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BUILDING BRIDGES May - June 2002 www.cubawifriends.org

FORMER PRESIDENT CARTER EXTENDS THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP TO CUBA



The historic visit of former President Carter to Cuba has raised expectations among some and fears among others. As the first present or former U.S. president to visit the island since the 1959 revolution, Carter raised hopes that he would lay the foundation for a relaxation of tensions and the eventual normalization of U.S.-Cuba relations. At the same time, others feared the exact same thing.

Amid high hopes among the Cuban people and controversy sparked by the Bush administration's accusation of bio-weapons production by Cuba, Carter, his wife Rosalynn and others arrived on Sunday, May 12th. to a very warm welcome by President Fidel Castro and other government officials and were given the red-carpet treatment throughout their week-long stay.

On his first full-day in Havana, Monday May 13th., Carter waisted no time in categorically refuting the Bush administration's claim regarding bio-weapons production. He said, "There were absolutely no such allegations made or questions raised. I asked them myself on more than one occasion if there was any evidence that Cuba has been involved in sharing any information with any country on earth that could be used for terrorist purposes. And the answer from our experts on intelligence was no."

For many, the highlight of former President Carter's trip occurred on Tuesday when he had the opportunity to address the nation on the state television and radio network. In his address, Carter outlined his vision of the path to normalization.

I asked them myself on more than one occasion if there was any evidence that Cuba has been involved in sharing any information with any country on earth that could be used for terrorist purposes. And the answer from our experts on intelligence was no. Former President Carter

Early on in his speech, Carter set down his purpose. He said, "Will this new century find our neighboring people living in harmony and friendship? I have come here in search of an answer to that question," and later, he reiterated, "I have not come here to interfere in Cuba's internal affairs, but to extend a hand of friend-

ship to the Cuban people and to offer a vision of the future for our two countries and for all the Americas."

That vision includes U.S. congressional and administrative actions to allow unrestricted travel, establish an open trading relationship and repeal the embargo. He mentioned that the present situation "induces anger and resentment, restricts the freedoms of U.S citizens and makes it difficult to exchange ideas and respect," while failing to mention the restrictions imposed on Cuban citizens as a result of the embargo.

He also addressed the issue of resolving property disputes stemming from expropriatons and confiscations that occurred up to 40 years ago with the triumph of the revolution. To resolve these, he proposed the establishment of a blue ribbon committee to look into "the legitimate concerns of all sides in a postive and constructive manner." At the same time, Carter did not mention Cuba's offer of compensation for these properties nor the Cuban demand for compensation for the economic damage inflicted by the 40 year-old embargo.

Furthermore, Carter urged the opening of the Cuban economy "to use individual entrepreneurial skills," and, in reference to many Cubans residing in south Florida who remain angry over their departure and their divided families, he noted, "We have to define a future so they can serve as a bridge of reconciliation between Cuba and the United States." Such vague comments seem to gloss over the fact that at least some of these exiles have promoted and engaged

in violent acts against the Cuban people.

His final reference was regarding human rights. In defining "democracy," he referred to the Inter-American Democratic Charter which sets down these premises: all citizens are born with the right to choose their own leaders, to define their own destiny, speak freely, organize political parties, trade unions:and:non-governmental:groups::and: to have fair and open tribunals. In an unusual admission of need for improvement. Carter spoke of the U.S. when he said, "My nation is hardly perfect in human rights. A very large number of our citizens are incarcerated in prison, and there is little doubt that the death penalty is imposed most harshly on those who are poor, black or mentally ill. For more than a quarter of a century, we have struggled unsuccessfully to guarantee the basic right of universal health care for our people." He also mentioned the recent censure of Cuba's human rights record at the UN Human Rights Commission and the Varela Project that has collected more than 10,000 signatures with which they are petitioning the Cuban government for a referendum on greater freedoms in the country.

In a speech given by President Castro on Monday at the Latin American School of Medicine, he seemed to anticipate some of Carter's remarks regarding democracy and human rights. Castro asked rhetorically, "And what is a society without justice? What is a society of illiterates? What is a society where the few have everything and the rest nothing? What kind of freedom can come from inequality and ignorance? What kind of democracy? What kind of human rights?"

Castro focused on the failure of democracy to adequately address the pressing social justice issues of our time, such as poverty, ignorance, health care, housing, inequality and others. The inability or unwillingness of democracies to aggressively seek lasting solutions to these social problems seemed to call for a new concept of democracy, one which would place more emphasis on social justice and communal responsibilities and less on individual freedoms.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- → MAY 19 Cuban Dignitary, Esperanza Luzbert, Director of North American Division, Cuban Institute for Friendship Among Peoples, will speak at UWM Student Union, Fireside Lounge (first floor), 7:30 p.m. Sponsored by Wisconsin Committee for Peace and Justice and Wisconsin Committee to Free the Miami Five.
- May 21 Coalition Meeting at Central UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 25TH. AND WISCON-SIN AVE. 7:00 P.M. Come hear the experiences of Shorewood High School students who recently returned from a unique experience in Cuba. Instead of riding a bus, students got to see Cuba by bicycle and were able to meet people everywhere they went. Students formed groups in which they studied different aspects of Cuba in more depth. Listen to them share the answers to the questions they formulated before going on the trip. Free to the public; free off street parking available south of the church. [A business meeting of the the Coalition and its steering committee will begin at 6pm, & anyone interested is invited to attend at the same location.]
- → MAY 24 BENEFIT CONCERT FOR HURRICANE RELIEF, FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE, 1342 N. ASTOR St., 414-273-1040 OR 294-0504, SEE P. 5 FOR MORE DETAILS.
- → MAY 28 MILWAUKEE-NUEVITAS SISTER-CITY MEETING, UNITED COMMUNITY CENTER, 9TH. AND WASHINGTON ST., 6:30 P.M.
- → June 11 Maraca y Otro Visión returns to Milwaukee at Rainbow Summer. 12:00 noon and 7:30 p.m. performances at the Peck Pavilion at the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts.
- →June 21-July 1 Sister-City Trip to Havana, Camagüey, Nuevitas, <u>see p. 9 for more details.</u>
- → JULY PASTORS FOR PEACE CARAVAN STOPPING IN MILWAUKEE, SEE P. 12 FOR MORE DETAILS.

News Briefs:

VISAS APPROVED, THEN DENIED

The good news quickly turned to bitter disappointment as Olga Salanueva and



her four-yearold daughter, lvette, were notified by the U.S Interests Section in Havana that their already-approved visa applica-

tions had been revoked making it impossible to visit René González (one of the Miami 5), Olga's husband and Ivette's father. This action of the U.S. government was based on the incrdible assumption that Olga might meet/talk to terrorist elements during her time in the

This type of action by the U.S was repeated this week when the Interests Section denied visas to Adriana Carr Pérez and Tania Crombet Ramos, researchers at the Center for Molecular Immunology who specialize in the development of new cancer treatments. They were to travel to Orlando, FL for the Annual Meeting of the American Clinical Oncology Society. This is especially unusual since the same people were granted visas for the same event in 2000 and 2001.

President Bush plans to clamp down even harder on those who would dare to exercise their basic human right to free association.

MAY 1ST. INTERNATIONAL LABOR DAY

With flags waving, millions of Cubans took to the streets to celebrate the Inter-



national Day of the Worker. Speeches by many government officials and others reaffirmed the general commitment

to continue on the path of socialism. One of the featured speakers was Gloria La



Riva, who recently appeared in Milwaukee to speak at the Forum for the Miami 5. She reaffirmed the dedication of many people in the U.S. to continue working for the freedom of the Miami 5.



Millions turned out for the May Day celebrations throughout Cuba and the world.

MILWAUKEE CONTONO TO NO SWAMP RELATIONS CUBA

Who We Are:

The Milwaukee Coalition to Normalize Relations with Cuba consists of both organizations and individuals who have come together based on the following points of unity and principles. We hope you will join us based on the following principles:

Member Organizations

- -Casa Maria Catholic Worker Com'ty
- -Central United Methodist Church
- -A Job Is a Right Campaign
- -Peace Action-Milwaukee Inc.
- -National Lawyers Guild-Milwaukee
- -Pledge of Resistance-Milwaukee
- -U.S. Farm News
- -Wis. Com. for Peace and Justice

What We Believe:

- ► We support the normalization of relations with Cuba.
- ► We oppose any policy of our government designed to increase the misery of the Cuban people in order to obtain political gain. ► We oppose:
 - ▶the ban on travel to Cuba,
 - ▶the U.S. economic embargo which has restricted even food and medicine, and
 - the policies which discourage third countries from trading with Cuba.
- ► We support and encourage increased person-to-person contact between the U.S. and Cuba such as through religious, union and sister-city interchanges.

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IFCO/Pastors for Peace

Marty Horning, rubiomon@aol.com

BIO-WEAPONS ALLEGATIONS REFUTED

U.S. Allegations of Bio-Weapons Production by Cuba Refuted by Center for International Policy

U.S. Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton made a number of grossly misleading and unsubstantiated allegations concerning Cuba's attitudes toward terrorism and its supposed manufacture of biological weapons at the Heritage Foundation on May 6.

These are quoted below with the Center for International Policy's point-by-point comments on each.

—"The United States believes that Cuba has at least a limited offensive biological warfare research and development effort."

Bolton prefaces this very serious allegation by stating that, "Cuba leads in the production of pharmaceuticals and vaccines that are sold worldwide. Analysts and Cuban defectors have long cast suspicion on the activities conducted in these biomedical facilities."

Bolton does not provide any evidence or even say who the analysts and defectors may be. His comments, however, seem to reflect those made by one analyst and one defector whose uncorroborated and admittedly speculative theories are continuously recycledamong hard-line exiles.

The analyst is former Soviet Colonel Ken Alibek, who in his 1999 book, Biohazard,

writes that his former chief, Maj. Gen. Yuri Kalinin, told him he thought Cuba had an active bacteriological arms program. Alibek's allegations concerning Cuba—comprising 3 pages in his 291-page book—were based on his former boss's own speculation. "It was his opinion," Alibek has said, acknowledging that his former boss, in fact, "saw no weapons production [in Cuba]."

In 1999, commenting on the Alibek book, the State Department said, "We have no evidence that Cuba is stockpiling or has mass-produced any BW [biological warfare] agents."

Robert Zilliniskas, a senior scientist at the Center for Non-proliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, backed that up, saying, ithere's been no evidence they're doing anything."[1]

U.S. officials interviewed by The Miami Herald following publication of the Alibek book stated that there is "no proof." The Herald quoted one U.S. official, having just "checked with appropriate agencies" about the book, who said, "With all the intelligence we get from defectors and other means, there's never been evidence."

Another U.S. official said, "We get lots of reports from defectors and others, but when we go to check them out it's always second and third-hand, and the stuff doesn't check out." [2]

It is indeed strange that after all these indi-

cations from U.S. officials that there is no evidence that Cuba is developing a biological warfare capability, Bolton now says we have reason to believe it is. In November of 2001, Bolton announced U.S. concerns over six nations believed to be interested in bioweapons productions. Iraq, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria were all on that list. Cuba was not.

—"Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to other rogue states."

The supposed cooperation in BW with rogue states probably refers to the statements of Cuban defector José de la Fuente, the former director of the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) in Havana.

He alleged in a Nature Biotechnology commentary that Cuba has sold to Iran biotechnologies associated with treating heart attacks, viral diseases and with the development of vaccines. In 1999, a U.S. official interviewed by the Miami Herald commented on the Cuban biomedical industry's capability to produce bioweapons: "Stuff that sophisticated always has dual use [medical and military], no way around it....But none of what we know adds up to Cuba having offensive biological warfare capabilities."[3]

De la Fuente stated that his concern was not that Cuba sold the technology but whether Iran would use the technologies to care for its population or to attempt to develop biological weapons. De la Fuente has also ac-

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What We Do

BUILDING

Our bi-monthly newsletter brings news and analysis of recent developments as well as information about upcoming events in Milwaukee.



RELIEF FUND FOR HURRICANE MICHELLE VICTIMS

The devastation of Hurricane Michelle is still being felt in many parts of the island. To help in their rebuilding efforts, the Milwaukee Coalition is co-sponsoring a Benefit Concert on May 24th. See p. 5 for more details.

www.cubawifriends.org



This yearly event brings together people from all parts of the U.S. to accompany shipments of medical and educational equipment and supplies along with the delivery of school buses to Cuba. See article on page 12.



Show solidarity with unjustly imprisoned Cubans serving time, one here in Wisconsin, on controversial espionage charges. Letter writing and visitation campaigns are getting underway. See articles on pp. 6,7.

MILWAUKEE-NUEVITAS

SISTER-CITY ASSOCIATION

Building our relationship with the port city of Nuevitas has brought many new friendships and a growing understanding of this small town on the north coast of Cuba. Next meeting, May 28th., 6:30 p.m. at United Community Center, 9th. and Washington. See p. 8,9

EDUCATIONAL/INFORMATIONAL

FORUMS

Learn more about Cuba at forums held by the Milwaukee Coalition at their meetings which are on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. at Central United Methodist Church (CUMC) on 25th. & Wisconsin Ave. (639 N. 25th. St.) See Calendar of Coming Events, p.2.

CUBA TRADE POLICY HIJACKED

BY MAVIS ANDERSON,

LATIN AMERICAN WORKING GROUP

Once again, where US policy toward Cuba is concerned, a back room deal has overridden the will of Congress. The results of the House/Senate conference committee on the Farm Bill were announced on April 26. The provision to allow for private financing of agricultural sales to Cuba was removed from the bill. According to the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), House Majority Whip Tom Delay (R-TX) and members of the House leadership led efforts to remove the Cuba-related provision.

In spite of a 273-143 vote (non-binding)

in the House of Representatives on April 23 instructing House conferees to include the Cuba language in the final version of the bill, the provision was excluded. Without pressure from the leadership, the House conferees, based on previous votes on the House floor, would probably have supported the Cuba financing language by an estimated margin of 12-8. Based on previous votes, the Senate conferees supported the provision by at least a 5-2 margin.

The conferees are expected to present their report to the House and Senate today, and the bill may be on the President's desk by the end of the week. The President is expected to sign it.

<u>ACTION:</u> It is important that Congress hears from constituents about this subversion of the democratic process. Please call or write your senators and representative as soon as possible expressing your dismay that the Cuba private financing provision was removed from the Farm Bill—against the will of both the House and Senate. It is especially important to contact the members of the conference committee (available at www..lawg.org/423vote.htm).

The following several paragraphs could serve as a example in writing your letter:

....[On April 26 the results of the House/ Senate conference committee on the Farm Security Act (HR 2646) were announced. There are always winners and losers in the conference committee process. This time the loser was democracy.

The Senate-bill contained language to allow for the private (mind you, private) financing of food sales to Cuba. The House of Representatives, on April 23, passed 273-143 a motion instructing conferees to accept the Senate language. In the end, the Senate language was removed, and American farmers will still find it exceedingly difficult to sell food to Cuba.

Strong-arm tactics from the House leadership have once again suffocated the voice of the Congress and the American people on this issue. What message does this send to the Cuban people about democracy in America? That an extremely small group of people can hijack the democratic process in our country.

This is not the first time that the House leadership has prevented the will of Congress from being legislated on the issue of policy toward Cuba. It has been happening for years. Members of Congress need to prevent this from happening again. US policy toward Cuba must be changed.] . . .

Efforts to change US policy toward Cuba will continue—stronger than ever. We expect several initiatives on ag sales, travel, and The Bridges to the Cuban People Act over the next few months. The bi-partisan Cuba Working Group in the House of Representatives is undaunted in their efforts to change policy. They will be publically announcing the results of their Cuba policy review soon, along with proposals for policy changes. We will keep you updated on all of these efforts.

This is a long-term struggle. We are making progress! Continue to make your voice heard. That is the way that we will ultimately succeed in ending the embargo.

For more information, see: Latin American Working Group, www.lawg.org To receive updates on Cuba, e-mail lawg@lawg.org

Note: All nine of Wisconsin's congressional representatives voted to include the Cuba trade language in the Farm Bill. A short note expressing your appreciation for their support would be helpful for future efforts.

Bio-Weapons Charges, from p.3

knowledged that he has no cause to think that Cuba had sold the technology with malicious intent and that he could not "in any way confirm the use of this technology for anything other than [vaccines]."[4] Further, de la Fuente has stated that, "I heard no account of any effort for developing biological weapons in Cuba."[5]

Is this defector's mere suspicion Mr. Bolton's evidence that Cuba is providing dual-use biotechnology to other rogue states? If he has other evidence, he should produce it.

—"Castro has repeatedly denounced the U.S. war on terrorism."

This is not true. At the beginning of the war in Afghanistan, Cuba criticized the U.S. bombing campaign as resulting in excessive civilian casualties. Castro also expressed alarm at the prospect of an open-ended war that he feared would entail, as President Bush had said, "every necessary weapon of war," and that would take lives of more innocent people.

But these differences over tactics aside, Cuba consistently expressed its support for the overall struggle against terrorism. Indeed, Cuba's immediate response to the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon was to condemn them and to express Cuba's "solidarity with the American people." Cuba offered its airspace to planes en route to the U.S. on September 11th that might have been stranded when the U.S. closed its own airspace. It also offered humanitarian aid to the victims. That weekend, thousands in Cuba marched in "solidarity with the American people during the national tragedy they are living through." [6]

On September 22, 2001, Castro pledged that, "The territory of Cuba will never be used for terrorist actions against the American people and we will do everything within our power to prevent such actions against that people." He reiterated Cuba's "willingness to cooperate with every country in the total eradication of terrorism." [7]

Indeed, Cuba signed all 13 of the ensuing United Nations counter-terrorism resolutions. Cuba offered no objections to the U.S. use of Guantánamo naval base for its detainces and it even offered to return any escapees and consult with medical personnel at the base. Also, Interpol Secretary General

Ron Noble, an American, was "absolutely satisfied" with the anti-terror briefings he received in January 2002 meetings with Cuban police and Ministry of Interior officials.[8]

Finally, Cuba has asked the United States to sign a bilateral agreement providing for joint efforts against terrorism and narco-trafficking. The United States has declined to cooperate. [9] Mr. Bolton of course does not mention this.

-- "Castro continues to view terror as a legitimate tactic to further revolutionary objectives."

This is patently untrue. Castro has over and over again denounced terror as a legitimate tactic, as referenced in the September 11th and September 22nd statements above.

Bolton quotes a speech of Castro's at Tehran University in which he said that, "Iran and Cuba, in cooperation with each other can bring America to its knees. The U.S. regime is very weak, and we are witnessing this weakness from close up." Castro's words were irritating to be sure. Clearly, however, Castro was not actually proposing that Iran and Cuba together defeat the United States in a literal sense — as of course they could not. Rather, he was suggesting that U.S. hegemony, to which both Cuba and Iran see themselves as victims, would be overcome and the so-called strength of the Iranian and Cuban systems would prevail.

Bolton does not tell us that Castro went on to praise Iranians for deposing "the strongest gendarme of the region not with guns, but with your thoughts." [10] This is hardly an endorsement of terrorism.

—The 1998 Pentagon report "underplayed the threat Cuba posed to the United States."

Bolton concludes that Defense analyst Ana Belén Montes, who pleaded guilty on March 19 to charges of spying for Cuba, is the major reason why the Pentagon report found Cuba no longer a threat. This is an absurd allegation and is insulting to the dozens of analysts in the Defense Intelligence Agency and throughout the Defense Department who participated in the preparation of the report. It is inconceivable that Ana Belén Montes's view prevailed over those of the dozens of loyal and competent analysts who helped produce the report.

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR HURICANNE MICHELLE VICTIMS IN CUBA



ENJOY TRADITONAL CUBAN AND LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC WITH:

ANA RUTH BERMUDEZ (CUBA) ON THE CELLO

ANA LOURDES DE LA CUESTA (CUBA) ON THE FLUTE

CARNES DANIELE BARRO KOLERON (VENEZUELA)

CARMEN DANIELLE PARDO KOLESCH (VENEZUELA) ON THE VIOLA DINORAH MÁRQUEZ (MÉXICO) ON THE VIOLIN AND VIOLA

FRIDAY, MAY 24TH., 7:30 P.M.
FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE
1342 N. ASTOR ST.

[CORNER OF ASTOR AND OGDEN, OFF-STREET PARKING AVAILABLE]





Last November, Cuba experienced the worst hurricane in 50 years. Two-thirds of the concert proceeds will be sent directly for hurricane relief throught he non-profit Cuban American Alliance Education Fund (CAAEF, www.cubamer.org), with the remainder to cover out-of-pocket expenses for local educational and humanitarian work, including exchanges with our compañeros in Cuba. Admission will be by donation (minimum suggested: \$7 & \$5 for students & low-income). Contact the Milwaukee Coalition for advance tickets. Make-checks payable to: CAAEF.

Concert co-sponsored by the <u>First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee</u>, (414) 273-5257, and the <u>Milwaukee Coaltion to Normalize Relations with Cuba.</u> 606 W. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1706, Milwaukee, WI 53203, (414) 273-1040, www.cubawifriends.org

But, if conducting intelligence operations against the United States were cause for placing a country on the terrorist list, then Israel would long since have been on it-along with a lot of other states. Convicted several years ago, the spy Jonathan Pollard severely compromised U.S. national security, as he gave up NSA code-breaking techniques, the identities of nearly a hundred U.S. agents in the Middle East, top-secret military and diplomatic codes and Mideast war-fighting plans. After years of denial, Israel finally admitted in 1999 that Pollard was a spy for Israeli intelligence. Unfortunately, such intelligence operations are all too common a part of international relations, even among "friendly" nations. The Montes case is no exception and offers no justification whatever for keeping Cuba on the terrorist list.

—Cuba is "harboring terrorists from Colombia and Spain, and fugitives from the United States."

This is the State Department's tired old canard for keeping Cuba on the list of terrorist nations in the first place. In fact, to be harboring someone, that person must be sought or pursued by someone else. But the Basques living in Cuba are not sought by the Spanish government.

On the contrary, many of them came there years ago as the result of an agreement with the government of Felipe González which asked Cuba to take them. Others have come subsequently and the present Spanish government does not consider the earlier agreement any longer to be operative. But the present government has not asked for the extradition of any of the Basques living in Cuba. It apparently is content to have them remain there. And we note that the President of the autonomous Basque Republic just this month paid a state visit to Cuba, which he would not have done if he considered Cuba to be harboring Basque terrorists. In fact, Spain thanked Cuba for denying asylum to two ETA members in late 2000.[11] The presence of the Basques in Cuba, therefore, is obviously no cause for keeping Cuba on the list.

As for the Colombians, the Colombian government has expressed gratitude for the helpful role Cuba has played facilitating talks with the ELN guerrillas. Just last month, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Colombia, General Fernando Tapias, told the House Committee on International Relations that, "there is no information...that Cuba is in any way linked to terrorist activities in

Continued on p.10



FAMILIES SPEAK OUT

HAVEN'T STOPPED LOVING OR LONGING FOR YOU!

A letter from Adriana Pérez to her husband, Gerardo Hernández on their thirteenth wedding anniversary.

Just a few days before our 13th. anniversary. all of the marvellous memories that we have enioved during our marriage welled up in my mind, ones that you were mainly responsible planting for and cultivating. nevertheless...today, I have to return to the usual blank paper, have to leave this line of thought for ever, so that not even death can put an end to this illustrious and profound love I have nor to this immense gratitude that l profess...

Thus wrote Raul Gómez García. unaware that years later, these words would reflect the reality of a young couple, who in spite of the distance separating them haven't Stopped loving each other with the materity of older couples, the passion of the wild and carefree, wrapped up in the pride, admiration and mutual respect that you and I feel for each other.

Once more we are physically separated, but our love is not diminished by that, neither do I need your smile, nor your mischievous look, nor the desired farewell kiss at bed time to feel your presence. You are always at my side, in my dreams, memories and realities. In the past, with idelible details we constructed this edifice on solid foundations that today is our marriage, that is undergoing the test of difficult times; at the present, nostalgic and filled with anticipation; in the future, which belongs to both of us. with the assurance of returning to live those longed for moments filled with happiness that

we deserve.

Yet, in spite of these years of silence and forced separation, I haven't stopped loving and longing for you. With your unbounded affection, respect, understanding, your sensitive patience, selflessness, tenderness and eternal smile you have made me a spoiled little girl and an immensely happy woman. As Martí said, "Loved will be he who loves, kisses will be gathered by he who sows kisses."

For men like you neither the sacrifices matter nor the unlimited selflessness for which one isn't prepared.

We have a beautiful love story, im-=possible=to:capture=in=these=few=lines;=but the years will pass and our love will grow. I've been and still am very happy to share my life with an extraordinary man, who today is part of our country's history, who is adorned with enviable qualities and who knows how to enrich and increase that wonderful feeling of love.

I wish you a lot of happiness, accompanied by these kisses that time and distance have prvented us from enjoying. Thank you for so much happiness and for loving me so much. I miss you a lot.

Love is like the wind to the fire, it enlivens the strong and extinguishes the

Happy Anniversary! I love you. Your Bonsai

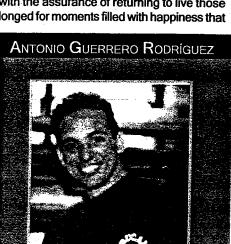


Even though Gerardo Hernández and his wife=Adriana=Pérez;;have=been;separated= from each other for the past four years, their love is as strong as ever.

Message from Magali Llort (mother of Fernando González Llort, imprisoned at Oxford, WI) There are many special days in the course

of life, but none approaches the significance of this one - Mother's Day - the highest expression of devotion and unqualified sacrifice.

On this day, we send North American mothers our message of love and hope for a better world for our children.



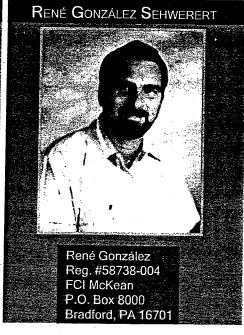
Antonio Guerrero

U.S.P. Florence

Florence CO 81226

P.O. Box 7500

#58741-004







Gerardo Hernández #58739-004 U.S. P.-Lompoc 3901 Klein Blvd. Lompoc, CA 93436

René González's Daughter, Irma, Tells Her Story



Irma González Salanueva with her little sister lvette and their father René González

My name is Irma González Salanueva. I'm seventeen years old and the daughteir of a pilot and an engineer who joined their lives like many other young Cubans filled with dreams which they hoped to fulfill in a society like ours.

Nevertheless, in 1990 my father was separated from our home, where he had been so necessary, in order to occupy a leadership position where men-like him are essential, willing to make the highest human sacrifice and who, in the silence of anonymous heroes, watch over the dreams of all Cubans who constitute here the most humane endeavor of these times.

When this happened I was only six years old and too young to understand everything. I only knew that soon I wouldn't see him again, staying with my mom.

However, my life continued like that of any other girl, no one pointed me out, no rights were taken away. I continued being a

pioneer, integrated into the activities of my school and my neighborhood.

I grew up longing to have my father at my side and to be like the rest of my friends. But I didn't lack the guidance of my mother who assumed the role of both parents until our reunion which took place six years later.

At that time I was twelve, already an adolescent and I noticed that my father had never lost any of the values that I remembered and admired in him.

In the U.S. I got along with the young people but I could also notice the differences between us. There it is extremely important to dress with the latest styles, wear the most expensive tennis shoes or drive the latest car.

It's not necessary to study very much to get good grades because the teaching isn't very demanding. They have in their hands many information tools but live uninformed and alienated. It is more important to know the latest gossip than the fact that millions of children are dying of hunger.

For that reason, I looked forward to vacation time to return to my homeland, ride a "camello" (buses used in Havana) with my friends or for everyone to go bike riding to the beach with big smiles but always with an interesting topic to discuss.

I was surprised to find out that in the short time I was there my friends made me aware of many things that in almost four years in the U.S. I hadn't learned.

In 1998, when my family had grown some more, one morning I felt for the first time how my rights and those of my four-month old sister were violated when our sleep was interrupted by armed men who told me without hesitation to put my hands

up, not to touch anything and to leave the house. My mother was already awake and they woke up my little sister. And my father, I didn't see him again for a long time.

That's when the agony started. The press pursued us, the isolation due to the fear many of our friends had of talking to us and as a result we had to go to live in the apartment of one of our few remaining friends. My little sister had to go to the house of my great-grandmother so that my mother could continue working and provide for us, but we almost never saw each other because she worked at night and I went to school during the day. On the weekends, we went to visit my little sister in Sarasota, a four-hour trip from our home.

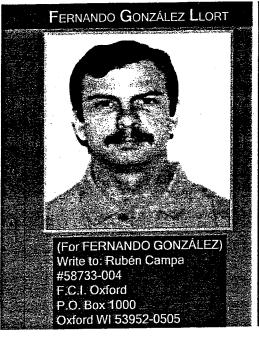
At the same time, we were worried about my father being in a jail cell for no reason and not being able to see his daughters. He was only able to see the first footsteps of lyette through a window on the 12th floor of a federal prison. We stood on the sidewalk and he with his orange uniform made hand signals to let us know he was looking at us.

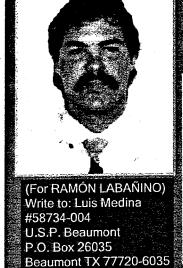
He remained in solitary confinement for 17 months. I remember that the first visit my sister and I could have with him took place in a small room in the jail where my father was seated in a chair, handcuffed and surrounded by FBI agents.

During all this time, my mother had to take on the responsibility of supporting her two daughters and relinquish having her baby close to her, whom she was only able to see on weekends.

In those moments I again saw the differences, in this society no one was interested in our fate.

Continued on p. 11





RAMÓN LABAÑINO SALAZAR

They're waiting for you.

Prison life is lonely and you can do something to make it a little bit easier. Letters. A simple letter expressing your support would do wonders for their spirits. Our solidarity with them during their time of imprisonment while at the same time working to overturn the unjust sentences which they received is the minimum we can do. So the next time you're sitting in front of the TV, take out a pen and some paper and get started. If you're at a lose for words, just start talking about your favorite subject—yourself. I'm sure they'd like to know more about you

MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE GROUP TRAVELS TO CUBA



THE SYMBOL OF THE CITY OF NUEVITAS CONTAINS REPRESENTATIONS OF THE THREE SMALL ISLANDS IN THE BAY, THE THERMOELECTRIC PLANT, AND THE LANDING OF CHRISTOPHER COLOMBUS. ALTHOUGH THE LANDING OF COLOMBUS HAS BEEN DISPROVED, FOR THE SAKE OF TRADITION IT HAS BEEN RETAINED IN THE CITY'S SYMBOL.



NUEVITAS MAYOR, ABEL ROMERO ALVAREZ, HAS GENEROUSLY OPENED UP THE CITY TO MILWAUKEE DELEGATIONS FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS. ALTHOUGH WILLING TO MOVE AHEAD WITH PROJECTS BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES, HE LOOKS FORWARD TO A FORMAL AGREEMENT WITH MILWAUKEE'S MAYOR, JOHN NORQUIST, TO GIVE OUR SISTER-CITY RELATIONSHIP A MORE PERMANENT STATURE.



A group of 32 Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) faculty, staff, friends and families traveled to Cuba on a Study Tour from March 29th to April 8th. The multi-generational group visited Havana, Santa Clara, Camagüey and Nuevitas, Milwaukee's sister city.

The educational delegation consisted of three repeat Cuba travelers, but opened the eyes of many that had never visited "the Pearl of the Antilles". The trip was the brainchild of Alexandra Topping, a long-time Coalition member and ESL instructor at MATC, and was expedited by Raúl Galván of the Milwaukee Nuevitas Association.

Among the travelers were MATC faculty, staff, a Board Member and his son, a long-time union organizer, a retired postmaster, and retired educators. The group experienced a variety of formal and informal presentations.

We arrived in Havana on a Saturday and after an amusing check-in at the Plaza Hotel, where the rooming list had been alphabetized, they hit the streets of Old Havana to explore the sights and sounds of one of the New World's first cities. Some headed for the Malecón, Havana's grand ocean front drive, while others walked into Centro Habana, Havana's former commercial district, and now the home for thousands of Habaneros.

Music was everywhere, children were out playing sandlot baseball, couples were out for their weekend walks and old American cars criss-crossed the streets. That night, a number of baseball fans in the group headed for Estadio Latinoamericano to see Havana's Metropolitanos face the Industriales in a key Cuban National League contest. Others headed to see old friends and those needing "mojito therapy" headed for the Floridita, Hemingway's old hangout.

On Easter Sunday, many folks went to churches of various denominations—religion is alive and well in Cuba! A number went to the Cathedral where they were fortunate to hear mass said by Cardinal Jaime Ortega, the leader of the Cuban Catholic Church, who had been instrumental in the Pope's visit to Cuba in 1999. They also had a chance to meet the Cardinal after mass, in the Cathedral's courtyard.

In the afternoon, the formal programming of the MATC tour began with an interesting presentation at the Plaza's Solarium by Debra Evenson, a Chicago attorney who works for a New York firm that represents the Republic of Cuba in the United States. She has lived in Havana for a number of years now, and does a great deal of research into the Cuban legal system.

Later in the week, the group heard presentations by Basilio Gutierrez, who talked about the effects that tourism has had on the Cuban revolution, and Julio Espinosa, the International Affairs Coordinator for the Cuban National Assembly. Of special interest to the group was a meeting and presentation by the Confederation of Cuban Workers National Teacher's Union and their Vice-President, Margarita Rodríguez. The meeting concluded with an expression of gratitude from the MATC delegation headed by American Federation of Teacher's Local 212 president Michael Rosen.

The group headed eastward to Camagüey on Wednesday. There was a stop in Santa Clara to visit the impressive monument to "Che" Guevara, and his resting place. On Thursday, the group hit the streets of Camagüey for a visit to its old town, which as a whole, is in much better shape than Havana's. They visited the home of Camagüeyan patriot Ignacio Agramonte, who was killed in the War of Independence.

On the 40th anniversary of the Cuban Pioneer Organization and the 41st of the Cuban Communist Youth League,

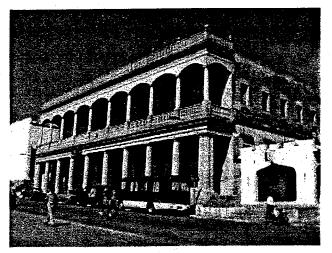


the group visited a Pioneer Camp, where in addition to visiting vocational education classes, they were treated to a musical by the camp's theater troupe. The kids didn't hesitate to coax the group members onto the dance floor.

After a Cuban "merienda" concluding with homemade ice cream, the group headed to a meeting and presentation by the University of Camagüey's "Instituto Superior Pedagógico José Martí", the teacher's training college and its rector, Ana María Rodríguez. That night, the group received

an invitation to attend the Camagüey Ballet's production of "Giselle", which was exquisitely staged.

screensavers of images taken by the group as it arrived to an emotional welcome in the school's courtyard.



Then it was off to a rustic lunch at Los Pinos in Cayo Sabinal, across the bay from Nuevitas. The trip to the virgin key featured a lecture about the ecology, flora and fauna by Verardo Seijo Díaz, the key's biologist.

On Saturday, the group returned to Havana after a reception hosted by Francisco "Paquito" López, the local delegate of ICAP, the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples.



FOR THE CUBA LOVER IN YOU

The Milwaukee-Nuevitas Sister-City Association invites you to travel to Cuba on a Department of Treasury Licensed humanitarian mission leaving on the weekend of June 21st.

Trip will be led by Raul Galvan of the Association, who just returned from Cuba on his 3rd trip in the last 24 months

<u>DATES:</u> June 21 to July 1st (June 20th to June 30th)

<u>DESTINATIONS:</u> Havana, Camagüey and Nuevitas

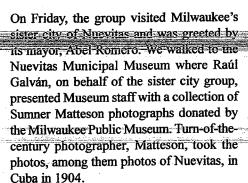
COST: \$1,500, double occupancy. Single supplement \$180. Includes all airfare, 3-star hotel, breakfasts, airport transports, and motor coach transfer to Camagüey and Nuevitas. \$50 non-refundable deposit required.

PROGRAMMING: Will be visiting schools, museums, medical centers,

arts groups and meeting with National Assembly officials.

<u>DONATIONS:</u> Your donations of prescription & non-prescription drugs, school supplies and personal hygiene products will be appreciated.

If you're interested, please call Raúl at (414) 297-7548 or (414) 247-1441. There will be a maximum number of 16 slots available for the mission.



The Nuevitas visit concluded with a trip to Victoria at Girón Elementary School, where the MATC contingent delivered a generous amount of school supplies and group members left the school's computers with



Top: Nuevitas's City Hall (ayuntamiento) faces the main square, or plaza, of the city. Above Left: MATC delegation displays photographs by Sumner Matteson donated by the Milwuakee Public Museum to the Museo de la Ciudad in Nuevitas.

<u>Above</u>: Students from the *Victoria en Girón* School extend a warm greeting to their visitors from Milwaukee.

On Sunday, a large contingent from the group took a local ferry across the Bay of Havana with Consuelo Alba, a director at Cuban Television and a friend of Alexandra Topping's. Others visited Rev. Dora Arce, the Cuban minister who had received the Lutheran Campus Ministry's Gamaliel Chair last fall, at her parish in Luyanó.

The trip sparked the creative fires of many in the group. In an effort to collaborate with their Camagüeyan counterparts, proposals are being prepared for MATC to partner in educational projects with the University, and to collect soccer supplies for the Nuevitas soccer program, one of the strongest in the province.

Note: The MATC contingent was one of three Milwaukee groups [Shorewood High School and the UWM Institute of World Affairs, the others] which were in Havana at the same time.



Page 10 Bio-Weapons from p. 5

Colombia today...Indeed Cuban authorities are buttressing the peace movement....And this is the information that I have from the president and from the commissioners that are involved in that regard." [12] President Pastrana has publicly stressed the important role Havana plays in the peace process.[13]

As for the American fugitives, yes, there are a number of them. There is no evidence that any are engaged in terrorist activities or in activities against the United States. Further, while there are American fugitives in Cuba, there are Cuban fugitives in the United States, and a number of them are terrorists with extensive FBI files.

President Bush recently insisted that anyone who harbors a terrorist is a terrorist, and that no one can pick and choose their terrorist



Convicted of terrorism against Cuba, Orlando Bosch was pardoned by former President George Bush and is now living and active in Miami.

friends. But we note that his father, the first President Bush, freed Orlando Bosch, the Cuban exile arch-terrorist responsible for the deaths of dozens of innocent people and over 30 terrorist acts documented by the U.S. Department of Justice, at the urgings of Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen(R-FL), now-Governor Jeb Bush and other Florida politicians.[14] Does this, then, make them, by President Bush's definition, terrorists?

Regardless of how many fugitives either country would like returned, the old U.S.-Cuban extradition treaty has been inoperative for more than forty years. In 1977, the Carter administration began a normalization process, and an extradition treaty was discussed as one of the steps that needed to be taken. Unfortunately, the normalization process was stalled long before that step was reached.

—"We know that Cuba is collaborating with other state sponsors of terror."

Do we indeed? In what way is Cuba collaborating with these states? By sending medical personnel to them? By selling them medical technologies that they sell the world over? By making highly rhetorical speeches at their

universities? Mr. Bolton does not say. Indeed, he presents no evidence at all.

—Why bioweapons accusations now? Why has the Bush Administration suddenly decided that Cuba is involved in some form of bio-terrorism?

It is most unlikely that it has any evidence today that it did not have in November 2001, when it left Cuba off the list of countries of concern. Indeed, it has produced a carefully worded statement but no evidence at all. Why then this sudden attack?

Cuba watchers know well the reasons why. Many hardline Cuban exiles and their political allies are riled that the Bush administration is permitting former President Jimmy Carter to travel to Cuba.

For several years now, coalitions of business, agriculture, political and rights groups have joined forces with an overwhelming majority in Congress to lift trade and travel restrictions against Cuba Opponents understand that the writing is on the wall for the embargo.

This would appear to be a desperate effort to stay the inevitable. Staunch supporters of the failed U.S. policy toward Cuba have been anxious for the administration to fulfill its campaign promise to toughen U.S. Cuba policy. Some of these groups have been complaining that the administration was not taking seriously enough their accusations concerning biological weapons in Cuba.

With Jeb Bush running for re-election in November, the Administration would seem to have decided to silence those complaints and do what the hard-line exiles require. But this will not fool our allies in the war against terrorism and it will not fool Congress. Such transparent tactics aimed at winning domestic political battles only detract from our seriousness of purpose in the struggle against real terrorism.

Making unsubstantiated, politically expedient charges against Cuba in no way serves the interests of the American people.

[1] Tamayo, Juan. U.S. skeptical of report on Cuba biological weapons. The Miami Herald. June 23, 1999.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] San Martin, Nancy. Cuba forced to sell biotechnology. The Miami Herald. October 10, 2001.

[5] Johnson, Tim. Talk of Cuba's germ warfare potential could affect embargo. The Miami Herald. May 7, 2002.

[6] Cuba rallies against terrorism, supports US people. The Associated Press. September 16, 2001.

[7] Speech by Fidel Castro Ruz. San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba. September 22, 2001

[8] Interpol chief picks up Cuban anti-terror dossier. Reuters. January 16, 2002.

[9] Cuba seeks deals with U.S. to fight terror, migrant smuggling, drugs. Agence France Presse. March 19, 2002; Boadle, Anthony. U.S. thanks Cuba, but declines anti-drug accord. March 19, 2002.

[10] Valinejad, Afshin. Castro calls U.S. 'imperialist King.'" The Associated Press. May 9, 2001.

[11] Goodman, Al. Suspected ETA Members Arrested. CNN.com. November 7, 2000. Alleged ETA terrorists held after Cuban asylum bid fails. Agencia EFE, S.A. November 7, 2000.

[12] House Committee on International Relations hearing on Global Terrorism and Illicit Drugs. FDCH political transcripts. April 24, 2002.

[13] Johnson, Tim. Colombian leader takes new stance on Cuba ties. The Miami Herald. January 17, 1999.

[14] Examples of controversial pardons by previous presidents. A report prepared by Minority staff, Committee on Government Reform, U.S. House of Representatives, April 20, 2001; Hancock, David. U.S. decides to deport Bosch; terrorist activities are cited. The Miami Herald. June 24, 1989; Marquis, Christopher. Indignant exiles rally for Bosch. The Miami Herald. June 25, 1989; Schmalz, Jeffrey. Furor over Castro foe's fate puts Bush on spot in Miami. The New York Times. Aug. 16, 1989; The Bosch case does violence to justice. The New York Times. July 20, 1990; Lacey, Mark. Political memo: resurrecting ghosts of pardons past. The New York Times. March 4, 2001.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CUBA AND TERRORISM, VISIT

Center for International Policy
http://www.ciponline.org/cuba
Also recommended on Cuba and terrorism:

 The Council on Foreign Relations: http://www.terrorismanswers.com

-The Lexington Institute:

http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/cuba -US-Cuba InfoMed Project:

http://www.cubasolidarity.net/boltonreply.html

Irma's Story from p.7

Two years later, they tried to use our family in a blackmail scheme, hoping my father would betray his companions so that we could stay together in the U.S. After a blunt refusal by my father, my mother was imprisoned and isolated for three months in a prison in another city, where she wrote letters to my father that he never received and where my sister, who by now was two, could only see her through a window.

At that moment, the four people in our family were totally separated and facing an unknown future. I was in Cuba, my sister in Sarasota, my mother was in prison in Fort Lauderdale and my father in prison in Miami.

But neither no one nor nothing could make us betray our ideals, and my mother was deported to Cuba where they finally brought my sister.

Now, my father continues in prison, the same as his four idealistic companions, as he said so well in his argument (pre-sentencing) they continue to be in-prison only for the crime of being dignified.

Our family is still divided, but we are with the other children and families and with the essential support of the those fighting for the return of our fathers. I know that it won't be easy now that three have been sentenced to life and my father and the other one have received long sentences.

Victory will be ours. This unjust imprisonment will be known worldwide and then the court of decency of all people will demand their freedom.

My father and his four companions will return to their homeland in order to construct along with this new generator a hope-filled future.



SENATOR FEINGOLD PLEDGES TO SUPPORT THREE MILWAUKEE METHODISTS AND COMPLETE REPEAL OF U.S. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS TO CUBA

On May 12, Senator Russell Feingold heard from several members of Central United Methodist Church (CUMC), at one of his regular listening sessions open to all area residents with concerns related to our federal government.

Two of the three CUMC members who have been threatened by our government with fines of up to \$7,500 apiece for travelling to Cuba, spoke. They were commissioned by CUMC to participate in the 100th anniversary of its sister church in Havana Centro, La Trinidad (the Trinity), in January 1999, and have recently been pursued by OFAC, the office of the Treasury Department which is supposed to enforce the U.S. restrictions on travel to Cuba.

Recently, the Bush administration has substantially increased OFAC's actions in attempting to punish US travel to Cuba. The threatened CUMC members, including a veteran of the Korean War, stated that they had a "right to travel" to Cuba and that they intended to exercise

that right both as free U.S. citizens and as people of faith. The others in the crowd not only listened attentively, but took the unusual step to applaud them.

Then Senator Feingold stated that he did not believe these travel restrictions were justified in any way, and that he greatly appreciated being informed of how this apparent crackdown by our own government was affecting his constituents concretely. He stated that he would support legislation to repeal the travel ban when it comes up in the Senate, and that he would have his office investigate and pursue these specific cases as appropriate.

Any group or person wishing to support these individuals, or in scheduling them to speak, are invited to contact CUMC, at 639 N. 25th St., Milwaukee, WI 53233, (414) 344-1600. Visit our website, www.cubawifriends.org for a petition to our senators, and a free service to send a fax to your senators and representative in congress.

To Write to the Families of the Miami 5

MAGALI LLORT AND
ROSA AURORA FREIJANES
(MOTHER AND WIFE OF FERNANDO
GONZÁLEZ, RESPECTIVELY)
APARTADO POSTAL 6100
CÓDIGO POSTAL 10600
LA HABANA, 6, CUBA

Adriana Pérez (WIFE OF GERARDO HERNÁNDEZ) SAME AS ABOVE Olga Salanueva (WIFE OF RENE GONZALEZ) SAME AS ABOVE

MARGARET LOUISE BECKER (COMPANION OF ANTONIO GUERRERO) 1504 SOUTH ST. KEY WEST, FL 33040

Your Help Is Needed!!!!!

The Coalition Newsletter aims to keep you up to date on events in Cuba and the U.S. so you have a better idea of where and how to direct your letters, actions, comments, etc. There are certain expenses involved in bringing the newsletter to you and we hope you will be generous within your means in helping us cover these costs. Suggested donation is \$15.00.

Name		e-mail:	e-mail:	
Address		·		
City	State	ZIP		



PASTORS FOR PEACE

13th ifco/pastors for peace

us/cuba friendshipment caravan

For Health and Healing in

INTERRELIGIOUS

FOUNDATION FOR

COMMUNITY

ORGAINZATION

Cuba & in Our World

july 4-30, 2002



For more info. contact:

IFCO/Pastors for Peace
402 W. 145 St.
New York, NY 10031
Phone: (212) 926-5757

FAX: (212) 926-5842 E-Mail: <u>cucaravan@igc.org</u> Website: <u>www.ifconews.org</u>

Milwaukee Coalition to Normalize Relations with Cuba 606 W. Wisconsin Ave. Suite 1706 Milwaukee, WI 53203 (Return Service Requested) First Class ■ Challenge the immoral US blockade of Cuba by attempting to deliver millions of dollars of medicines, computers, and medical equipment without a US Treasury license;

■ Commemorate ten years of grassroots struggle_of_the_earavans_against_the_US_ blockade;

- ■Celebrate Cuba's health achievements for its people and the peoples of the world;
- Carry back health-related products made in Cuba with the Second Reverse Challenge!

In Cuba, caravanistas will participate in a special anniversary celebration commemorating ten years of the caravans challenging the US blockade; July 26 festivities; and a visit to the Latin American School of Medical Sciences where dozens of US students, recruited by IFCO, are studying on full scholarship to serve as doctors in medically underserved areas in the US!

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- 1. Travel with the caravan and recruit other participants!
- 2. Host the caravan in your church, school and/or community
- 3. Collect aid and/or sponsor a vehicle to be donated
- 4. Donate to the "Millions of Medicines for Cuba!" Fund

CARAVAN SCHEDULE

July 5-15 Public events and aid collections in the US & Canada

July 16-19 Orientation and border crossing in Texas

July 21-29 Caravan program in Cuba

July 30 Reverse Challenge!

Note: The Milwaukee appearance of the caravan is not definite at this time. Please, watch for an announcement through e-mail, flyers, etc.

Help Save Mailing Costs-Send Us Your E-Mail Address at: mailing-list@cubawifriends.org