

# Castro's arrest demanded

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**ARIEL REMOS**

*Eight members of congress remind Clinton that when the murder of four Brothers to the Rescue pilots happened, "you made a public commitment with the mothers of the victims that you would not rest until those responsible for the murders were brought to justice."*

Eight members of the U.S. Congress sent a letter to President Clinton asking him to instruct the nation's Attorney General to take measures in order to proceed to arrest and extradite the Cuban dictator Fidel Castro to the U.S. They are Lincoln Diaz-Balart and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, of Florida; Dana Rohrabacher and William Thomas, of California; Gerald Solomon, Michael Forbes, and Peter King, of New York; and Robert Menendez of New Jersey.

The members of Congress have based this on the fact that the former General Augusto Pinochet has been arrested by the British government at the request of Spanish judges in Spain investigating the alleged murders of Spanish citizens during his rule (1973-1990), and is awaiting extradition to Spain: and that on the 24<sup>th</sup> February, 1996 "three citizens and a legal resident of the US were killed in the Straits of Florida by Cuban fighter pilots (MIGs), under the direct orders from Fidel Castro," facts "extensively documented by American radar and by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)".

They are asking President Clinton "to instruct the Attorney General to review the efforts of the Spanish courts to extradite Pinochet and to take definite steps to bring the Cuban tyrant to justice for the murder of Armando Alejandro, Carlos Costa, Mario de la Peña and Pablo Morales." The indictment is also necessary for the murders of tens of thousands of people committed by Castro in Cuba and other countries, and for his participation in terrorism and drug trafficking.

They remind the President that when the murder of three citizens and one legal resident of the U.S. occurred, "you made a public commitment with the mothers of the victims that you would not rest until those responsible for the murders were brought to justice."

They cite the case of Noriega, former dictator of Panama, who was taken to U.S. justice and is today serving his sentence for his crimes, affirming that "An indictment of Fidel is necessary, given his responsibility for the killing of tens of thousands of people in Cuba, Central America and elsewhere, and for his responsibility for training, funding and supporting terrorism and participating in drug trafficking."

The fact that former authoritarian ruler Augusto Pinochet has been arrested in London at the request of Spanish judges, yet the dictator in practice Fidel Castro comfortably travels around the world, as equals with democratically-elected heads of government, has caused many to stop and look at what they understand to be a double standard in favor of the Cuban tyrant.

The important financial newspaper *The Wall Street Journal*, shocked the public opinion of the world with an editorial on Tuesday titled "Arrest Fidel," which indicates that if "Pinochet was arrested under statutes for violations of human rights ... OK, but if this is the rule, Spain must arrest Fidel. His murders and human rights violations dwarf in comparison to the exaggerated charges against General Pinochet".

Commenting on the case, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen said the Clinton Administration "has been appeasing Castro and his supporters for far too long", and that it is time to "think about the justice and welfare of the American people, over the interests of those who support the Cuban dictator."

For his part, Congressman Diaz-Balart referred to the "reprehensible and unacceptable double standard in so many places with Castro, the multiple crimes he committed, and the double standard incurred by governments that pay homage to and invite him to international forums, treating him as if he were another democratic leader."