

# Luis Posada Carriles, the White House terrorist

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On April 19, 2007, Federal Court Judge Kathleen Cardone of El Paso (Texas) granted parole to Luis Posada Carriles, the worst terrorist on the American continent, in exchange for a \$350.000 fine. On April 12, 2007 the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals of New Orleans, in a last ditch effort, tried to block the release of the criminal of Cuban origin who had been in custody since May, 2005. [1] But Posada Carriles, responsible for nearly 100 murders, serenely returned to his house in Miami to await his trial, which was to begin May 11, 2007. [2]

The Posada Carriles case strongly undermines the credibility of the U.S. "war on terror." President Bush, who has declared many times that any nation that protects a terrorist will be considered an accomplice, is now faced with his own contradictions. Indeed, Posada Carriles was tried for illegally being in U.S. He entered in March 2005 aboard the yacht "Santrina" under the nose of the authorities. He was arrested only after holding a press conference during which he boasted of having no fear of the U.S. government, which he loyally served for several decades. The seven charges against him only referred to migratory fraud and false testimony and not his criminal activities. [3]

What about Section 412 of the Patriot Act, which prohibits the release of a suspect "if the release of the alien will threaten the national security of the United States or the safety of the community or any person"? [4] What about UN resolution 1373, adopted after the 9-11 attacks of 2001, which states that all terrorists must face trial?

In an article published on April 10, 2007, president Fidel Castro declared, "Orders for Kathleen Cardone's decision could only have come from the White House. President Bush constantly avoided the issue of the criminal and terrorist character of the accused. He was protected and charged with a simple immigration violation." Indeed, Washington, fearing Posada Carriles might reveal secret information, refused to bring up the criminal past of one of their x-agents since, as the Cuban leader pointed out, "to accuse Posada Carriles would be equivalent to accusing themselves." [5] One of the most ruthless agents in CIA history was involved in too many secret affairs, including the assassination of president John F. Kennedy. Posada Carriles knows too much and his release was the price of his silence.

## A bloody terrorist career

Informant for the police during the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, Luis Posada Carriles joined the ranks of the CIA in February 1961 as a member of the 2506 brigade. Trained at the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, he became an explosives expert and participated in the U.S. military attack at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. [6] Although he was an official CIA agent from April 1965 to 1974, the Agency maintained "occasional contact with him" until 1976. [7] In 1976, George H. W. Bush, father of the current president, was

director of the CIA. Posada Carriles was “of operational interest to this Agency,” [8] which paid him a monthly salary of at least \$300. [9]

On June 23, 1964 in a signed declaration to the FBI in Polk City, Florida, Posada Carriles confessed his intention to carry out terrorist attacks against Cuba. “Posada stated that they were never formally given the support of the U.S. government, but they believed that they effectively had the tolerance of the U.S. government since their military training activities had gone on undisturbed.” [10]

On May 17, 1965 the FBI spoiled a plot organized by Roberto Alejos Arzu, a Guatemalan tycoon, aimed at overthrowing the government of his native country. Posada Carriles was among those implicated in the conspiracy along with Cuban exile Luis Sierra López. During the operation, U.S. Customs confiscated a significant amount of arms and ammunition. [11]

Posada Carriles is credited with the organization and implementation of numerous terrorist attacks. According to the FBI, while an agent of the CIA, he received \$5000 in June 1965 from Jorge Mas Canosa, then leader of the terrorist cell RECE (Representación Cubana en el Exilio) and future leader of the powerful Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), to be used to blow up a Cuban or Soviet ship in Veracruz, México. Posada Carriles told Mas Canosa of his plans to acquire Puerto Rican identification in order to enter Mexico. At his disposal were “100 rolls of C-4 explosives.” [12]

In the 1970’s Posada Carriles was a commissioner in the counter-espionage division of the Venezuelan intelligence service (DISIP) and he participated in the torture and execution of numerous political opponents, unionists and social militants until 1974. [13]

Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch were the intellectual authors of the bloody attack on a Cuban commercial plane that ended 73 lives in Barbados on October 6, 1976. Those killed included the entire Cuban youth fencing team, which had just won first place at the Pan-American Games. According to a secret CIA report written July 22, 1976 entitled “Possible plans of extremist Cubans to blow up a Cubana airplane.” a terrorist group “directed by Orlando Bosch” intended to place a bomb on a Cuban civilian aircraft. A businessman close to the Cuban exile community described as a “reliable informant” had given this information to the CIA. At no time did George H. W. Bush or the U.S. authorities alert Havana to the imminence of the terrorist attack.

According to an FBI confidential report dated October 9, 1976, only three days after the horrific crime, the FBI legal attaché in Caracas had been in contact with Venezuelan Hernan Ricardo Lozano, one of the terrorists who, along with Freddy Lugo, planted the bomb on the plane October 6, 1976. The document affirmed that Lozano was an independent journalist employed “by a industrial security company directed by Luis Posada.” However the report emphasized that Lozano in reality “was in the personal service of Luis Posada.” Lozano had informed the FBI of his intention to attack the Cuban embassy in Caracas. On September 30, 1976 he applied for a visa to go to Puerto Rico to research an article. The FBI noted a strange coincidence in his report:

“In reviewing the passport and application form, legat (legal attache) noted Ricardo [Lozano] ... had traveled from Caracas to Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, on august 29, 1976, and had returned to Caracas on September 1, 1976. Legat recalled that the bombing of Guyana’s consulate in Port-of-Spain had occurred at approximately 10:15 a.m. on September 1, 1976, and wondered, in view of Ricardo’s association with Luis Posada, if his

presence there during that period was a coincidence.” [15]

The FBI had strong suspicions about the terrorist activities of Ricardo Lozano and Posada Carriles but nonetheless authorized Lozano’s visa. Lozano even indicated to the FBI that he planned to visit Barbados. On October 8, 1976 the FBI learned through a confidential source that Ricardo Lozano had been arrested in Trinidad for the murder of 73 individuals. [16]

A report submitted by the State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research to Henry Kissinger regarding the October attack confirmed the culpability of Ricardo Lozano and indicated that Posada Carriles had recruited him into the DISIP and trained him in the use of explosives. “The Venezuelan government is concerned and it would face serious problems if these connections were made public,” the report stressed. [17]

Freddy Lugo was a photographer employed by Posada Carriles’ company. He also worked for the DISIP under the same conditions as his accomplice. The name and telephone number of the U.S. Legal Attaché was discovered in Lugo’s address book upon his arrest in Trinidad. [FBI agent Joseph] Leo claimed that he had never been in contact with Lugo and speculated that Posada had given Lugo his name and telephone number, according to the document submitted to Kissinger. [18]

Then Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez, who was a sympathizer of Orlando Bosch, allowed him free movement in the country, according to the CIA. Andrés Pérez agreed to close his eyes to Bosch’s terrorist activities as long as Bosch promised not to use Venezuelan soil as a base of operations. In this way, Andrés Pérez became an accomplice to the violent murder of 73 innocent people. [19]

The report submitted to Kissinger described the announcement made by Posada Carriles during a fundraising dinner in September 1976: “Now that our organization has come out of the Letelier job looking good, we are going to try something else.[...] We’re going to hit a Cuban airplane.” He was referring to the murder of Marcos Orlando Letelier del Solar, former Chilean defense minister during the Salvador Allende government. According to the FBI, CORU, an “anti-Castro terrorist organization” directed by Orlando Bosch and to which Posada Carriles belonged, placed a bomb in Letelier’s car in September 1976. Letelier’s personal secretary Ronnie Moffit, a U.S. citizen, was also killed in the attack. [20]

Another FBI report dated November 1976 confirmed the involvement of Luis Posada Carriles in the attack on the Cubana de Aviación airplane. “Some plans regarding the bombing of a Cubana airlines airplane were discussed at the bar in the Anauco Hilton Hotel in Caracas, Venezuela, at which meeting Frank Castro, Gustavo Castillo, Luis Posada Carriles and Morales Navarrete were present.” Another meeting to plan the crime was held in the apartment of DISIP agent Ricardo Morales Navarrete at the Anuco Hilton that was attended by Navarrete, Posada Carriles and Frank Castro. The Cuban National Liberation Front (FNLC), another “anti-Castro terrorist organization”, according to the FBI, should take credit for the attack. Posada Carriles and his group had also attempted to blow up Cuban civilian aircraft in Panama and Jamaica. [21]

According to the FBI, several members of the Venezuelan government were involved in the attack. Morales Navarrete stated that if Posada Carriles and his accomplices were to talk, “we would have our own Watergate.” Orlando García Vásquez, ministry advisor for security affairs under Andrés Pérez, told the FBI he was convinced that DISIP explosives expert Carlos Fabbri had either manufactured the bomb or was privy to the preparations for the crime.

According to the FBI, Fabbri was “a good friend of Posada” and the Venezuelan authorities had arrested the pair previously for supplying false identification and explosives to Orlando Bosch. On October 27, 1976, in an attempt to put a lid on the matter, the Venezuelan government published a statement claiming that Morales Navarrete had never worked for the DISIP and Morales Navarrete instructed his girlfriend in Florida not to call him at the hotel anymore because he no longer officially existed. [22]

One of the first FBI reports about the Barbados crime, published October 7, 1976, categorically stated the culpability of Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch: “Posada and Bosch had engineered the bombing of the airline.” A source had informed the FBI of the involvement of the two Cuban terrorists. [23] After the attack, Hernan Ricardo Lozano called Orlando Bosch to inform him that “A bus with 73 dogs went off a cliff and all got killed.” [24]

Posada Carriles was arrested and tried in Venezuela. But with help from the Cuban extreme right in Florida he managed to escape from prison August 18, 1985, while the trial was in appeals. After meeting with Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North in El Salvador he was assigned to the Ilopango airbase where he participated in the terrorist war against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua supplying arms to the “contras.” [25]

Between April and September 1997, a wave of terrorist attacks hit the Cuban tourist industry taking the life of a young Italian named Fabio di Celmo and wounding numerous others. On July 12, 1998, Luis Posada Carriles granted an interview to the New York Times in which he bragged about having committed more terrorist attacks against Cuba than anyone else and claimed to be the intellectual author of the 1997 attacks. He stated that the Italian tourist “was at the wrong place at the wrong time.” When journalist Ann Louise Bardach asked him if he regretted the deed, his response, bursting with cynicism, was unequivocal: “I sleep like a baby.” Posada Carriles confessed that Jorge Mas Canosa financed his criminal activities: “Jorge controlled everything. Whenever I needed money, I asked him to send me 5,000 dollars, 10,000 dollars, 15,000 dollars.” In total Posada Carriles received more than 200,000 dollars from Mas Canosa and CANF. [26]

On November 17, 2000, Posada Carriles was arrested and sentenced to 8 years in prison in Panama for planting [z1] 45 kilos of C-4 explosives in an amphitheater at the University of Panama where 2,000 students had gathered to listen to President Fidel Castro give a speech. The then president of Panama Panamá Mireya Moscoso, whose mandate ended on August 31, 2004, pardoned Posada Carriles on August 25, 2004 thus violating Panamanian law, which stipulates that a pardon can only be granted to a prisoner if the judicial process has been completed. However, Posada Carriles’ trial was in appeals at the time. It is now publicly known that Moscoso’s action was meant to please the Cuban extreme right in Miami, where she currently lives, and came after being pressured by Washington. [27]

All this is just a small sample of the terrorist career of Posada Carriles. He has been involved in many other criminal acts, including several attempts to assassinate President Fidel Castro: during his visit with Salvador Allende in 1971, on his trip to Venezuela in 1988 and during the second Ibero-American Summit in Madrid in 1992. He is also responsible for the murder of several Cuban officials in Argentina in August 1976 and collaborated with the Augusto Pinochet’s secret service in Chile in the disappearance of numerous political opponents. [28]

## Orlando Bosch

What about Orlando Bosch, Posada Carriles' accomplice in the tragic crime of October 1976? He is now serenely walking the streets of Miami. But in 1989, Bosch was imprisoned in Florida. After completing his sentence in Venezuela he returned to United States where he was arrested for parole violation in connection with a 1972 attack perpetrated in the U.S. On July 23, 1989 The U.S. Department of Justice published a report stating that Bosch should be deported due to his international terrorist activities. Orlando Bosch "has repeatedly expressed and demonstrated a willingness to cause indiscriminate injury and death." In the report, Acting Associate Attorney General Joe Whitley described why Bosch should be deported: "The October 6, 1976, Cuban airline bombing was a CORU operation under the direction of Bosch." But Bosch was not deported to Cuba like Whitley suggested. On July 20, 1990 he received a presidential pardon from George H. W. Bush. [29]

Orlando Bosch has never denied his terrorist past. On the contrary, he regularly appears boasting in the Florida media. In April 2006, Miami Canal 41 journalist Juan Manuel Cao interviewed Bosch:

Juan Manuel Cao: Did you blow up the plane in 1976?

Orlando Bosch: If I say yes I was involved, I am incriminating myself and if I say no, you will say that I am lying. Therefore I am not going to confirm my participation nor deny it.

Juan Manuel Cao: In this attack, 76 [73] people were murdered.

Orlando Bosch: No, man, in the war that we Cubans who love liberty are waging against the tyranny, planes have to be blown up, boats have to be sunk, one has to be ready to attack anything within reach.

Juan Manuel Cao: Don't you have any remorse for those who were killed in the attack, for their families?

Orlando Bosch: Who was aboard that plane? Four members of the Communist Party, five North Koreans, five [one] Guyanese. Hell man! Four members of the Party! Who was on it? Our enemies!

Juan Manuel Cao: And the fencing team? The kids aboard?

Orlando Bosch: They were in Caracas. I saw the kids on TV. There were six of them. After the competition, the captain of the six dedicated their triumph to the tyranny. etc. He gave a speech praising the tyranny. We had already agreed in Santo Domingo that anyone who comes from Cuba and glorifies the tyranny runs the same risk as those men and women who fight for that tyranny.

Juan Manuel Cao: Wouldn't it be difficult for you, if you had to face the families of the victims.

Orlando Bosch: No, because in the end, those who were present must have known that they were cooperating with the tyranny in Cuba. [30]

These were the words spoken by Orlando Bosch with impunity on a TV show in Miami.



## The double standard in the war on terrorism

In the eyes of the world, the Bush administration has no credibility when it tries to evoke the “war on terrorism.” The international community will not take it seriously while the U.S. refuses to charge Luis Posada Carriles for his crimes and allows him to enjoy an impunity that is an indescribable offence to the memory of the victims and their families. There can be no exceptions in the war against terrorism.

The U.S. continues to refuse Posada Carriles’ extradition to Venezuela where he is considered a fugitive from justice, under the pretext that he could be subjected to torture. Besides the grotesque and unfounded accusation, it is ironic that a country responsible for the barbarities of Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo is suddenly concerned about the risk of mal treatment. Hugo Chávez has reiterated his petition: “We demand that this terrorist and murderer not be protected but be extradited to Venezuela.” The President of the Bolivarian Republic denounced the double standard in the war against terrorism. “The mask has been dropped once again,” he pointed out, emphasizing the contradictions of the Bush administration. [31] But what else could be expected from the current White House occupant?

Nicaragua denounced Washington’s decision that “promotes terrorism” according to Managua. President Daniel Ortega stated: “In addition to denouncing [the release], I offer Nicaragua as the venue for a trial against Posada Carriles, since he also committed terrorist acts here.” [32]

Ohio democratic Senator Dennis Kucinich also criticized Posada’s release in a letter addressed to Attorney General Alberto González, “If he is released from prison, our credibility in the world will be compromised, as it will be acting counter to our war on terrorism.” [33]

The 118 member countries of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) unanimously adopted a resolution condemning his release. The NAM expressed “great concern” regarding the “parole” of the “notorious international terrorist Luis Posada Carriles.” “As is well known, Mr. Posada Carriles is responsible for numerous acts of terrorism against Cuba and other countries including the October, 1976 terrorist attack on a Cubana de Aviación aircraft that killed 73 innocent civilians [...]. Despite this, he has been jailed in the U.S. for a simple migratory violation, and Venezuela’s petition [for his extradition] has been ignored. The NAM pressed Washington to respect “the obligations intrinsic to the war on terror by virtue of international law and bring to trial or, when appropriate, to extradite the authors of terrorist acts.” It also beseeched the White House to not offer any “political, diplomatic, moral or material support to terrorism” and to hand over Posada Carriles to Venezuelan justice. [34]

Meanwhile, five Cubans have been languishing in U.S. prisons since 1998 for having infiltrated Florida’s terrorist gangs in hopes of thwarting more terrorist attacks against their country like those of 1976 and 1997. After a mockery of a trial, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González were sentenced to a total of four life sentences plus 77 years for “conspiracy” and “attempted espionage,” even though there was not a shred of evidence to prove the accusations. Moreover, several high-ranking U.S. military officers, such as Navy Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll, Army General Edwards Breed Atkeson and Air Force Lieutenant General James R. Clapper, stated during the trial that the five were not guilty of espionage. The prosecutor even admitted to the jury, in a surreal declaration, that to prove the guilt of the accused was “an insurmountable

obstacle.” Nevertheless, he insisted on the conviction of the five Cubans. The jury accepted his demand without blinking, without posing a single question and without requesting a single clarification. [35]

The U.S. government still refuses to authorize family visits for some of the political prisoners. Adriana Pérez has not seen her husband Gerardo Hernández for more than eight years. Olga Salanueva has not seen her partner René González either. Ivette, René’s nine year-old daughter was forced to wait more than eight years to finally meet her father. The Bush administration has rejected United Nations and Amnesty International petitions demanding a fair trial and an end to the “cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment” the five Cubans are enduring. This humanly intolerable judicial scandal has been completely ignored by the media. [36]

One of the most shameful aspects of the Posada Carriles case is the refusal of the international press to call him a terrorist. Instead various other expressions are used to describe him: “militant,” “Cuban militant,” “anti-Castro militant,” “Cuban exile,” “anti-Castro exile,” “anti-communist militant,” “anti-communist.” Just like the Bush administration, they never utter the proper adjective: “terrorist.” To a certain degree the western media has accepted Washington’s “good terrorist and bad terrorist” doctrine. How else could the media’s handling of the matter be interpreted except as unspeakable and unpardonable complicity with terrorism against Cuba? Posada Carriles’ guilt is evident. [37]

The international press does not consider blowing up a passenger plane in mid-flight and murdering 73 individuals (including women and children) a horrifying act of terrorism as long as they are Cubans. To them it is an act of “militancy.” Similarly, to organize a wave of bloody attacks against the Cuban tourist industry does not make the intellectual author a despicable criminal but simply an “anti-Castro militant.” The memory of the one of the worst terrorist act on the American continent deserves a little more respect.

The cases of Posada Carriles and of the five unjustly imprisoned Cubans illustrate Washington’s monumental hypocrisy in its “war on terrorism.” It appears there is no limit to the Bush administration’s irrational race toward infamy.

[\*Article in french\*](#), April 25, 2007.

## Notes

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[4] Public Law 107-56, Uniting and Strengthening America By Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT ACT) Act of 2001, Government Printing Office, 26 October, 2001, Section 412.

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