

Front

**El Nuevo Herald, Wednesday, October 21, 1998, page 1-A
PABLO ALFONSO**

From the United States to Europe, from Miami to Washington, the arrest of Chilean ex-dictator Augusto Pinochet has unleashed a wave of demands for the Cuban ruler Fidel Castro to be submitted to a similar judicial process.

Eight US congressmen, several press media, political analysts and organizations join in soliciting the arrest of Castro, comparing his dictatorship to the Pinochet regime.

Pinochet, 82 years old, was arrested Friday in London at the request of Spanish judge Baltazar Garzón, who is investigating the murder of 94 citizens of various nationalities during the regime of the ex-dictator.

The daily newspaper The Wall Street Journal, in its editorial Tuesday titled "Arrest Castro" urged Spain to arrest the Cuban ruler, who that same day could be found in Madrid after participating...

'The murders and violations of human rights of Castro make small the most excessive denunciations against Pinochet'

"His murders and violations of human rights make small even the most excessive denunciations against general Pinochet," said the influential New York daily. "In fact, the subversive plans of Castro in Latin America were the true root of the savagery that devastated that region in the decade of the 1970s."

"His intentions to propagate revolution gave life to the savage military dictators who formerly stained the Latin American panorama," stressed the editorial.

The daily paper indicated that if the world were to begin a "mass revenge" against dictators who let down their defenses, "there will be many less dictators available to deliver the government from the democrats of their nations."

"Even more so if those who seize power with savagery, like Fidel, who take it boastfully," it said.

In addition, eight US congressmen, in a letter sent Tuesday to president Bill Clinton, demanded that he prepare measures to arrest and demand the extradition of the "Cuban tyrant" for "among other crimes, the murder of American citizens over the Strait of Florida on February 24, 1996."

"We ask that he instruct the Attorney General to review the efforts of the Spanish courts to extradite Pinochet, and that he take definitive steps to bring the Cuban tyrant to justice for the murder of Armando Alejandro, Carlos Costa, Mario de la Peña and Pablo Morales".

The petition is signed by congressmen Lincoln Díaz Balart (R) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R) for Florida; Robert Menéndez (D) for New Jersey; Jerry Salomón (R), Peter King (R) and Mike Forbes (R) for New York, and Bill Thomas (R) and Dana Rohrabacher (R) for California.

The congressmen explain in their missive that, just like Manuel Noriega, ex dictator of Panama, who was brought to justice and is serving his sentence, "a prosecution against Fidel Castro is necessary, given his responsibility for the murder of tens of thousands of people in Cuba, Central America and other places," and for the training, financing and support of terrorism and his participation in drug traffic.

They allege that "these crimes" provide the basis for action by the Department of Justice.

On his behalf, Castro answered the press commentaries, ruling out any possibility that one day he would have to face the same destiny as Pinochet.

"I belong to a lineage that would be difficult to arrest anywhere, not only morally, but for the history of my whole life," said Castro, who spoke during an hour and a half on Monday from the stage of the Roman Theater of Merada, Extremadura, before almost a hundred journalists.

Castro commented that "Pinochet should not be converted into a martyr," because "his time has past," and, although the detention of the Chilean general is "morally just," it is "legally questionable and could be a threat to the situation in Chile."

Castro said that he does not fear that one day something similar could happen to him, because his case is not comparable to that of Pinochet, so he has moved freely throughout the world despite the hundreds of attempts that have been organized against him. "I go wherever they give me a visa," he said.

Castro reminded that the Chileans are traditionally very jealous of the laws and of their sovereignty, "more than any country in Latin America," and that the detention of Pinochet could provoke that "the rightwing unifies, which is strong," while creating a difficult situation for the progressive forces."

Edition: Final
Section: Front
Page: 1A