

STATEMENT SUPPORTING CUBA AGAINST BUSH'S ATTACKS -

Initiated by the International A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition -

We invite you to sign this statement in solidarity with the people of Cuba. To add your name, go to <http://www.internationalanswer.org/campaigns/cuba/sign.html>

STOP BUSH'S NEW AGGRESSION AGAINST CUBA

We, the undersigned individuals and organizations, view with great concern the intensifying campaign of subversion and aggression against Cuba, directed by the U.S. government.

We in the U.S. progressive and anti-war movement recognize our obligation to expose and organize against the Bush administration's plans to overthrow the government of Cuba. Under the rubric of the "war against terrorism" the Bush administration has aggressively embarked on a campaign to carry out the overturn of governments that seek to maintain independent control over their own land and resources. At stake in Cuba are the considerable social and economic gains of the people made in spite of overwhelming opposition from the government representing the most powerful country in the world.

On April 7, James Cason, chief of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana and the top U.S. diplomat in Cuba, declared, "all of our allies agree that their policy goal in Cuba is, ultimately, the same as ours: the rapid and peaceful transition to a democratic government characterized by strong support for human rights and an open market economy." He stated on the same day, "the Administration's top priority is to promote a rapid, peaceful transition."

Coming from a U.S. government representative, the meaning is clear: "transition" translates to overthrow.

In the wake of the war on Iraq, there is no corner of the world that is safe today from U.S. aggression. This is especially the case for Cuba, part of whose national territory remains under U.S. military occupation. U.S. diplomats have warned Cuba, along with Iran, Syria and North Korea, to "learn the lessons of Iraq."

Over the past 43 years Cuba has suffered the loss of 3,478 of its citizens from numerous acts of terrorism, invasions, assassinations, assassination attempts, biological warfare and blockade. The government of one country has perpetrated these illegal acts against Cuba: the government of the United States.

The United States government has imposed an economic and political blockade on the island nation for more than 40 years, causing \$70 billion damage to Cuba's economy, and inflicting unnecessary suffering on the most vulnerable in Cuban society. The U.S. military has continued to maintain and expand its naval base at Guantanamo Bay, a legacy of colonialism. Today, hundreds of people -- including children under the age of 16 years -- are being imprisoned and interrogated by the U.S. at Guantanamo with no recourse whatsoever to due process.

Recently, a coordinated campaign of aggressions and foreign subversion against Cuba has been revealed, indicating the U.S. may be setting the stage for a renewed confrontation with Cuba.

The trial of the 75 Cuban individuals arrested in March uncovered the directing role of the U.S. Interests Section in guiding, financing, and organizing subversive actions against the Cuban government. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has funneled some \$20 million in support to anti-government organizations in Cuba as a part of this counter-revolutionary campaign. After the popular revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Batista in 1959, the U.S. government has resorted to invasion, nuclear threats, biological and chemical attacks, assassination attempts and murders, C.I.A. financed and organized "opposition," and economic destabilization. For forty years the overthrow of the Cuban government has been a priority for U.S. policy makers. The Bush administration's goal is to carry out regime change and replace the Cuban government with a puppet regime. It is a testament to the popular support of the Cuban government and its ability to stand up and confront U.S. aggression that the people of Cuba have successfully repelled overt and covert attempts to recolonize their country.

Over the past seven months, a series of seven armed airplane and boat hijackings have occurred in Cuba -- an exceptionally high number in such a short time. The hijackings have together endangered the lives of hundreds of people. Thus far, the Justice Department has failed to prosecute any of the hijackers who arrived in the U.S. Despite having committed the terrorist crime of air piracy, several have been released on bail.

At the same time, the U.S. Interests Section has virtually stopped granting visas to Cubans applying for admission to the United States. Under the 1995 U.S.-Cuba Migratory Agreement, the U.S. agreed to grant 20,000 entry visas to the U.S. annually. The purpose of the 1995 agreement was to assure a safe, legal and orderly immigration process.

However, from October 2002 to Feb. 2003, the first five months of the accord's calendar year, only 505 visas were granted to Cubans wishing to enter the U.S. This fact must be understood in conjunction with the Cuban Adjustment Act (CAA) of 1966, a law which uniquely accords Cuban immigrants the right to U.S. residency and financial assistance if they set foot on U.S. soil. Cutting off legal channels for immigration while the CAA remains in effect, serves as open invitation to Cubans to immigrate illegally to the U.S. Non-prosecution of even those individuals who hijack planes to get to the U.S., means that the U.S. government is openly encouraging the most dangerous forms of terrorism against Cuba.

As a fact of international law, which recognizes the rights of states to defend their sovereignty, Cuba is exercising its legal right and responsibility to defend and protect its people against foreign government subversion, terrorism, and other forms of U.S. aggression.

In light of these developments, and understanding the real dangers that Cuba faces from the U.S. government:

- 1) We demand that the Bush Administration cease and desist from the current campaign of attacks on the Cuban people and government.
- 2) We call on the U.S. government to end its blockade against Cuba, to lift restrictions on travel, and to end its ongoing multi-faceted war against the Cuban government.
- 3) We further call upon the Bush Administration to free the five Cubans who are imprisoned in the U.S. for trying to stop Miami-based terrorism against their people.

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