

Arrest Castro!

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"His killing and human rights violations dwarf the most exaggerated accusations against General Pinochet."

Castro dared to declare that "I am part of a lineage that is difficult to arrest anywhere, not only for the morals I have, but for my life's history..."

The most important financial newspaper in the United States and possibly the world, *The Wall Street Journal*, published an editorial in its Tuesday edition (October 20th) titled "Arrest Fidel!" in which it explained and provided examples why, following the arrest of General Augusto Pinochet in London, Spain has even more reason to proceed to arrest Fidel Castro.

Pinochet was preventively arrested in London at the request of two Spanish judges, seeking to extradite him in order to investigate the repression committed by his government (1973-1990) against Spanish citizens.

The editorial says that if Pinochet was arrested under European anti-terrorist statutes for human rights violations during his government, "OK, but if that is to be the standard, Spain should arrest Fidel. His killing and human rights violations dwarf the most exaggerated accusations against General Pinochet."

It goes on to say that "Castro's program for subverting Latin America was the real root of the brutality that swept the region in the 1970s. His attempts to spread revolution gave life to the brutal military dictatorships that once marred the Latin scene."

Nor does it leave out that in the past quarter century, romantic Marxists have tried to exact vengeance on General Pinochet in particular, "the man who probably did more than anyone else in Latin America to roll back their revolution." And it states that with the election of Allende by only 36% of the votes cast in 1970, it was thought that Chile would be the launching pad for Castro-style communism throughout the continent. "General Pinochet headed the coup that saved his country. Some 3,000 people died. One of them was President Allende — who by some accounts killed himself with a gun that had been a gift from Fidel Castro."

The editorial also considers that the leftist governments who today control the greater part of Europe, in exchange for not being able to expand the welfare state, appease the bulk of their voters with the Marxist symbolism of applying one legal standard to General Pinochet and quite another to Castro.

"What has since rankled the radical left is that Chile under General Pinochet was translated from a Communist beachhead to an example of successful free-market reform, after which in 1989 peaceful elections were held and he left power. "Chile was again a democracy," and the final insult for those who'd hoped that it would be the next Cuba.

"What we have instead is a free and prospering nation. The decision in Chile was to make peace with the past, and move on. Germany made an identical decision, of course, about the Stasi records. [...] We hear the arrest sets new precedents for human rights. Interesting. If we start extraditing rulers with blood on their hands, what becomes of

China's President Jiang Zemin — part of the party machinery that crushed the 1989 Tiananmen protests by ordering the army to kill peaceful civilians in Beijing? Is Russia's President Boris Yeltsin safe? Yes, he led Russia to democracy. But before that he served as party boss in the Urals, presiding over things like the manufacture of nuclear bombs and the local gulag. Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, the generals who led Korea to democracy, were arrested for earlier repression, but were pardoned by Kim Dae Jung, the former dissident they'd repressed.

The WSJ editorial also says that "If the world begins a program of wholesale revenge against dictators who drop their defenses, there are going to be a lot fewer dictators willing to turn over government to their nations' democrats. All the more so if those who cling brutally to power, like Fidel, strut about boastfully."

The arrest of General Pinochet in London immediately brings up the contrasting fact that Pinochet headed an authoritarian government in power and effectively made authority respected in response to the subversion sponsored by the dictator Castro in Latin America, as well as the various attempts to destabilize Chile, including one vicious attack that nearly cost him his life.

In Chile, the news has shocked the country, and the majority of Chileans have condemned the arrest. The Chilean president, Eduardo Frei, said that Chile is a lawful state, and that crimes committed in Chile should be judged in Chile. "This is the principle of international law that we believe must be respected and this is the position we are going to uphold." Finally, he stated the clear position of his government "in regard to not accepting the extra-territoriality of the courts" in Spain.