

Basulto insists that the Administration could have avoided the planes being shot down

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Jose Basulto, president of Brothers to the Rescue, once again insisted that the Clinton Administration knew of the Cuban air force preparations and practices prior to the shooting down of two planes belonging to that organization by a Cuban MiG on February 24, 1996, in which Armando Alejandro, Carlos Costa, Mario de la Peña and Pablo Morales were killed. The Administration, therefore, did not prevent the shoot down.

Basulto based his claim on the trial that continues this week in Bradenton, Florida, of Adel Regalado Ulloa and two other defendants, all on the same charges of air piracy for which they had already been acquitted by a Tampa court seven months ago.

"During the hearing that commenced last Monday before a federal judge, in which our organization appeared yesterday (Wednesday) with Jose Basulto's testimony, it becomes increasingly evident that President Clinton's Administration has instructed the Department of Immigration to ignore a previous trial in which the defendants, Adel Regalado Ulloa and two other young Cubans were acquitted of piracy by a jury in Tampa" says the media release prepared by Brothers to the Rescue with the title "Concealment and obstruction of justice."

Why?

Basulto believes that the Administration wants to send the three defendants back to Cuba, because Ulloa was aware of the Cuban air force practices and preparations for the premeditated shooting down of the two planes belonging to Brothers to the Rescue. His testimony, said Basulto, is key in determining that the Administration knew of the "imminent danger for the BTTR mission of February 24th," but deliberately chose not to prevent them being shoot-down.

"This information raises the degree of criminality of the event, the premeditated murder committed by the Cuban government and confirms what Time magazine previously reported on October 28, 1996, where the following quotation appears: "In January, U.S intelligence agencies sighted Cuban MiGs testing the firing of missiles in the air and practicing maneuvers to attack aircraft with low speeds, similar to those flown by the Brothers," says the media release.

"On the other hand, the Clinton Administrations response to the attack, until now, is totally inadequate, reinforcing our contention that the Administration knew of the imminent danger the BTTR mission ran on February 24th, and also decided, with premeditation, to not prevent the shoot-down," the press release added.

It ends by urging the exiled Cuban organizations and persons sensitized by the monstrous crime to "denounce with us this new act of concealment and obstruction of justice by President Clinton's administration. We urge you to support us in uncovering the truth of what occurred on February 24th, 1996, for an unresolved crime that remains unpunished."