals he can later give to other visitors.

If a dignitary has a true calling to request the release of prisoners, let it be the release of all political prisoners.

As a case in point, Dr. Omar del Pozo, freed a year ago following the Papal visit. His place is now occupied by the four authors of the manifesto, "La Patria es de Todos," "The Homeland Belongs to All Citizens."

Mr. Chairman, another terrible aspect of Cuban life is political discrimination. Under Castro, to be allowed to study beyond the elementary school level or to obtain a job, one must belong to the political organizations the government has created as its own support system. In fact, Decree 34, effective on March 12, 1980, establishes

that political conduct is one of the considerations to fire an employee. In fact, any individual who is not a member of those organizations or refuses to participate in the activities in support of Castro and his dictatorship simply becomes a third class citizen, jobless and uneducated.

There is another level of discrimination, that of Cubans versus foreigners. The latter are allowed to own business entities, engage in commerce, import and export, while those same activities are prohibited to Cuban citizens.

A similar situation prevails in segregated hotels, beaches and stores that prohibit access to Cubans. As far as I am aware, there is no comparable case of blatant discrimination in the Western Hemisphere.

The infamy behind the dual health care system in the island is also well known. But I want to emphasize what occurs with foreign investments in Cuba because, aside from the fact that many factories, warehouses, and industries have been stolen from their rightful owners, Fidel Castro is violating numerous labor standards accepted by Cuba in the International Labor Organization, such as the direct hiring of workers by the employer without government interference, the prohibition that workers be allowed to organize independent labor unions to defend their rights, and the abominable practice of confiscating up to 95 percent of the salary they receive.

If Fidel Castro is responsible for this peculiar mix of exploitation and arbitrariness, the disreputable businessmen that confabulate with Castro against the Cuban workers are just as responsible by accepting to do business under such conditions.

It is very worrisome that executives of American companies are putting pressure on Congress to lift the restrictions that prohibit them from doing business in Cuba when such commerce would take place under the same adverse conditions for Cuban workers as those that exist today under other foreign investors in Cuba.

A clear example of the dangers implicit in the issue of investments in Cuba was evident when recently the attorneys of several American telephone companies sided with Castro when a Miami judge decided that the funds that were destined for Cuba as payment for telephone services would be diverted as compensation to the families of the American pilots who were killed when Castro's armed forces destroyed their aircraft over international waters in 1996.

Doubtlessly, companies who enter into business with the Cuban dictator will ultimately oppose any United States measure that seeks Cuba's freedom which would, of course, disrupt their flow of profits. In this sense, it is alarming how it is becoming increasingly clear that this administration intends to follow a policy of engagement with regard to the Cuban problem.

The complete failure this policy has had in China is a fact which government officials have tried to conceal. This policy should serve to dissuade the administration from pursuing such purposes in Cuba, lest it results in a more grave mistake.

What changes has engagement produced in China in terms of repression against dissidents or recognition of fundamental rights? None—or, actually, one. This is one completely contrary to what

was desired, and that is the silence of government authorities concerning imprisonments, lengthy sentences, and forced deportations.

Robert Kegan, a reporter for the New York Times, mentioned in a January 15 article that: "They"—the American officials—"were wrong and they have paid dearly. China's leaders seem confident that they will pay no significant price for the crackdown and that President Clinton will tolerate almost any misbehavior rather than change his policy of engagement. So far, they are right. President Clinton has been silent."

It really is not my desire to be critical of the administration, but it is my duty to point out potential errors which can still be avoided. Let us not forget that errors here are only that—errors without further consequence than criticism. But for Cubans on the island, those errors can cost lives and years of imprisonment.

Apparently, common sense prevailed some weeks ago, and the plans to create a commission to review United States policy toward Cuba were discarded. It was a good thing, too, because the phrase "review" was redolent of engagement and of economic profit over human suffering.

What the policy toward Cuba needs is enforcement. If the embargo, the Helms-Burton bill, and the efforts to get allies to place pressure on Castro to open Cuba are the instruments, then, please, enforce them.

It looks like a joke to say the policy has failed when it is not really implemented.

Mr. Chairman, I lived for 30 years in Castro's Cuba, 19 of those years in prison. I can assure you that Fidel Castro will never make the slightest concession in favor of democracy. Through the years, Castro himself has consistently said so.

It is inconceivable that after four decades of crimes and destruction, some are still trying to find in the dictator a vestige of democracy or human feeling.

What Castro wants and is actively seeking is an understanding with the U.S. Government, a government to government deal, based on mutual interests but that will not affect his control and tyranny over the island—something quite different from what the friends of the cause for democracy in Cuba wish.

It is the money and the credits with which to finance his dictatorship that he is after.

How many years more do politicians need to realize that Castro just wants everybody to bend and submit to his will and ego?

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the logical and necessary question is how can the United States help Cuba move toward democracy? To me, the answer is clear: Castro's power is based on terror and that terror relies on maintaining the enormous military repressive apparatus that enforces it. If Castro's resources are cut or reduced, he is obliged to downsize that apparatus and that would give the people of Cuba an opportunity to remove the dictatorship, or at least obtain a reprieve in the repression.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

The time being what it is, I had hoped that we could have a little bit more time for questions, but we are running over. I suggest that we have a round of 7 minutes each.

Please do not make a speech and then ask a question after the caution light is on. Of course, that's not you [indicating] and not you [indicating]. You have never done that.

About this baseball game, ladies and gentlemen, I had been led to understand that the administration was going to insist that the proceeds from the game go to the Church in Cuba, the Catholic Church.

Now I am about as strong a Baptist as you ever saw, but I thought that was a good idea.

Now the administration appears to be backing off on that position. If anybody will, send word to the administration that one guy on this committee fervently hopes that the administration will return to and restore their original position on this.

The Treasury Department said that ESPN has asked to travel to Cuba to explore arrangements with the Cuban Government to broadcast the baseball game on March 28.

It is not yet known whether ESPN will request to pay for the broadcast rights or how the money will be divided. But the rumor is that Castro has turned down, thumbs down, on the money going to the Church after a preliminary agreement had been entered into by him and others.

Now we need to know exactly where we stand on this thing. I am not saying that the Orioles cannot go or that I am going to try to stop them. But I am going to appeal to the baseball players on the Orioles to examine their own consciences about whether they ought to go under the circumstances that the proceeds will go to Mr. Castro.

Now if he is going to get the money, it is a different proposition, as far as I am concerned, and I will oppose personally their going. I certainly hope that the management of the Orioles and the players on the team will examine the whole aspect, including their consciences.

Now, then, I would have a question for Mr. Calzon. Have the embassies of the European Union countries been active in supporting dissidents?

Mr. CALZON. Senator, as you know, I am here on behalf of the Center for a Free Cuba. I cannot speak for other governments.

But my understanding is, for example, that at this juncture the Italian Government has expressed great concerns about what is happening in Cuba. The same thing applies, to his credit, to the Canadian Foreign Minister at this time.

In the past, the help or access to Cuban dissidents in Cuba by other missions, besides that of the United States, has been limited. But it is a fact that there are several democratic governments that have, at least, opened their doors to the human rights activists and to the families of political prisoners.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you know of any embassies which have been active in trying to help the dissidents?

Mr. CALZON. I do, Senator. But I do not think in an open hearing it makes a lot of sense to point out who they are. Otherwise, the Cuban Government will make life even more difficult.

As as you probably know, the Cuban Government broke into the U.S. diplomatic pouch a couple of years ago. One piece of evidence presented by Havana, I am sure the Senators have read, is George

Orwell's "Animal Farm." The Cuban Government considers Orwell's books subversive so, too, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

So as far as foreign governments are concerned, I think it would be very helpful for the committee to contact some of their diplomatic missions in Washington and get a better appraisal than I can provide about what they are willing to do.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me ask the other two of you, because all three of you—he [Mr. Gutierrez-Menoyo] doesn't think we ought to do anything—seem to be more together.

What more could our Government do in our interest section in Havana to help the dissidents or independent journalists that I referred to earlier?

Mr. CALZON. I have something to say. I think one important thing is that all the members of the committee, I would assume, are in favor of baseball games.

I remember as a child in Cuba watching the World Series on Cuban TV. That was accomplished thanks to a Cuban airplane placed on the Florida Straits, which enabled the Cuban people to watch the game.

So those who support the Orioles playing in Havana ought to support a C-130 in the Florida Straits that will make it possible for TV Marti to be seen in Cuba at all times, so that Cubans can watch not only one baseball game, but TV Marti on a regular basis.

The CHAIRMAN. But do you have any suggestion about other things that our country should do?

Mr. CALZON. Yes, Senator, and I mentioned some of them briefly in the testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. Then be brief because I want to hear from the others, too.

Mr. CALZON. Yes.

I would urge those, particularly those who favor constructive engagement or who have been talking about medical supplies, such as, I think, Senator Hagel and Senator Dodd, to raise these kinds of issues with the Cuban Government.

You have a lot more influence than certainly those of us who are critical of the regime. It makes a lot of sense, to me that you approach the Cuban Government and say that, as long as these four people are in prison, as long as the rapid deployment brigade are going around beating up dissidents, innocent people, very little is going to be accomplished.

Now I'm not talking about free and fair elections under international supervision. I am simply saying, asking that you say to the Cuban Government, to the people you talk to all the time, that as long as they go around beating up dissidents—mothers, children—as long as they have these people in prison, that they are not going to have a lot of constructive engagement from the United States side.

The CHAIRMAN. Very quickly, do you have a quick suggestion? I want to enforce my own time rule on me.

Ms. MONTANER. Increasing support to the Cuban dissidents—not to the group, but to Cuban dissidents in general and to the journalists.

I have one comment, one short comment.

In 1936, in the Olympic Games, people from the German Republic will have forever a footnote that they attended the games for the national regime. These baseball players will have such a footnote on their resumes for the rest of their lives.

It is very insensitive in their behalf and in the Orioles owners' behalf to go at such a time when 94 persons were arrested in 1 day.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Again, let me thank our witnesses for being here today and for expressing their views.

I do not think there is any disagreement in terms of the issue of these four who are being tried. I appreciate your testimony on that, that this is a violation of human rights down there and that people feel strongly about it and have expressed themselves on it. Also, other governments have done so as well. Governments that have diplomatic relations with Cuba have expressed themselves on the issue.

So I do not think there is much debate, at least there should not be much debate, on that particular issue. But what I think could be valuable here—because, as I said at the outset of my remarks—is too much of our policy over 40 years has been based on action/reaction, action/reaction. Any suggestion or any efforts to try to find some different way to improve the situation in Cuba is met with, at least in many quarters, with significant hostility, including the proposal, I gather, the three of you would be opposed to. This is the proposal for the Orioles to go to play in Havana.

Is that true? Why don't you just give me a quick answer to that, yes or no.

Mr. Calzon, do you oppose the Orioles going to Cuba?

Mr. CALZON. No. I am in favor of it as long as the proceeds go to the Catholic Church.

Senator DODD. But there are not any proceeds from that game. Aren't the proceeds really going to come when they play in Baltimore? That is more likely where the proceeds will come from.

Mr. CALZON. Senator, if you are in favor of the Orioles going to Havana, I assume that you have a moral responsibility to speak out against the fact that some Cuban athletes are not allowed to play due to their political views.

Senator DODD. You're not answering my question. Let me ask the question and you can answer it for me. I listened to you very patiently during your testimony.

Mr. CALZON. Yes, sir.

Senator DODD. You are in favor of the team going down? I just want to get a quick review. Yes?

Mr. CALZON. I am not against the team going to Havana.

Senator DODD. How about you, Ms. Montaner? Are you in favor of the Orioles going down to play in Havana?

Ms. MONTANER. At this time, I believe it is very insensitive in their behalf to go now. And I am all for establishing peoples to peoples contact, to increase that. Yes.

Senator DODD. OK.

Mr. Zuniga, are you opposed to them going down?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Yes. I am opposed because it is a tragedy. At a time when Cuba has so many deaths, prisons, and so on, being in a joyful way, playing baseball as if nothing happened in Cuba—no.

Senator DODD. I understand. I just want to get your views.

How did you feel about the Pope going there? What was your initial reaction, the organization's reaction to the Pope going there?

Mr. ZUNIGA. He did very good. Very good. The Pope's visit was a shower of spiritualism to the Cuban people.

Senator DODD. Were you in favor of him going down there initially, the Pope? Were you in favor of the Pope's visit?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Of course.

Senator DODD. All of you were?

Ms. MONTANER. Yes.

Mr. CALZON. Yes, I was.

Senator DODD. Your organization, Mr. Calzon, the Center for a Free Cuba, how much money do you receive from the United States Government?

Mr. CALZON. We have a grant that is about half of our budget, \$400,000, similar to those allocated to promote democracy in Poland, the Czech Republic, and in many other places around the world, Senator.

Senator DODD. All right.

I wonder if you might just quickly comment on the notion of how we might begin to change the dynamic here because that, to me, is what is critically important. We have relationships with governments around the world, many of which do not embrace Jeffersonian democracy. You mentioned China and Vietnam. There are other governments that have monarchies that are far less than democratic. I can think of governments in the Middle East with whom we have major economic relations which do some things that violate human rights all the time.

Certainly we speak out periodically. But it seems to me we have to get beyond that in our bid if we are going to try to create some sort of transition that occurs here.

What do you say to those who raise the issue—and try to keep your answers brief on this because I only have 7 minutes? What is your answer to those who say after 40 years of a policy—37 years, 38 years—of an embargo, where the conditions have not improved by maintaining a policy of isolation, where those who have even suggested going to Cuba and trying to develop any opening here, where nothing has changed?

We make the case in Eastern Europe and other places where, in fact, a policy of constructive engagement did, at least, contribute to creating some change that brought about the results we see today in Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

How do you answer the question that a consistent policy that we have followed for 40 years has not produced anything but the status quo and your insistence that we maintain that policy here without any change?

Mr. ZUNIGA. If you would allow me to answer—

Senator DODD. Sure.

Mr. ZUNIGA. I think it is a mistake to say that the U.S. embargo has failed. I have proof—I am not talking about my opinion, I am talking about proof. The year 1991 was when intervention stopped.

From that time on is when we can measure the impact of the embargo because, formerly, Castro was receiving \$3 billion a year and he could waive off any economic measure.

From then on, 1991 to 1995, the Cuban Government assessed that they reduced 48 percent of their military budget—48 percent. Besides, here, in 1997, dismantling of her navy occurred. Cuba has no navy now. They were sinking missile boats worth \$24 million.

Do you know why? It is because the embargo is working.

If the United States were not doing that, Castro still now would be a threat to the United States. Thanks to the embargo, Cuba is not a military threat to the United States.

Besides, the dollarization of the Cuban economy, the slight opening of cracks in Cuba, are the result of Castro's willingness. Is Castro prone toward democracy? No. It has been the economic pressure that has done this.

It's the same way that it worked in the Soviet Union, the same way it worked in Eastern Europe. It's because of the economic cracking. Otherwise, they would not bend.

Their purpose is quite clear, to stay in power as long as possible and to have everybody submitting to them. Only when they lacked the resources to maintain their control did this happen.

Senator DODD. Thank you. Let me get to another witness.

Ms. MONTANER. I going to reply with a question: can anyone show me what improvements we have made with an engagement policy that has been in effect for the past 14 months? The only thing we see that we can observe is an increase in the repression on the island. Besides the codes they had there, they thought they were not enough and they imposed new sanctions.

It is the only country in the hemisphere where political problems are in the code, in the penal code, described as offenses to the Nation. Can you tell me what the engagement has done to alleviate that condition? Nothing. So both policies have failed—so far.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I, too, wish to thank our witnesses for coming today and expressing their views.

Thank you very much.

I have a question that I would like each of you to answer.

Mr. Menoyo, you have gotten off lightly so far. So I don't want you to feel neglected at your end of the table. The question is for each of our four witnesses.

In your opinion, what does the recent crackdown tell us about Castro's regime? Does it mean his regime is weaker, stronger, or does it make any difference?

Mr. Menoyo.

Mr. GUTIERREZ-MENOYO [as translated]. It means, first, that it is the same dictatorship as ever. Second, it means that they feel cornered by a policy from the United States.

I wish to clarify to all of you since mention has been made here of human rights violations, that I, who have spent 22 years in Cuban prisons, can assure you that there is no violation of human rights in Cuba because there cannot be a violation of what does not exist.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Calzon.

Mr. CALZON. I think what it means is that the Castro regime has begun to be more fearful of the Cuban people. The Pope went to Cuba and told the Cubans not to fear. They have begun to speak out.

But I think the day Cubans begin to speak out, then the folks here in the Congress will have a responsibility, and that should not be to make Cuba an exception to the policy of the President for this hemisphere. We hear about China, we hear about the Middle East. In this hemisphere, the President's policy is to promote democracy everywhere—in Haiti, in Central America, and in Chile. Cuba should not be an exception, Senator.

Senator HAGEL. So you would say—what—that this recent crackdown has made things—what?

Mr. CALZON. I think the crackdown is part of a long-term repression of human rights in Cuba. It also shows that the policy of engagement, as well as the policy of sanctions, has not worked. This is because there have been two policies in place for 40 years. Let us remember that. Canada, France, Mexico, and the others have had a policy of engagement, of accommodating Castro, of not conditioning things, of dealing with him, of trying to find reasons to blame the United States for his crimes. So this policy has failed.

So let's not blame the Canadians for what Castro does to the Cuban people, nor blame the United States. It is Mr. Castro who is responsible.

Senator HAGEL. So is he stronger or weaker?

Mr. CALZON. I think he is much weaker now than he was 40 years ago when the overwhelming number of Cubans supported him. I think today he is stronger in the sense that some of his friends have found their voices to try to blame the United States. Every time Castro does something terrible, the occasion is used to try to blame U.S. policy.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Ms. Montaner.

Ms. MONTANER. The crackdown is one of the symptoms of the breakdown. The corruption, the criminality index increasing, these are symptoms, that in most organizations people are giving up their ID cards; people are not going to the meetings, the regulated meetings. These are signs of the breakdown in the government. The support of the socialist allies they had throughout the world is weakening by the moment.

As I was coming here yesterday night, the President of the Senate in the Republic of Dominica told us that they are going to make a strong statement today criticizing Castro for this new wave of repression.

Yes, he is weakening and he is more dangerous than ever.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Zuniga.

Mr. ZUNIGA. For me it is quite clear. Castro is terrified by looking at the power that is dripping through his fist. He is looking at his power terminating.

Remember that in the Soviet Union, nobody could envisage that it was so close to being cracked down. And it happened. Castro is in the same pattern. He knows that his power is ending, that he has no more resources to maintain the terror that he maintained.

And, besides, there are deep, profound cracks inside his dictatorship's apparatus.

So I think that is an evidence of his fear of what is about to come.

Senator HAGEL. Do you believe before the recent crackdown that there was more independence by journalists, independent groups, than there is now?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Well, to speak or to say something about freedom or independence in Cuba is quite difficult.

Senator HAGEL. Well, it is relative, obviously.

My question is has there been more or less since the crackdown?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Indeed, there is more because the international pressure is now awakening. So, for example, even Communists, as in Italy, are now criticizing Castro. Samarago, the Nobel Prize winner, also a Communist, is also criticizing Castro. The socialists in Chile are also criticizing Castro.

I know that is why there is a widening. There is now more relaxation inside because he cannot keep the fist so tight as he did before.

Senator HAGEL. Does Mr. Menoyo share that view?

Mr. GUTIERREZ-MENOYO [as translated]. I feel that in Cuba we can speak of tolerance. There was a bit more tolerance before, because, without question, Cuba envisages the possibility of improving relations with the United States. When this possibility disappears, tolerance disappears as well.

Senator HAGEL. I think my time is almost up. To be in full compliance with the chairman's wishes, I yield the floor.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Torricelli, you can take 8 minutes.

Senator TORRICELLI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to spend one of them complimenting you. The most important thing about the improvement of human rights and bringing political change in Cuba is that Castro will never be able to convince himself that people are no longer watching. Your holding this hearing is invaluable and we are indebted to you.

I want to thank Mr. Zuniga for his spirited defense of American foreign policy through these years. You are quite right that the American embargo on Cuba has had very real, lasting, and tangible benefits.

The Cuban army, air force, and navy are a fraction of their former selves. Ironically, the dollarization of the economy, Castro's reversal of his position of allowing phone service, perhaps now mail service, even the greatest irony of all, I suspect, his invitation to the Pope, he would have found far too dangerous if he had not been under the economic and political pressure of the embargo.

The only point that might have been added is that, indeed, the embargo is not 40 years old. It is 6 years old because, until we eliminated trade through Western Europe, it was an unfulfilled promise of an embargo. It had no real meaning.

I greatly regret that the Clinton administration some months ago, following its predecessors, convinced itself in a triumph of hope over reality that further concessions to Castro would yield some result. It is a painful lesson that Jimmy Carter learned, that

I believe George Bush learned. But Bill Clinton had to learn it for himself.

Can anyone cite, based on the concessions that the Clinton administration made, any action by Castro that indicates that we are entering into a reciprocal process where he has recognized the changes of our policy and he is prepared on any level to institute changes of his own?

Mr. CALZON. I think part of the answer that sometimes is heard, Senator is that Castro is willing to talk to some American Senators and even to some exiles. But he does not allow the Cuban people to talk among themselves. That is the real issue.

The issue is not whether the Cuban Government talks to some of you or the Cuban Government talks to some Miami exiles who visit Cuba. The issue should be whether the Cuban people in Cuba, as it occurred in South Africa, Chile, Poland, and elsewhere are permitted to meet peacefully in order to find solutions to the problems of the country.

Senator TORRICELLI. So you share the conclusion, then, that Fidel Castro gave Bill Clinton nothing for the administration's concessions on trade and travel.

Mr. CALZON. Castro, I am afraid to say, perceives those concessions as signs of weakness on the American side.

Senator TORRICELLI. Let me go further.

I know that the Holy Father went to Havana with the very best of intentions. I believe, indeed, that 30 or 40 priests are going to be allowed to follow.

I actually believe that, historically, the Pope's visit may have profound consequences. I have always believed that, whoever the next leader of Cuba is, whoever leads democratic change and a fight for human rights, I suspect that person is a young person who was in that crowd, heard that Mass, and had a taste of freedom.

But in the very real and practical sense of the moment, are there any tangible concessions that Fidel Castro made to the Holy Father other than the few prisoners?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Up to now, there is not one that I could mention.

Senator TORRICELLI. So then, the last two principal international efforts at reconciliation with Cuba, those of the United States Government and by the Catholic Church, have yielded nothing?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Nothing really.

Senator TORRICELLI. These facts, therefore, should be instructive to the King of Spain as he plans his own trip?

Mr. ZUNIGA. I think that it will follow the same pattern that we saw with the Pope.

Ms. MONTANER. The same.

Senator TORRICELLI. Is there then a greater chance of the King of Spain being used during his visit for propaganda purposes than any realistic hope that he would be able to get any concessions?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Even if a great influence, personality, can't convince him, even if the words of a Pope could not make any dent in Castro's iron fist, do you think that a King of Spain could do that?

Senator TORRICELLI. I do not. That is why I hope the King, for whom I have profound respect and a great admiration for his country, will not allow his position to be used. He has an opportunity

to learn by the experience of the U.S. Government, which has been so unsuccessful.

Mr. CALZON. Senator, my hope is simply that the King, if he decides to go to Cuba, will obtain concessions before he goes. If there are going to be any concessions, they have to be announced before he goes.

Senator TORRICELLI. Yes, although I would remind you that I think the Holy Father was of the impression that he had such concessions and agreements worked out in advance as well. They were not kept.

Could I ask your reactions to the usefulness of the Iberian-American Summit that has been proposed for Havana for later this year? What reaction do you have as to its prospects? This must be brief because of my time constraints.

Mr. CALZON. Senator, I would hope that those meetings, all future meetings, in Havana would be reconsidered in view of what has happened in Cuba in the last few days.

Senator TORRICELLI. Therefore, the international community, recognizing the jailing of dissidents, these new laws on journalistic contacts, countries should reconsider their decision?

Mr. CALZON. That is my hope, Senator.

Senator TORRICELLI. Mr. Zuniga, do you have the same position?

Mr. ZUNIGA. Yes, indeed.

Senator TORRICELLI. I am curious, by the way. I have lived in the Americas all my life. The Government that I represent here represents half the economic activity of the Western Hemisphere and its largest population and its longest existing government. I am curious as to why the United States and our representatives would not be invited to Havana and how there can be a conversation on the future of the Americas without us.

Ms. MONTANER. The Iberian community, the community with Iberian roots, Spanish speaking and Portuguese speaking countries, will be at that particular summit. At that particular one, Portugal will be there and Spain, too.

Senator TORRICELLI. The United States is now the largest Spanish speaking Nation in the Western Hemisphere.

Ms. MONTANER. Yes, indeed.

Mr. ZUNIGA. That's correct.

Mr. CALZON. We are, indeed.

Senator TORRICELLI. I want to make it clear that if Fidel Castro for this period did respect human rights and were to reverse his recent proposals, I, for one, would go to Havana. I would like a chance to tell Mr. Castro what I think of his government, his repression of his people, and the way that he has conducted himself. If he wants to have a dialog, he should invite those who find the greatest critique with his regime.

Let me, finally, Mr. Chairman, if I could, remind members of the committee and our guests that these actions taken by Fidel Castro in recent weeks are not about a mounting concern of the U.S. Government. This is not about the exile community or international opposition. It is Fidel Castro's fear of his own people.

In some measure, every time I see that Fidel Castro is repressing another human rights dissident, betraying promises to the Catholic

Church, passing laws further restricting civil liberties, I recognize that the embargo policy is succeeding.

Fidel Castro is afraid of his own people. He has stripped them of all weapons, all power or ability to speak and organize and he lives in terror.

We are succeeding.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for your patience and again for your leadership.

The CHAIRMAN. Well said. Well said.

Let me say, again, that we are delighted to have you on this committee.

Senator TORRICELLI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me thank each of you for being here. I know you came under somewhat severe circumstances. One of our scheduled witnesses, Dr. Omar del Pozo, was unable to come because of the weather.

Without objection, I shall invite him to submit a statement to be included in the record of this hearing.

[The prepared statement of Dr. del Pozo appears in the appendix on page 29.]

Finally, I would make a personal comment. I am afraid that I may be the only person in this room who remembers Batista. I was old enough to understand the circumstances in Cuba and how they differ from today's. He had his critics, he made his mistakes, and he departed.

But I also remember very well how Mr. Castro was out in the boondocks and the American media just flocked to him. Night after night on CBS Edward R. Murrow would proclaim him as being everything good. He was a nice young fellow, a freedom fighter, and all the rest of it.

Meanwhile, Herbert Matthews of the New York Times every morning was telling what a virtuous man Fidel Castro was. I think the American people assumed that this must be so.

I also believe that by the time Castro got in and confiscated all of the weapons of his political enemies and put them in prisons for years, and years, and years, the American people also had their attention diverted to other matters involving our own country, and so forth. I think that Mr. Castro was lucky in that he had an alliance with the Soviet Union from whom he got billions of dollars every year.

Since that has dissolved, he is in trouble and he is doing all sorts of things to his own people, confiscating the salaries or the income of doctors and lawyers, for that matter. The things that they are having to resort to to feed their families are just atrocious.

But, in any case, I appreciate your coming. We are about to wind up on exactly the time I am supposed to conclude this committee meeting. I conclude it with my sincere gratitude to all of you.

If there be no further business to come before the committee, we stand in recess.

[Whereupon, at 11:59 a.m., the committee recessed.]

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR PAUL COVERDELL, U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA

Mr. Chairman, I commend you for holding this hearing today on the important issue of human rights in Cuba. The title of this hearing, "Castro's Crackdown in Cuba," is certainly fitting, for in the past several months the Cuban people have been the victim of renewed repression at the hands of the Castro dictatorship. Recent months have reminded us yet again of the brutal and repressive nature of Fidel Castro.

I am sorry to say that Cuba remains an aberration in our hemisphere. The rest of our neighbors have made historic and permanent steps toward democracy, respect for human rights, and free market economies. Yes, there have been setbacks to this progress. Central America currently faces serious challenges in getting their economies back on their feet in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. But democratic principles and economic opportunity in this region will prevail.

But Castro's Cuba remains a black spot in the forward progress of this hemisphere. It is the only country in the region, and one of the few remaining countries in the world, where authoritarianism, oppression, and fear prevail—and where freedom of association and freedom of expression have little meaning.

Just over a year ago, Pope John Paul II visited Cuba and encouraged the island to open itself to the world and urged Castro to permit the growth of civil society. In the months since, Castro has not heeded the Pope's advice. To the contrary, repression has increased and the human rights situation has deteriorated even further. Pro-democracy and human rights activists continue to be intimidated, and denied due process and fair hearings. According to many reports, independent journalists are harassed and detained for reporting any news contrary to the official line.

If some of us had hoped for visible, significant improvements in the wake of the Pope's trip, Castro's recent measures have crushed these illusions. New measures imposed just last month toughen penalties for political dissent. And, last week, four prominent pro-democracy activists were put on trial for writing a document criticizing Cuba's one party system. They had been detained in July, 1997, held for more than a year without charges, and then finally charged with subversion and undermining state stability. In this case, the international community has again seen the true nature of the Castro regime and the suffering the Cuban people endure on a daily basis.

We in Congress look forward to the day when the people of Cuba once again prosper in a free and open society, a society where human rights and human dignity are respected. We look forward to the time, in the not so distant future, when the people of Cuba freely elect a government and join the other nations in this hemisphere in realizing a free and prosperous future.

Mr. Chairman, I again thank you for calling this hearing and would like to thank the distinguished panelists for their presence here today.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. OMAR DEL POZO

I was a prisoner of conscience. The Fidel Castro regime imprisoned me for creating and organizing a political opposition organization named National Unity Committee which sought to promote democracy and the resurgence of a civil society in Cuba. Our vehicle to voice our ideas to the Cuban people were the popular short wave radio stations that broadcast from the United States, mainly the Voice of the Cuban American National Foundation.

For this "crime" I was sentenced to fifteen years, of which I served nearly six, having been released through the intercession of Pope John Paul II as a result of his visit to Cuba, and subsequently exiled to Canada. Prior to that, I had served three years for attempting to seek political asylum while on duty abroad as a doctor.

On September 6, 1991, I was among the protestors who gathered in front of Villa Marista, the national headquarters of Cuba's dreaded State Security, and called for freedom on behalf of all political prisoners. The peaceful protest, which ended in arrests and beatings against the participants, became a milestone for Cuba's beleaguered opposition, and sealed my fate as a prisoner of conscience.

As a survivor of the Cuban gulag, I am uniquely qualified to discuss the plight of political prisoners, including the four authors of the *manifesto La Patria es de Todos* [The Homeland Belongs to Us All]: Marta Beatriz Roque, Vladimiro Roca, René Gómez and Felix Bonne. I know what life is like in Castro's prisons, where there is no respect for the human condition; where hunger, isolation, and beatings abound; where the total lack of medical attention and hygiene compounds needless suffering and promotes the proliferation of diseases in epidemic proportions, and where one's physical and spiritual strength is constantly tested by a prison system specifically designed to break one's resistance and resolve, a cruel system enforced by prison authorities who are typically no better than the dangerous common inmates political prisoners are forced to cohabit with.

In Castro's man-eating prisons, lives are swallowed, mangled, and spit out in what can only be described as his revolving-door of infamy. Some may claim that the fact that I am able to stand before you here today is because I am a product of engagement with Castro. While I am certainly grateful for the international outcry that created pressure on Castro to release me, it would be negligent of me not to recognize that as long as the dictator remains in power, there will continue to be political prisoners who are destined to become pawns to be handed over as tokens depending on the occasion. I benefited from early release and from the support given to my case by human rights organisms such as Amnesty International, but my release in no way benefited the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of men and women who were left behind. Men like Julio Cesar Alvarez, who was 23-years old when he was charged with me in 1992 and sentenced to 19 years; men like Jorge Luis García Pérez, who's release the Holy Father also requested, but was denied, now entering his ninth year of tortured existence in Fidel Castro's hell holes; courageous women like Migdalia Rosado, and Maritza Lugo, who as we speak is on hunger strike in Havana's *Manto Negro* prison for women,¹ having left her fifteen and seven-year-old daughters in the care of relatives, because her husband, Rafael Ibarra, is imprisoned too, serving a 20-year sentence. Maritza was imprisoned because she refused to remain silent as to the mistreatment and injustices heaped upon her husband who has been confined in the remote prison of *Kilo 8*, one of Castro's most notorious, since 1994. And still others, like my colleague Dr. Oscar Biscet, a peaceful man who took his anti-abortion and death penalty message to the streets of Havana. Contrary to what is generally being reported, not all the activists who were arrested during the most recent crackdown were released.

How many more like them are serving political sentences in Cuba? No one truly knows with any degree of accuracy. For the last 15 years there has been no *in-situ* inspection by international human rights monitors of Cuban prisons. In a country with well over 200 prisons, and a penal code that establishes such outrageously arbitrary laws as the Law of Dangerousness, which calls for sanctions of up to four years in prison for individuals, who have committed no crime, simply because they demonstrate, and I quote, "... behavior that manifestly contradicts the norms of socialist morals", it is clear how easy it is for the Cuban State to conceal political prisoners by charging individuals with common crimes. They may not get away with it in the case of well-known dissidents, but for scores of nameless others, the political nature of their so-called offense remains hidden under a shroud of delinquency.

Forty years have passed, and a new millennium dawns, and still political prisoners exist in a country only 90 miles from the shores of the freest nation on earth. The Cuban people and especially the members of the political opposition are living through extremely difficult times. As if the situation were not bleak enough, Cuba's sham of a parliament just recently enacted tougher sanctions against independent journalists and dissidents who dare speak out.

In the confusion of clichés Cuba has become in the mass media: Castro and cigars, Castro and tourism, Castro and baseball, the terrible tragedy of Cubans and their legitimate needs and desires takes a backseat to the priorities set by the *Comandante en Jefe* and his regime. The truly tragic part is that there are some who, in the name of profit, are willing to compromise justice and play by his rules, with no regard for the welfare of the Cuban people. Up to now, they have excused their behavior by saying that trade and investment will create other cracks in Castro's

¹The official name of the prison is Prisión de Mujeres de Occidente. The name *Manto Negro*, or *Black Shroud*, was given by the thousands of women political prisoners who were confined there during the sixties and seventies.

stone wall. In light of the most recent crackdowns and political trials lacking due process, where Castro's unwillingness to change is, yet again, more than manifest, I can't help but wonder what arguments they will turn to next to continue to excuse the inexcusable.

These past days, I have heard even experienced Cuba observers question why Castro has raised the level of repression at this point in time, considering the many gestures of goodwill he has received internationally prior to and following the Papal visit. The only possible answer is that it is the nature of the beast. Castro can not help it any more than he can help being a totalitarian dictator. It is who he is and will always be. It is because he is motivated by one thing and one thing alone: absolute power. He wants to continue to stand on the backs of the Cuban people and he will persecute, torture and kill in order to accomplish his goal of being Cuba's "dictator for life". By now, everyone knows who Castro is and what he is capable of. From this point on, the field can only be divided between those who are willing to overlook his crimes and those who are not.

The Cuban people do not want empty gestures. They want true solidarity and allies in the struggle for freedom and human dignity. In this regard, the United States will continue to be looked upon for leadership in a world contaminated by half-heartedness and less than noble intentions. The United States should and must support the cause of freedom and democracy and the political opposition movement in Cuba as well as continue to actively seek international consensus on this issue. It may very well be the best contribution to peace, not only in Cuba, but in the rest of the hemisphere.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELOY GUTIERREZ-MENOYO
FOR A NEW POLICY TOWARD CUBA

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee; Honorable Members of Congress: I appear before you with deep respect and humility. I would like to assure those of you who do not know me that I am absolutely committed to the concepts of liberty and democracy. With your permission, I will explain why I cannot be otherwise.

I am Cuban by inclination and by dint of my efforts in the long and painful struggle against a dictator known as Batista. In 1959, I was the first commander of the Revolution to enter Havana. It was a popular triumph, full of jubilation and hope.

I had headed the second guerrilla front in the central mountains of the Island, with more than three thousand rebel soldiers under my command. My brother Carlos had died heroically in the fight against Batista.

My childhood had been steeped in love for liberty and democracy. When the Revolution triumphed, when it captured Havana after 25 years, these two terms were not new concepts or just vague words to me. Before leaving Europe to settle in Cuba, my brother Carlos had been recognized as an anti-fascist hero. He fought in Spain against the dictator Franco, and if you reviewed the documents and photos of that era, you could see how he extended his struggle to the occupied countries, entering Paris in a tank, next to General Leclerc, on the glorious day of liberation.

This is part of my family's and my history. We are children of a father who loved liberty and democracy, a social democratic physician. We were born in the midst of the Nazi threat. At the age of 8, I learned first-hand about the pain of war: my brother Jose Antonio, just 16, died fighting against Franco's troops on the Majadahonda front.

Liberty and democracy. And their high price in sacrifice and pain! When we felt the Revolution was not prepared to honor these concepts, at least as we understood them, we broke with the government of Fidel Castro.

In 1961, with most of my General Staff, I left the Island for the United States. I did not take part in the Bay of Pigs invasion backed by Washington. I did not join the ranks of the Central Intelligence Agency. I did not join in the terrorism against Cuba.

After several years of "commando"-type attacks from the Caribbean, in an honorable, independent, and small-scale war, I again disembarked in Cuba. After several engagements with more than 20,000 Cuban government troops, I was captured and spent 22 years in Cuban prisons.

This is, in part, my origin. Today, you know that *Cambio Cubano*—the organization I represent—supports a peaceful solution on the Island and believes that, for this to occur, Washington's policy toward Havana and Havana's policy toward Washington and the Cubans themselves must change.

Ladies and Gentlemen of this Committee: you are in the process of again reviewing America's policy toward Cuba. Let's not fool ourselves! This means that the pol-

icy contains fundamental flaws and errors, even for those who have defended tightening the embargo.

But let me tell you something else: 40 years of isolation have failed. So, with your permission, I'll ask you: Why are we here today? To multiply to infinity the misfortunes of eleven million Cubans? To satisfy a specific pressure group, which is becoming less and less powerful and more and more discredited, in the south of Florida?

You will have heard, you will hear, the pained voices of some of my compatriots. Many of them respectable, although I believe they are mistaken. Others, of questionable independence.

My fear is that this discordant exercise will result in a return to the "deadlock" policies that have only achieved two things: on the one hand, providing a skillful politician like Fidel Castro with a formidable pretext; on the other hand, allowing him, cloaked in that pretext, to prolong his control over the country.

My appearance here occurs at an opportune time. Cuba is in the throes of a serious economic and social crisis. It is, perhaps, the Cuban government's worst political moment. After clear signs of opening-up following the encouraging Papal visit, there is now growing pressure against certain groups of so-called dissidents. On the one hand, there is the reality of this conflict; and on the other, the selfish desire of some to magnify this episode.

If the intent of the political hyperbole is to try to connect these events with a desire to foster the supposed need for confrontation, it seems to me that this Committee should carefully look after the best interests of the United States. Confrontation is not advisable for the United States, or for anyone . . . and if it were advisable for anyone, perhaps it would be—in a very oblique way—the Cuban government, since it would reinforce its best pretext: "if we dig in our heels and do not permit opening-up, it is precisely because of pressure from Washington."

I am appearing before you in the hope that my testimony will be of specific use, both for the resolution of the dispute between Cuba and the United States, and for a favorable resolution for all Cubans. Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee: because I hope this testimony will be useful, I have decided to make some disclosures here, to the extent caution permits.

In June of 1996, I was received in Havana by President Fidel Castro. This unusual meeting, apparently of two opponents "to the death," turned into a frank dialogue in which Castro shared with me some of his desires, concerns, and fears about what a possible political opening-up on the Island could lead to, but he left the door open for calm, responsible diplomacy on Washington's part. Let us start from the assumption that the policies towards Cuba that have been tried since 1959 have not been exemplary. A clear and uninhibited confrontational route, paved with covert operations, attacks, and conspiracies of various kinds, has prevailed. This is public knowledge.

Castro told me I should fear extension of this route by other means. He is shrewd.

In recent weeks we have read important and revealing reports in this country's press: How much did certain American authorities know about the danger represented by the flights of small light aircraft over Cuba? Why, then, were they authorized to fly? What was being fostered with these risky provocations? Why is that kind of inexplicable synchronism between here and there so amazing to us?

With the shooting down of the light aircraft—enormous stupidity on Havana's part—what we had achieved in our first meeting with Castro was ended. We had agreed to the possibility that a space would open up for *Cambio Cubano*: first, an office; then, we would see.

The shooting down of the light aircraft resulted in the Helms-Burton Act. It was inevitable.

Pardon me, Messrs. Helms and Burton, your law is an insult to Cubans, offends the world, and puts this country in a paradoxical position: how to change the Cuban government with a law it can use as a tool to invoke nationalism and keep itself in power?

Constructive rapprochement was yesterday, is today, and will be tomorrow and always, the best solution for conflicts.

Fidel Castro is looking for clear signals to initiate an effective and calm diplomacy in which it is clear that the United States renounces, in word and deed, any desire for hegemonic dominance over Cuba. Believe me, this is his feeling and this is his hope.

I am not speaking—believe me—as an ambassador from Havana. I did not participate in the alliance with Moscow, or the political executions, nor was I a tool of American policy. Years ago, having just been released from the political prison, I was invited to Geneva, along with the U.S. delegation, to report on human rights violations in Cuba. For those of us who have insisted on the need to re-Cubanize

the opposition, it seemed to me ethical and a good idea, at that time, to also ask for respect for human rights in the Paraguay of the dictator Stroessner.

The person addressing you, then, is an absolutely independent Cuban. So much so, that I am excited about being able to think of a day, in the future, when true democracy will prevail in Cuba; a day when Cubans and Americans see each other as good neighbors, without the fear that the one will become masters and the other, servants.

Is this possible? We know it is, but only if we cast off the failed policies of interference. Recently, a group of well-known Democrats and Republicans proposed the establishment of a Bipartisan Committee to sensibly assess the state of American policy toward Cuba and the possibility of finding new alternatives.

We support that initiative, which seemed encouraging to us.

Is it possible to change the minds of the most stubborn? Yes, it is possible. In 1949, a young politician named Richard Nixon was tormenting the Truman administration—and the Democrats in general—for having permitted the defeat of the Nationalist Chinese. I invoke the name of Nixon because his position in favor of a government in Taiwan and his radical opposition to Communist China could not then presage what in 1971 would be a true foreign policy achievement, spearheaded by Henry Kissinger, who is today asking for the Bipartisan Committee. (By the way, I would like to remind you that the same Nixon left, in his memoirs, clear advice on the need to change foreign policy toward Cuba).

The United States, through confrontational rhetoric and by means of its laws—first, Torricelli; then Helms-Burton—is insisting on the need to foster a civil society in Cuba.

The ingredients of harassment, however, inherent in those laws, tend to create conditions for an internal explosion. What is it that is sought, perhaps a repetition of the Hungary of 1956? To top it off, the most recent law even violates the most basic rules of extraterritoriality in relation to other countries.

So the United States has been forced to enact a law that annoys the rest of the world, hatched under pressure, blackmail, and the delusions of certain Cuban elements who are distinguished by their anti-popular elitism, corrupt lives, and determination to use Washington as a vehicle for their dreams of power.

How removed those elements are from the feelings of 11,000,000 Cubans! When will you, all of you, stop thinking about that corner or miniscule area of Miami and begin to think productively about the Island, 90 miles from your shores, and about the United States' true interests? Do you know the feelings of the extremely large Black and mestizo population that cannot have money sent because they do not have relatives in the diaspora?

Is the United States aware of the message it sends to the poorest Cuban people when it allies itself with the rancorous, arrogant extreme right?

American antagonism has been giving Havana an irreplaceable excuse to explain, more or less rationally, its absolute control. After nearly forty years of use and abuse, the romantic notion of "David versus Goliath" seems to remain useful to Fidel Castro.

It is useful to him domestically and yields him benefits in the international arena. Why do some of you insist on helping to perpetuate this state of affairs? Why prolong policies that do not work and that intrinsically entail the danger of an adverse ending of incalculable proportions?

The Cuban conflict is quite complex. Castro is strengthened by the awkward policy of the exiled extreme right. But he is also strengthened by the new internal elements, who are encouraged to engage in useless confrontation, sometimes from abroad, sometimes by the Cuban government's own security mechanism.

It is time for the United States to abandon this conflict and move ahead with a policy of constructive rapprochement.

It is time for the United States to cast off the role of zealous and selfish pariah and begin to work with the countries of the region and the European community.

You could help if you understood that there will only be political space for an opposition in Cuba when the independence of the activists and the non-destabilizing nature of their activity are guaranteed.

You could help if you understood that the civil society that will emerge in Cuba will have its own characteristics and not those dictated or imposed from abroad.

You could help if you understood that to the extent the U.S. and Cuba make progress in discussing transparent agendas, the Cuban government will not need to avoid sitting down and having discussions with the opposition.

I do not pretend to have a monopoly on pain, but I believe 22 years in prison and an entire life of struggle entitle me to seek peace between you and Cuba, and peace among all Cubans. If I did not, I would be sharing guilt with those who test, in an irresponsible and sinister manner, the dangers of widespread anarchy on the Island,

with its inevitable consequence of battles between factions and unstoppable mass exodus, capable of destabilizing the entire Caribbean region and a good part of the United States.

Some would ask themselves: What mystical revelation has converted this man, who seems to have lived war since his childhood, to pacifism?

Ladies and Gentlemen: Precisely because I lived through the Spanish Civil War as a child, I do not want anarchy to take possession of Cuba. I recall horrible scenes I do not want to be repeated. Hungry children, running after a rat, I do not want this to be repeated! Children armed with sticks and knives, furiously attacking adults for a little something to eat, I do not want this to be repeated!

The United States has always been a country of prodigious imagination for creating ideas that help humanity. Not far from the south of Florida there is an Island that demands respect, calm analysis, and a good dose of the compassion which for years has been the best component of the American nation's character, and without a doubt, its people's most admirable trait. Eleven million Cubans await that compassion. It is up to you.

Thank you very much.

EUROPEAN INVESTMENT IN CUBA BEFORE HUMAN RIGHTS CRACKDOWN

SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JESSE HELMS

(Prepared by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Staff)

"Four European nations—Italy, Spain, England and France—account for the bulk of foreign investment in Cuba, with about 50 percent, . . . Marta Lona, Assistant Minister for Foreign Investment, said.

"Cuba Expects Foreign Investments"
CubaNet News, June 6, 1998

"The Netherlands Caribbean Bank nc, a joint venture that includes the Dutch ING Bank, is the first foreign bank to be represented in Cuba, said Carel Lopez, the Havana representative of the Netherlands Bank . . . it [ING bank] is involved in the financing of export and import ventures in Cuba . . . 'we have seen significant additional investments recently,' observed Lopez, particularly from companies in Western and Eastern Europe . . . Talks are under way with a Swedish company for a fast ferry service between Cuba and Mexico, said [Silvio] Calvez, [advisor to the minister of transport]."

"Invitation to Cuba"
Traffic World/lexis-nexis, December 14, 1998

"European firms, such as the \$29 million (United Kingdom) Beta Gran Caribe Fund, have raised hundreds of millions [earmarked for Cuba] . . . Today's steps suggest the U.S may ease its embargo in the not-too-distant future, said Peter Scott, the chief executive officer at Beta Funds Ltd., the London-based firm that runs Beta Gran Caribe, the only fund that invests exclusively in Cuba . . . For now, European firms like Beta 'are able to cherry pick investment projects in Cuba without competition from what should be the major source of competition—the United States,' Scott said . . . Spain's Sol Melia SA manages nine hotels in Cuba. Italy's Telecom Italia SpA owns 29 percent of the Cuban national phone company, Etecsa."

"For Now, Cuba Remains Phantom Market for Many Investors"
CubaNet News, January 1, 1999

"Companies from Canada, Britain, France, Sweden and Spain, in partnership with Cuba's state oil company Cupet . . . have been hunting for oil in 22 offshore and onshore blocks . . . Britain's Premier Oil is planning to drill its first well this year in central Cuba . . . Sheritt, accompanied by Canadian, Swedish and Spanish partners, was the operator in three exploration blocks off Cuba's south-eastern coast, where an exploration well was drilled last year."

"Lure of a big find draws oil companies to high-risk Cuba"
Financial Times, lexis-nexis, April 16, 1998

"Two ventures involving developers from Monaco and Spain are currently selling units of apartment complexes being constructed in Havana's Miramar district . . . A third residential property venture, which will also build apartment homes, has recently signed by a British investment fund. Several other projects have been approved and many more are under negotiation . . . Through a joint venture with a

Cuban company, British and Canadian investors have established a Havana office of RE/MAX, the North American real estate franchise giant, which will market new apartments and offices in Cuba. 'Demand is high. We anticipate selling over 500 home units in the first 12 months,' Stephen Marshall, the British co-owner of the RE/MAX Havana franchise, said . . . 'The market is good irrespective of the absence of the law,' said Simon Hodson, Chief Investment Officer of Havana Asset Management Limited, which runs Beta Gran Caribe, a British-based investment fund specialising in Cuba. The fund, through its Guernsey-registered Caribbean Property Corporation, recently set up a joint venture in Cuba, called Trinidad S.A., with Inmobiliaria Cimex, a Cuban real estate company . . . The total potential investment could exceed \$100m . . . Two other joint venture projects are already selling homes. Most advanced is the Monte Carlo Palace, a 31-apartment complex on Mirimar's Fifth Avenue due to be completed this year. This belongs to Real Inmobiliaria, a venture between a Monaco-based group Pastor, and Lares S.A., another Cuban property company . . . Other investors are reported to be queueing up for a share in Cuba's residential property market. The list of presented projects includes Canada's Sherritt International Corporation, Fransabank of the Lebanon, Portugues group Anorim, Britain's Railton International and US group Lincoln Property Company, operating out of its Mexico office."

"Latin America and the Caribbean"
Financial Times, lexis-nexis, July 14, 1998

". . . [Cuban Economy and Planning Minister Jose] Rodriguez said that at present there are 340 foreign association agreements in effect and that the trend is to increase because there are investors from Europe . . . who are prepared to negotiate because they are guaranteed a profit."

"Minister says foreign investment is growing despite US pressures"
BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, lexis-nexis, June 30, 1998

". . . Most . . . investments are in light industry, tourism, foods, agriculture and construction . . . Four European nations Italy, Spain, England and France account for the bulk of foreign investment in Cuba, with about 50 percent . . ."

"Cuba Expects Foreign Investments"
AP Online, lexis-nexis, June 15, 1998

"[Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation Minister Ibrahim Ferradaz] pointed out that 40 countries have businesses on the island, mainly Spain, Italy, Canada, Netherlands and France . . . To date, there are joint ventures in 34 sectors, mostly in petroleum, mining, tourism and telecommunications."

"Minister gives details of foreign investment in Cuba"
BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, lexis-nexis, January 27, 1998

". . . the state-run Cubanacan tourism concern and Italy's La Casina and Simset Spa agreed to build a \$18 million pair of hotels in the resort area of Varadero and Saint Lucia Key east of Havana . . . The French tourism giant Accor has announced that it will administer two new hotels and an apartment complex currently under construction in the exclusive Miramar district of Havana."

"Lured by Sun and Socialism, Tourists Flocking to Cuba"
The Washington Post, lexis-nexis, January 9, 1999

"Italian companies are among European investors in Cuba. They include the Italian telecommunications company Stet, now Telecom Italia, which avoided being penalised by the Helms-Burton law by striking a deal with ITT, the former US owner of the nationalised Cuban telephone system in which Stet had invested."

"Cuba 'need not fear' US-EU deal HELMS-BURTON Italy Sees No Threat"
Financial Times, lexis-nexis, June 12, 1998

United Kingdom

"Britain has 'no hang-ups' over trading with Communist-run Cuba and is eager to catch up with other European nations doing more business with the Caribbean island, a senior British government official said . . . [Trade Minister Brian] Wilson said Britain was attracted to Cuba as a market of 11 million people with 'very significant potential for the future' . . . Britain has lagged behind other European nations like Spain, Italy, France, and Germany in doing business on the island . . ."

some 30 British companies were represented at the trade fair and . . . his visit was intended as a 'strong signal that we do want to find a way through.'

"Britain has 'no hang-ups' over trading with Cuba"
CubaNet News, November 3, 1998

United Kingdom

"A British trade mission made up of mainly small firms voiced optimism on Thursday about Cuba's investment potential and said it hoped to boost the relatively low levels of U.K. business on the Communist-ruled island . . . 'The doors have been very open as always . . . There are very good investment opportunities here,' mission leader Trevor Jones, of security printing company De La Rue, told a news conference in Havana . . . tangible results here included the opening of a commercial office for Petroplastics & Chemicals Ltd., further participation in the financial sector for De La Rue, and a likely joint venture between khaleej Cars Ltd. and the Cuban state to build beach buggies here for internal use and export . . . Britain has so far lagged behind some other nations from the European Union . . . in taking advantage of Cuba's opening to foreign capital since the early 1990's . . . British Embassy officials said the United Kingdom ranked in the top 10 investors, but was still well short of Cuba's leading partners Canada, Spain, Italy, Mexico and France . . . Bilateral trade in 1997 was about 34 million pounds (\$55 million) in 1997, with 22 million pounds (\$36 million) of British exports to Cuba, and 12 million pounds (\$19 million) in the other direction, according to the British Embassy. But in the first three months of this year, U.K. exports to the island have risen 96 percent, compared to the same period of 1997, to 12 million pounds (\$19 million), and Cuban exports 45 percent to 5 million pounds (\$8 million)."

"British businesses seek more investment in Cuba"
CubaNet News, June 11, 1998

United Kingdom

"Britain's Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) has begun negotiations on possible support for a power project by Canadian firm Sherritt International Corp. The project is an expansion of the Energas venture, which produces power using natural gas produced from the Varadero and Jaruco fields . . . ECGD reportedly is discussing guarantees that would allow the venture to buy turbines and other equipment from Scottis firm Kvaerner Energy Ltd. The expansion reportedly included the construction of one or more barge-mounted generating facilities . . . Sources say that British Development Corp., which also has an office in Havana, is also interested in a role in the project . . . One reason the ECGD has begun to hold talks with the Cuban government is that British businesses have been complaining that they are at a disadvantage when competing against companies from other countries because they cannot tap government export credits or guarantees. By contrast, export credit agencies from France, Spain, and Italy are providing cover in Cuba. Trade between those countries and Cuba has increased faster than with the United Kingdom."

"British export credit agency may reenter Cuba for power project"
CubaNews, February 1999

Portugal

"The agreement with Portugal to mutually promote and protect investments was the ninth of its kind signed so far by Cuba with member states of the European Union . . . 'Portuguese investments are starting up in Cuba, especially in tourism,' Jaime Gama, Portugal's Foreign Minister, said . . . 'This means that as a result of this accord, European companies have much greater facilities to do business with Cuba,' the Portuguese foreign minister said . . . the large Portuguese business group Amorim announced that in partnership with the French leisure group Accor it was undertaking a major investment project to rehabilitate or build 10 tourist hotels on the island."

"Portugal says EU-U.S. pact helps EU-Cuba business"
CubaNet News, July 7, 1998

United Kingdom

". . . companies active in Cuba include U.K.-based Premier oil . . ."

"Foreign Firms Help Cuba Double Crude Production in 9 Years"
CubaNet News, January 27, 1999

Spain

“Spain is Cuba’s main trade partner and one of its main foreign investors.”

“Fidel Castro says Cuba anchored in the future;
drugs accord signed with Spain”

BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, lexis-nexis, November 13, 1998

Spain

“Spain is now Cuba’s largest commercial partner and one of its major foreign investors. The normalization of bilateral relations will benefit Spain and Cuba commercially and provide more venture capital.”

“Cuban, Spanish ties continue to improve”

Xinhua News Agency, lexis-nexis, November 5, 1998

Spain

“Last year, Cuba traded 41 percent with Europe . . . Spain was the single biggest trade partner . . .”

“Cuba wants investments, if it’s right kind”

Sun-Sentinel, lexis-nexis, September 11, 1998

Spain

“Of the more than 300 deals involving foreign investors at the end of 1997 . . . Spanish companies accounted for around 60.”

“Canada’s Chretien has marathon talks with Cuba”

Caribbean Update, lexis-nexis, June 1, 1998

Spain

“The international Textile Association of Canary Island, Spain, and Cuba’s Ministry of Light Industry signed a textile agreement.”

“Canary Island, Cuba Sign Textile Agreement”

Cuba News, April 20, 1998

Belgium

“Cuba and Belgium signed an agreement on reciprocal protection and promotion of investments . . . in Brussels. The accord would contribute to their relations and investment growth between the two countries, said Ibrahim Ferradaz, Cuban Minister of Foreign Investment and Economic Collaboration. During his visit to Belgium, Ferradaz also discussed investment opportunities with companies from Belgium and Luxembourg.”

“Cuba, Belgium sign investments accord”

Xinhua News Agency, lexis-nexis, May 20, 1998

Czech Republic

“. . . Cuba is presently interested in creating an influx of foreign investment, some of which could come from the Czech Republic . . . some of the projects that are interested in foreign investment include the metal components producer Metal-mecanica ESTIL, which is looking for an investment of \$4m to augment its production of cast-iron and bronze elements for machine tools, and the Cuban state meat producer, which is looking for \$700,000 to modernise its freezing and production capacities. Other projects looking for foreign investors are the installation of a Tetra Brick packaging line in the Food Ministry’s fruit and vegetable processing company, as well as purchases and renewals of technical equipment in a factory of the state Geominera company . . .”

“Cuba Interested in Investments from Czech Republic”

CTK Business News Wire, lexis-nexis November 2, 1998

