

On George Bush's pardon of anti-Cuban terrorist Orlando Bosch

26 October 1999

Following the publication of an article by Gerardo Nebbia and Martin McLaughlin, "Puerto Rican nationalists to be released after two decades in prison" [9 September 1999], the World Socialist Web Site received a letter from a reader (LM) explaining that former President George Bush had pardoned anti-Cuban terrorist Orlando Bosch, which we published on October 2. Following an inquiry by another reader, LM has provided us with more information on this topic. We reprint his two letters below.

To the editor:

We must not forget the pardon by President Bush of a terrorist, Orlando Bosch, who conspired in the bombing of a Cubana airliner in 1976, killing all passengers and crew.

Bosch, who had been serving a prison sentence for a bazooka attack on a Polish freighter in Miami harbor, was freed as the result of a campaign launched by Jeb Bush and his right-wing Cuban supporters in Florida. This event did not make the news, nor did it arouse the moral outrage of Congress and the right-wing organizations who today denounce the release of the Puerto Rican political prisoners.

LM

Dear WSWs:

The terrorist activities of Orlando Bosch are fully documented in the book *Deadly Secrets* by Warren Hinkle and William Turner, who in turn drew their information from a Senate investigation led by Senator Kerry into the activities of the CIA.

Bosch was a cohort of Posada Carriles, a Cuban pediatrician who became a world renowned terrorist for the CIA. Carriles has taken claim for the recent wave of hotel bombings in Havana, Cuba. Both men were trained together at Fort Benning, Georgia. Bosch was the founder of the "Command of the United Revolutionary Organizations" formed to cooperate with

the DINA Chilean secret police and other Latin American repressive organisms in the murder of leftists throughout the region, including the assassination of the Chilean ambassador, Letelier, in Washington, DC.

The US government has repeatedly declined to extradite Bosch to Cuba to stand trial for the bombing of the Cubana airliner in 1976. In my opinion, there can only be two clear reasons for the denial. One, Bosch would prove very embarrassing for the US at a trial in Cuba. Two, his extradition would destroy the close political relationship between the exile Cubans who demanded his release and the Republican Party.

The quarterly magazine *Cuba Update*, September 1992, page 3, of the Center for Cuban Studies, New York, also carries the complete history of Bosch's participation in the bombing of the Cubana airliner and his subsequent pardon.

According to the *New York Time* of August 17, 1989, Cuban right-wing congressperson Ros-Lehtinen met with former President Bush to negotiate Bosch's release. The meeting was arranged by her campaign manager, Jeb Bush, who had earlier met with Cuban hunger strikers also demanding the release. Bosch was pardoned on July 18, 1990 and the *New York Times* was the lonely voice denouncing Bush's pardon on an editorial published July 20, 1990.

Below are two items recently published in Cuba [from Radio Havana Cuba] related to the terrorist bombing:

"October 5, 1999

"Cuban Athletes Remember Victims of the Sabotage of Cubana Airliner

"HAVANA (RHC)—A special commemoration ceremony will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, to remember those killed in the sabotage bombing of a Cubana airliner in 1976. Wednesday, October 6, marks the twenty-third anniversary of the mid-air explosion

over Barbados that killed all passengers on board. Fifty-seven Cubans—including the island's entire fencing team, returning from competitions—and sixteen foreigners were killed in the sabotage attack.

"Cuban athletes will hold a special ceremony tomorrow at the Cerro Pelado Training Center in Havana. The commemoration will include a march to Havana's Colon Cemetery. In the afternoon, another event will be held at the Sports City Complex.

"Evidence showed that the bomb was placed by Cuban-American mercenaries, in the pay of the US Central Intelligence Agency, the CIA. The two terrorists who admitted that they placed the bomb on the Cubana flight—Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch—are currently free and walking the streets."

"October 7, 1999

"Athletes Remember Victims of Sabotaged Cubana Airliner

"HAVANA, (RHC)—Cuban athletes held a commemoration ceremony on Wednesday for members of the island's junior fencing team, killed in the sabotage of a Cubana airliner 23 years ago. The plane exploded in mid-air after taking off from Barbados on October 6, 1976, killing all 73 people aboard.

"During yesterday's ceremony, Maria Redondo, the mother of one of the athletes killed, presented the national flag to the Cuban fencing team that will participate in next month's World Fencing Championship in South Korea.

"One of the Cuban fencers on the way to South Korea is Oscar Garcia, who read a statement affirming that the best way to honor those who were killed is to win in Seoul and qualify for next year's Olympics in Sydney, Australia.

"The sabotage attack 23 years ago took the lives of 57 Cubans, including the island's entire junior fencing team, which was returning from the 1976 Pan American Games in Caracas, Venezuela.

"Sixteen foreigners on board the Cubana flight were also killed. Evidence showed that two bombs were placed on the Cubana aircraft by Cuban-American terrorists in the pay of the US Central Intelligence Agency."

I hope I have enough information here to satisfy your reader or perhaps, bring something to light, in the midst of the Bush candidacy, which is more educational than the usual sexual transgressions of US politicians. Please

don't hesitate to contact me if I could shed some more light on this subject.

Thanks for your interest and the very informative analysis and news of the WSWs.

LM



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