

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Fidel Castro's Shameful Deceit: Cuba's Maximum Butcher Mourns Champion of Culture of Life**

#### *J'Accuse*

**New York, April 7, 2005.** Fidel Castro, in his latest propaganda stroke, attempts to outdo the rest of the world by declaring three days of national mourning for Pope John Paul II. Let's not be fooled by Cuba's mass murderer. Mr. Castro not only played deaf to the Pope's plea for an end to oppression during his 1998 trip to Cuba, but his systematic execution and assassination of opponents and dissenters is long known, documented, and continuing.

In April of 2001, Fidel Castro publicly declared: "In our country there have never been death squads –not a single disappearance, no political assassinations, not one person tortured. (...) Travel around the country, ask the people, find just one shred of proof, someone demonstrate that the revolutionary government has ordered or tolerated any such acts, and I will never again assume a public post." In April of 2005, as the United Nations Human Rights Commission meets in Geneva, Cuban Foreign Minister has parroted Castro's claim of "not one extrajudicial assassination or disappearance, not one!" Mr. Perez Roque issued the challenge to present but one name of a Cuban mother searching for the remains of her assassinated child, or of anyone tortured. The civilized world must resolutely reject such mockery. For the record, here is our challenge.

The Truth Recovery Archive on Cuba, primarily based on the groundbreaking work of Dr. Armando Lago, Ph.D., is assembling the record of the Castro regime's victims. Despite the inability to operate inside Cuba, it has documented over 8,000 cases of execution, assassination, and disappearance for political causes –a long list that includes dozens of minors, pregnant women, and fourteen religious leaders, including Catholic nuns and Protestant ministers.

Reverends Lázaro Aspurú, Reinaldo Duarte, José Durado, Antonio González, and Pablo Rodríguez, of different denominations, were all executed by firing squad for attempting to flee Cuba. Rev. Gerardo González was assassinated with machine guns by a prison guards at Boniato prison in September of 1975. In January 1985, Jehovas Witness Rev. Felipe Hernández died in prison of heart failure after Prison Director Col. Edel Castillo refused him medical care: "We don't give medical care to counter-revolutionaries, let Jehova save you." Sister Aida Rosa Perez died of heart failure from torture and hard labor at age 42 in December of 1967. She was serving a twelve year sentence as "enemy of the revolution."

As for the claim that no Cuban mother has mourned her missing children, a long list of tragedies prove otherwise. One in particular stands out for its connection to the Vatican. The mother of three young men, ages 19, 21, and 25, died heartbroken after claiming her sons' bones for years to no avail. The García-Marín Thompson brothers, members of a Jehova's Witness congregation, had sought asylum on December 3, 1980 at the Vatican Embassy ("Nunciatura") in Havana. Cuban Special Troops burst in and captured them. Sentenced to execution, they were never seen again after thirty days later they were taken from their cells in the middle of the night. The mother was sentenced to twenty years in prison for protesting her sons' executions and served ten years after her mental health deteriorated.

The long list of atrocities is, of course, obeys no affiliation, gender, age, or race. In numerous cases of assassination by Cuban authorities, families have been denied remains for proper burial. Such is the case of Owen Delgado Temprana, beaten to death at age 15 in March of 1981 after Cuban Special Forces stormed the Embassy of Ecuador in Havana and took out the entire family attempting to obtain asylum to escape the island.

The culture of life has yet to reach Cuba. Let the world take heed and refuse to play to Castro's evil fiddle.

For more cases of Castro's victims, see [www.CubaArchive.org](http://www.CubaArchive.org).

## March 25, 2005 Update on Non-Combat Victims of the Castro Regime

The following information is derived primarily from Armando M. Lago, Ph.D.'s "Cuba: The Human Cost of Social Revolutions," manuscript for publication. This work documents loss of life and disappearances for political and military reasons during the Cuban revolutionary period.. Each documented case is substantiated by historical data and reports from diverse sources.

The following table comprises non-combat deaths attributed to the Castro regime onwards from January 1, 1959, date the Castro government assumed power. Due to the ongoing nature of the work and the difficulty of obtaining and verifying data from Cuba, the following totals are, thus, not exhaustive. The Truth Recovery Archive on Cuba (T.R.A.C.) continues investigating reported cases and documenting previously unreported cases. Because this work is in progress, totals change as research advances.

**Table: Non-combat Victims of the Castro Regime**  
**January 1, 1959 to Date**  
**(Documented to March 25, 2005)**

Firing squad executions	5,634
Extrajudicial assassinations <sup>1</sup>	1,178
Deaths in prisons <sup>2</sup>	1,190
Missing and disappeared	197
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>8,386</b>
"Balseros" (high end of estimated range) <sup>3</sup>	77,845
<b>Total</b>	<b>86,231</b>

*Note: This table excludes documented deaths of civilians -both Cuban and otherwise- resulting from international military incursions, sabotage, or support for international subversion sponsored by Cuba.*

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<sup>1</sup>Includes 187 assassinations during attempts to leave the island and seek asylum abroad.

<sup>2</sup>1,190 deaths in prisons include 199 deaths for lack of medical attention, 142 assassinations, 272 suicides, and 577 deaths due to accidents and other reasons, including natural causes. Executions, even when they mostly occurred within prisons or of prisoners at the time of death, are tallied separately (see table above).

<sup>3</sup>The estimated number of victims has been derived from data in studies by the Oceanographic Institute of the University of Miami and the University of Havana. The actual number of rafters who have perished at sea is very difficult to corroborate. Francisco Chaviano, who attempted inside Cuba to collect information on disappearances, including rafters, was sentenced to 15 years in prison in 1995.

## SELECTED CASES OF EXTRAJUDICIAL ASSASSINATIONS, EXECUTIONS, AND DISAPPEARANCES ATTRIBUTED TO THE CASTRO REGIME OF CUBA

The following cases represent a fraction of the thousands of documented cases by the Truth Recovery Project on Cuba and are meant to illustrate the nature of some of the crimes and the sources of the information. A full bibliography is available on request.

### 1. OWEN DELGADO TEMPRANA. Age 15.

**Assassinated on 23-03-81 in an exit attempt.** Location: G-2 State Security police headquarters at Villa Marista, Havana.

Entered the embassy of Ecuador on 13-02-81 with his family to ask for political assylum. Seven days later, on 21-02-81, Cuban Special Forces stormed the embassy and took the entire family into custody. At State Security headquarters, as members of his family endured beatings, Owen yelled for them to stop. He was then brutally beaten, suffering severe blows to the face and head and had one ear nearly severed. Transported to the Pinar del Rio hospital he lapsed into a coma and died two days later. His body was not returned to the family for burial.

Sources: *Hidalgo, 1994, p. 84. Bower, 1995, p. 19. Beruvides, 1993, p. 108. Cuban American National Foundation, The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide, 1994. WAQI-Radio Mambí, p. 16. Encinosa, 1994, p. 209. Circuito Sur, <http://members.aol.com/aguadacuba/cs/datafusi/ecuador1.htm>.*

### 2. ALEXIS E. MÁRQUEZ RÍOS, Age 6, AND MOTHER, ESTRELLA RIOS, Age 35.

**Assassinated on 20-10-99 in an exit attempt.** Location: Cuban territorial waters, 12 km. north of Havana.

Drowned when their boat sunk after it was rammed by a Cuban Coast Guard vessel.

Sources: *Vivian Cruet, Diario Las Américas, 23 de octubre de 1999, pp. 1-A and 10-A. Univision TV, Noticiero Univision, Miami, 22 October 1999. Pablo Alfonso, El Nuevo Herald, 23 de Octubre de 1999, p.1-A.*

### 3. RAMÓN DÍAZ YANES. Age 16.

**Assassinated on 08-07-62.** Location: Recreation yard of Baldor High School (formerly a private school that had been taken over by the government), Vedado, Havana.

Militiaman García Villanueva, chief of the Communist Youth in Vedado, was beating a young afro-Cuban student. When Ramón tried to help him, García Villanueva took out his 45-caliber pistol and shot Ramón in front of his classmates, killing him. Hundreds of people attended his burial in protest. His assassination had reportedly been planned by the Association of Young Rebels (which later became the Communist Youth Association) to intimidate counterrevolutionary sentiments in former private schools.

Sources: *Beruvides, 1993, p. 99. Cuban American National Foundation, The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide, 1994. Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil, 1965, p. 20. WAQI-Radio Mambí, p. 55. Nuestra Cuba, 1998, p. 53. Circuito Sur, July 2002, p. 25. Testimony of Rolando González Rosales, witness and fellow student, Miami February 20, 2005 at Memorial Cubano, to TRAC Director Maria Pino Cañizares.*

*\*I have a recent picture of witness/friend Rolando González Rosales at the Memorial Cubano 2005.*

### 4. 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.

Sources: *Encinosa, 1994, p. 238. Testimony of Pastor Emilio Nedoya (Camaguey resident), 5 June 2002.*

**5. MRS. ALBERTO LAZO PASTRANA and HER THREE CHILDREN**

**Assassinated during an exit attempt, 1971.** Location: Caribbean seas.

**ALBERTO LAZO PASTRANA.**

**Mysterious death in prison on 9-1-1978.** Location: Combinado del Este prison,

Alberto Lazo Pastrana had been a member of Castro's Revolutionary Army and had fought in the mountains against the Batista dictatorship. When Castro took power, he grew disenchanted and joined the opposition. Captured for alleged counterrevolutionary activities, he served a ten year sentence in Isla de Pinos (in Fajardo, at the San Cristobal area). After his release, he was denied work as well as permission to leave the country. Desperate, he built a raft with his family to flee Cuba. They left on the primitive vessel, but were spotted late at night by a Cuban Coast Guard patrol. Despite their cries for mercy and that children were on board, the Coast Guard boat rammed and sunk the raft. The father made it to shore exhausted, the wife's body washed ashore the next day, partly devoured by sharks. The children's bodies were never found. The father was captured and tortured despite his devastating grief. He was sentenced to 18 years in prison. Right before he was to be released in a general amnesty declared by Castro, he developed a colon ailment and died mysteriously in the prison's hospital.

Sources: *Ernesto Diaz-Rodríguez*, 1995, pp. 49-52, and 51-54. *Circuito Sur*, July 2002, p. 47 and <http://www.aguadadepasajeros.bravepages.com/historias/lazo.htm>. On Alberto Lazo Pastrana also see: *Eduardo de Juan*, 1997, p. 282. *Beruvides*, 1993, p. 134. *Presidio Político Cubano*, 1997, p. 158. *WAQI-Radio Mambí*, p. 70. *Encinosa*, 1994, pp. 101-102. *Pardo Mazorra*, 1992, p. 566. *Nuestra Cuba*, 1998, and pp. 69 and 70.

**6. 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.

Sources: *Mora*, 1986, p. 194. *Valladares*, 1985m p. 371. *Ana Lázara Rodríguez*, 1995, p. 71. *Beruvides*, 1993, p. 157. *Teresita Mayans*, *El Nuevo Herald*, 14 de octubre de 1996, p. 12-A. *Presidio Político Cubano*, 1997, p. 160. *Nuestra Cuba*, 1998, p. 53. *Cuban American National Foundation, The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide*, 1994. *WAQI-Radio Mambí*, p. 55. *Pardo Mazorra*, 1992, p. 567. *Organization of American States, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 5th Special Report*, 1976, p. 2. *Díaz Rodríguez*, 1995, p. 104. *Circuito Sur*, July 2002, p. 68.

**7. SISTER AIDA ROSA PÉREZ - Age 42.**

**Heart failure due to torture/hard labor. 12-12-67.** Location: G-2 Cuban State Security pavilion at the Military Hospital in Havana.

Daughter of the owner of the "Aida" theater in the city of Pinar del Río and Catholic nun who had in 1964 reportedly left her religious order and her convent in Guatemala for health reasons (congenital heart disease).

Arrested several times for alleged political activities, in 1965 she was held several months at the State Security office in the city of Pinar del Río charged as "enemy of the revolution." Her eventual trial, held in 1965 by a revolutionary tribunal, took place at 2:30 a.m. in the dungeons of La Cabaña fortress, and, despite no evidence against her, resulted in a sentence of 12 years. She served the first two years at the Guanajay national women's prison and at a hard penal work farm in Guanajay, both in Pinar del Río province. Due to heart problems, she was transferred to a cell in the G-2 State Security pavillion at the Military Hospital in Havana, and died of a heart attack, presumably while under interrogation.

Sources: *Medrano*, 1995, p. 56, *Mora*, 1986, p. 11. *Beruvides*, 19983, p. 159. *Carreno*, 1987, p. 141. *Cuban American National Foundation, The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide*, 1994. *WAQI-Radio Mambí*, p. 96. *Organization of American States, InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights, 5to. Informe Especial*, 1976, p. 3. *Testimony of Trina Pérez López (sister) of 7 July, 2002 to A. Lago*.

**8. 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.

Sources: Carreño, 1987, pp. 113-115 and p. 141. Mora, 1986, pp. 61-62. Beruvides, 1993, p. 176. Cuban American National Foundation, *The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide*, 1994. *Circuito Sur*, [http://www.aguadadepasajeros.bravepages.com/english/Edmunda\\_Serrat.htm](http://www.aguadadepasajeros.bravepages.com/english/Edmunda_Serrat.htm).

#### **9. 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, resident of Prado Street No. 512, 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.

Sources: Valladares, 1985, p. 256. Beruvides, 1993, p. 88. Eduardo de Juan, 1997, p. 279. Montaner, 1984, p. 265. Cuban American National Foundation, *The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide*, 1994. *Presidio Político Cubano*, 1997, ps.115, 155. WAQI-Radio Mambí, p. 98. Gómez-Estrada, 1990, p. 212. Encinosa, 1994, p. 214. Icosov, 1982, p. 366. Pardo Mazorra, 1992, p. 564. Pérez Coloma, 1996. Encinosa, 1994, p. 214. *Nuestra Cuba*, 1998, p. 99. Díaz Rodríguez, 1995, p. 105. Instituto de la Memoria Histórica Cubana contra el Totalitarismo, 2002 p. 26. *Circuito Sur*, July 2002, p. 7. Telephone testimony of Reinaldo Aquit Manrique (ex-political prisoner and brother), 12 December 2002. Testimony by brother Laureano Aquit, in person to M. Werlau (TRAC), Miami, 2-2004.

#### **10. 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.

Sources: Valladares, 1985, p. 255. Beruvides, 1993, p. 179. Eduardo de Juan, 1997, p. 285. Vargas Llosa, 1998, p. 195. Loredó and Pérez Diez Arguelles, 1988, p. 93. Gómez-Estrada, 1990, p. 212. *Nuestra Cuba*, 1998, p. 70. Sov, 1982, p. 360. Pardo Mazorra, 1992, p. 568. Organization of American States, *Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 4to. Informe Especial, Reporte de 1967, 7 de abril de 1967*, pp. 6-7. Organization of American States, *Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 5to. Informe Especial*, 1976, p. 3. Clark, de Fana and Sanchez, 1001, p. 20. Ruiz, 1972, p. 68. Díaz-Rodríguez, 1995, p. 104. Instituto de la Memoria Histórica Cubana contra el Totalitarismo, 2002, p. 25. *Circuito Sur*, July 2002, p. 83. Cuban American National Foundation, *The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide*, 1994. *Presidio Político Cubano*, 1997, pp 115, 161. WAQI-Radio Mambí, p. 70.

#### **11. IVÁN AGRAMONTE ARENCIBIA, Age 28.**

**Assassinated on 5-24-1996.** Location: Street in the city of Havana.

Resident of the intersection of San Leonardo and San Indalecio, Reparto Santo Suárez, City of Havana. Eyewitnesses reported that the victim was assassinated around 10AM by police officer Iosvani Martorán Fernández, who detained him in the street as he carried some kilos of bread by bicycle. Agramonte tried to get away, but was reached again by the officer, who beat him and after handcuffing him, shot him point blank in the head with his firearm. Still alive, he was taken to the "Miguel Henríquez" hospital, where he died. The Luyanó funeral home, where his body laid in wake, was surrounded by a major police deployment. He left two small children.

Source: *InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights, 1996 Annual Report, Chapter 5A, Cuba*.

#### **12. ESTANISLAO GONZÁLEZ QUINTANA**

**Assassinated while in detention on September 12, 1995.** Location: Police Unit of Consolación del Sur, Pinar del Río.

He had been detained on September 8, 1995 on charges of "unlawful economic activity." Relatives were informed four days later by officers of the Consolación del Sur police unit that he had died of a heart attack. The victim's corpse, however, displayed visible bruises and a profound gash in the forehead.

Sources: U.S. Department of State, 1997, p. 11. Organization of American States, InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights, 1997 Annual Report, p. 692. U.N. Commission on Human Rights, 7 February 1996, p. 16. U.N. General assembly, 24 October 1995, p. 27.

**13. CIPRIANO (Age 21), EUGENIO (Age 25), and VENTURA (Age 19) GARCÍA-MARÍN THOMPSON Presumed executed, 01-02-1981.** Location: La Cabaña Fortress, Havana.

Members of a Jehova's Witness congregation. At least one of the brothers was a former political prisoner.

On December 3, 1980, together with two other men and three women, they attempted to obtain asylum at the Vatican Embassy ("Nunciatura") in Havana, which was promptly evacuated of most personnel. Having agreed to meet on the Nunciatura grounds with negotiators portrayed by the Cuban government as neutral Central American diplomats, they quickly recognized one as a Lieutenant Colonel of Cuba's security forces. When they opened fire with a pistol, a shootout ensued and the "negotiators" retreated. Later, there were unconfirmed reports that an embassy worker had been wounded or a security officer killed. Hours after the asylum seekers had broken in the Nunciatura, an anti-terrorism squad from the Interior Ministry's elite Special Troops burst into the complex and captured them. A Nunciatura official apparently had given Cuban security forces permission to enter the diplomatic mission and remove the asylum seekers on the promise it would be done peacefully. The three brothers were taken to Villa Marista headquarters and told by prosecutor Carlos Amat that they had been "tried and sentenced to death." They were taken from their prison cells in early morning hours of January 2, 1981, and presumably executed, the others were sentenced to long prison terms. An Interior Ministry official who defected in 1992 reported that their fate had been decided in "an extremely summary process." The family was denied the remains of the three brothers for burial. The mother was sentenced to 20 years in prison for protesting the executions and served ten years after her mental health deteriorated.

Sources: *Testimony of Margarita Marin Thompson (mother) in Ricardo Bofill, Diario Las Américas, September 9, 1997. Pablo Alfonso. El Nuevo Herald, 31 October 1997, p. 6A. Valladares, 1985, p. 416. Amnesty International Annual Report 1983, p. 130. Nuestra Cuba, 1998, p. 3. Reader's Digest, October 1998, p. 83. Montaner, 1984, p. 267. Cuban American National Foundation, The Quilt of Fidel Castro's Genocide, 1994. Reinaldo Bragado, 1998, p. 5. Instituto de la Memoria Histórica Cubana contra el Totalitarismo, 2002, p. 35. Fuentes 2002, p.s 102-104. Juan O. Tamayo, "Ex-Cuban prosecutor's role in rights panel criticized," The Miami Herald, April 16, 1998. Circuito Sur, July 2002, p. 35, and <http://members.aol.com/aquadacuba/cs/datafusi/vaticano.htm>.*

**14. THE CANIMAR RIVER MASSACRE.**

**56 assassinated on 6-6-1860, including four children.** Location: Cuban territorial waters.

The Canimar is a scenic Cuban river that flows into Matanzas Bay, near Varadero beach. In 1960, a tourist excursion service was inaugurated using a large boat, the "XX Aniversario," with two decks of chairs and capacity for 100 passengers. It was to navigate for approximately 5 miles inland along the Canimar river.

On 6 July, 1980, the excursion boat was hijacked by three youngsters who wanted to take the boat to the United States—Ramón Calveiro Leon (15 years old at the time) and brothers Silvio Aguila Yanes (18 years old) and Sergio Aguila Yanes (19 years old). Sergio was a Sergeant in the Cuban Armed Forces (FAR). Another youngster involved in the plot, Humberto Martínez Echazabal (19 years old), reportedly never made it when the hijacking took place. Taking control of the vessel, the youngsters shouted: "To Miami!" amid screams of approval on the part of the 100 passengers aboard. The boat's security guard resisted and shot at the youngsters, who wounded him with firearms they had brought aboard the boat. Concerned for his health, they placed him on a boat with a fisherman together with a passenger who wanted to leave and sent them back to shore. When they arrived, they alerted authorities. Meanwhile, the "XX Aniversario" had turned around and entered Matanzas Bay and headed out to open seas.

Julián Rizo Alvarez, Secretary of the Communist party in Matanzas Province, commanded a chase into open seas. He dispatched two high-speed Cuban Navy patrol boats with orders to not let the excursion boat leave Cuba, sinking it if necessary. The patrol boats opened fire on the excursion boat and the youngsters defended themselves, firing back. When the patrol boat withdrew, they left some dead and wounded passengers on the deck of the "XX Aniversario." The boat was then attacked by a Cuban Air Force plane, which opened fire on the passengers on deck, leaving more dead and wounded among the innocent passengers and the deck covered with blood.

The excursion boat was reportedly very close to international waters when a huge boat commandeered by Rizo, rammed the much smaller riverboat in the middle, sinking it. The surviving passengers, now in the water, soon had to contend with sharks attracted by all the blood in the water. Silvio Aguila Yanes dove into the water and saved several survivors from drowning.

The government did not allow any communal funerals for the victims. The ten survivors were ordered to keep silence about the incident and to never gather in groups in which more than two of them were present. For several years government agents were stationed to monitor their activities while victims' relatives and survivors were offered gifts of televisions, refrigerators, and other appliances usually reserved for high government officials.

There are conflicting reports about the fate of Sergio Aguila Yanes. The Cuban government claims he committed suicide with his pistol. Others report that Sergio was taken from the ocean by the crew of the Cuban Navy patrol boats and never seen again. Silvio Aguila Yanes serves a 30-year prison sentence at "Combinado del Este" prison in Havana. Witnesses to his imprisonment report he has been subjected to psychiatric torture, receiving large doses of psychotropic drugs. 15 year old Roberto Calveiro served time in prison but reportedly was released and lives in Spain. Other witnesses have made it into exile.

The Cuban government's version is that the the "XX Aniversario" was accidentally sunk when waves forced the larger vessel to collide with it.

The toll of this disaster was 56 victims: eleven (11) bodies recovered and forty-five (45) missing at sea. Among the children assassinated: **LILIAN GONZÁLEZ LÓPEZ. AGE 3, MARISOL MARTINEZ ARAGONÉS. AGE 17, OSMANY ROSALES VALDÉZ. AGE 9, MARISEL SAN JUAN ARAGONÉS. AGE 11.**

A final, indirect, victim of this tragedy was Haydée Santamaría de Hart, veteran of the 1953 attack on the Moncada Army barracks, Director of the "Casa de Las Americas," the Cuban government publishing house, and wife of the then Cuban Minister of Education, Armando Hart Davalos. Immediately after the Canimar River tragedy, she visited the hospitals in the city of Matanzas, where survivors were receiving medical attention. One month later, on 25-06-80, Haydee, already in despair about the "Mariel" boat exodus, committed suicide.

#### **Sources:**

*Official records of the Revolutionary Tribunal of La Cabana Fortress and from the records of the Provincial Court of Matanzas, published by Dr. Alberto Fibla, Barbarie: Hundimiento del Remolcador 13 de Marzo. Miami: Rodes Printing, 1996. "Cuba reportedly sank hijacked excursion boat in 1980," Associated Press, Washington D.C., 8 December, 1985. Joseph B. Treaster, *The New York Times* 8 September, 1985. José Pérez-Marat, La Masacre del Canimar, Miami, undated book. Brown and Lago, 1991, Bower, 1995. Sources: *Records of the provincial court of Matanzas (reproduced in Fibla, 1996, p. 256)*. Testimony of Maria Julia Hernandez, niece of victim Vicente Fleites Cabrera.*

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The above information was primarily derived from Armando Lago, Ph.D.'s manuscript "Cuba: The Human Cost of Social Revolution." This summary has been prepared by T.R.A.C -the Truth Recovery Project on Cuba, an initiative of the Free Society Project, Inc. ([www.CubaArchive.org](http://www.CubaArchive.org)).

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## **FIDEL CASTRO, IN HIS OWN WORDS:**

*"In our country there have never been death squads –not a single disappearance, no political assassinations, not one person tortured. (...) Travel around the country, ask the people, find just one shred of proof, someone demonstrate that the revolutionary government has ordered or tolerated any such acts, and I will never again assume a public post."*

-Fidel Castro, April 5, 2001, Speech at the Plenary Session of the 105<sup>th</sup> Conference of Interparliamentary Union, Havana. (Translated from Spanish.)

*"Y quiero decirle al pueblo y a las madres de Cuba que resolveré todos los problemas sin derramar una gota de sangre. Le digo a todas las madres que nunca a causa de nosotros tendrán que llorar."*

-Fidel Castro, 9 de enero de 1959, Campamento Militar de Columbia, La Habana.

## **About the Truth Recovery Archive on Cuba**

Both inside and outside of Cuba there is a profound lack of understanding of the large and continuing cost in lives of the Cuban political process of the last half-century. The Truth Recovery Archive on Cuba (T.R.A.C.) seeks to address this by systematically constructing a record of disappearances and fatalities of a political or military nature attributed to the Cuban revolutionary process.

### **Principles guiding this effort**

T.R.A.C. is an independent and non-partisan initiative that upholds the intrinsic right of each individual to live safely and in freedom. It conducts its work with academic rigor and impartiality, documenting all deaths irrespective of the social, political, and other attributes or affiliations of the victims.

This effort is premised on the belief that knowledge and acknowledgement is vital for the psychological well-being of both survivors and society and that the benefits of truth recovery outweigh potential drawbacks of recognizing past and present systemic injustices. Moreover, constructive remembering helps a society control the future by promoting reconciliation and fostering justice. The formation of a culture of respect for life and the rule of law, in turn, shapes a moral ethos that averts further atrocities.

T.R.A.C. hopes to lay a foundation for peace, justice, and reconciliation in a future democratic Cuba. It wished to serve as a building block for far-reaching efforts to be undertaken inside Cuba when a free and open society can prosper.

### **The Project**

The project, is developing and maintaining a record of the loss of life that is *comprehensive* as well as systematically *expanded* and *updated*. The work is carried out with academic rigor and impartiality. The Archive encompasses events onwards from March 10, 1952 —date of Batista's suspension of democratic constitutional rule in Cuba— and covers actions taking place inside or outside the island, and affecting Cubans and non-Cubans alike.

From 1999 to 2004, the Project's Research Director, Armando Lago, Ph.D., conducted research *ad honorem* for an upcoming book titled "Cuba: The Human Cost of Social Revolutions." This investigation mostly focused on gathering and cross-referencing existing data on reported cases that met standards for documentation. Dr. Lagos' effort constitutes the building block for T.R.A.C., which continues and furthers this work by conducting corroborating and complementing documented cases with additional data and direct testimonies, expanding the records with previously unreported and new cases, creating an accessible database of cases as well as an archive of evidence, photographs, etc., and establishing diverse mechanisms to disseminate the findings widely both inside and outside Cuba.

**T.R.A.C. is an initiative of the Free Society Project, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt organization incorporated in 2001 in Washington, D.C., dedicated to promoting the understanding, recognition, and observance of human rights particularly through research, scholarship, and publications.**