TRUTH RECOVERY ARCHIVE ON CUBA

VICTIMS OF THE CUBAN COMMUNIST REGIME. SELECTED CASES OF INDIVIDUALS IN DETENTION OR SERVING PRISON SENTENCES FOR POLITICAL OFFENSES

November 2005 report
Work in progress

To date, 1197 deaths in prison have been documented -primarily from assassinations, medical negligence, and suicide. Many more are documented to have occurred during detention at State Security facilities or at the hands of police and other security personnel of the Cuban government. This number, however, is believed to fall short of actual deaths. The majority of this material comes from Armando M. Lago, Ph.D.’s, Cuba. The Human Cost of Social Revolutions, manuscript pending publication. A full bibliography is available on request. Investigation continues.

SELECTED CASES - WITH BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTATION

DIOSDANO AQUIT MANRIQUE - Age 33.
Assassinated in prison on 12-17-1966.
Location: Orange grove at Isla de Pinos prison.
Small grocery store (bodega) owner, Cruces, Las Villas province. Political prisoner was shot in the back arbitrarily by Corporal Arcia after asking for permission to break ranks to pick-up a straw hat blown off by the wind.

JOSÉ RAMÓN GUIT CRUZ - Age 16.
Assassinated by police on 03-71.
Location: City of Camaguey. High school student. After painting his alias, “Agapito” (for Eros, the Greek god of love) on Camaguey city walls, he was detained on false charges of painting anti-Castro slogans. His arrest radicalized him and he started to organize public protests. He was arrested several times and, finally, shot dead by the revolutionary police. During his funeral, the government sent tanks to the streets to contain a large protest.

LYDIA PÉREZ LÓPEZ - Age 25, eight months pregnant, and UNBORN CHILD.
Assassinated in prison, 07-07-61.
Location: Guanajay National Women’s Prison, Pinar del Río province. Kicked in the stomach by prison guards 30 days before her due date, she lost her baby, received no medical attention, and bled to death.

DR. EDMUNDA SERRAT BARRIOS - Age 70.
Assassinated under arrest on 06-09-81.
Location: G-2 State Security police headquarters at Villa Marista, Havana. A lawyer, she had served a three year sentence as a political prisoner -doing forced labor in Granja America, a concentration camp in the province of Havana- for opposing the Cuban judicial system and Marxist educational reforms. After her release, she began acting as defending lawyer in cases brought against the government. In August of 1981, during one of such cases, she objected to the conduct of the judges and was immediately detained during the trial. She was taken for interrogation at State Security Police headquarters in Villa Marista. A few days later, her family was informed of her death of an alleged heart attack. Her wake was held at a state funeral home and her coffin was sealed and under surveillance. A State Security policeman who later defected reported she had been beaten to death.

JULIO TANG TAXIER - Age 28.
Assassinated in prison on 9-3-1966.
Location: Isla de Pinos prison.
This political prisoner of Cuban-Chinese ancestry started to serve his sentence on May 1961. In 1966 he was arbitrarily attacked with a bayonet by prison guard Private Arcia when he wavered, due to his very poor physical condition, in answering an order to go do hard penal farm work. He lay on the floor in a pool of blood for four hours without medical attention and bled to death.
**ABBREVIATED LIST OF ADDITIONAL SELECTED CASES**

**Minors**

**Junior Flores Díaz. Age 17.**
Summer 1995. Location: Punishment cell in Valle Grande prison, El Morado, Havana province. *Died in prison, denied medical attention*. Vomiting incessantly, his calls for help were ignored. He was found dead in a pool of vomit and blood.

**Maximio Galán Zaldívar. Age 17.**
01-20-79. State security office in Guantánamo. *Suicide*. Vomiting incessantly, his calls for help were ignored. He was found dead in a pool of vomit and blood.

**Armando González Peraza. Age 14.**
Leader of a youth group of rock-and-roll fans. *Assassinated* while under arrest for ideological deviation.

**René Martínez. Age 14.**

**Leonardo Matas Pich. Age 16.**

**Ramón Rivero. Age 16.**

**Elio Rodríguez. Age 13.**
22-08-61. La Víbora, Havana. *Assassinated* by police, who claim he committed suicide.

**Raúl Torres Pérez. Age 17.**
03-06-62. Calixto García University Hospital, Havana. *Assassinated*. Developed cancer while serving prison for political reasons and was denied medical care. Eventually transferred to the hospital, he asked his guard to allow him to go to the bathroom. Denied permission, but unable to control his urge, he attempted to stand up and walk. The guard pistol-whipped him in the face, threw him to the floor, and shot him.

**Jorge Varas Bileves. Age 16.**

**Women**

**Maria Capiro (aka Maria Catil)**
17-09-86. Location: State security office in Arroyo Naranjo, Havana *assassinated* while under arrest.

**Caridad Pavón Rodríguez**

**Sister Aida Rosa Pérez**
Age 42. 12-12-67. Location: State Security pavilion at the Military Hospital in Havana. Former sister in the Catholic order of Sisters of Charity; had left her order and convent in Guatemala for health reasons, suffering from congenital heart disease. In the course of several months, she was repeatedly detained for expressing anti-Communist views and eventually sentenced to 12 years in prison. After serving 2 years she died of a heart attack while doing hard agricultural labor in prison.

**Caridad Placencia (aka Caridad Plasencia)**
15-09-75. Location: State security office at Reparto Lawton, Havana. *Assassinated* by police while under arrest.

**Dora Victoria Reyes**
30-08-84. Location: State Security headquarters in Havana. Had served a prison sentence and was released from prison. Given permission to visit relatives in Havana, she was detained there and died while under arrest.

**Alba Serrano**
Age 25. 30-10-67. Location: Guanajay National Women's prison, Pinar del Río province. *Suicide*. Sentence to prison for pursuing black market activities, she was sent to the lesbian cellblock in punishment. Her relatives overreacted very negatively and, unable to endure the shame, she hung herself in her cell.

**Berikis Tercio ("La mariposita")**
Age 19. 15-02-2002. Location: Agricultural penal farm No. 5, Camaguey province. *Committed suicide* by hanging herself three days after being assaulted by a prison guard.