

The Cruelty of Confinement of the Cuban Five: A Tiny Yellow Pencil

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While waiting for his resentencing in a Miami jail, Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five, wrote a poem describing what he sees, hears and feels during the week he spent in the "hole." Antonio writes in describing his routine: "once again tiny yellow pencil." With this tiny yellow pencil, "accorded" by the prison authorities from time to time, Tony's voice, and that of the other Cuban Five, goes out to millions of people around the world: heads of state, international personalities and organizations and people from all walks of life that are increasingly discovering the truth about this case.

His writing and his paintings show that this is a man of profound convictions, honest, transparent, peaceful and sensitive to the problems of the people, even putting that concern before his own intolerable conditions under which he has been suffering for over eleven years.

In addition to all the water-tight proof and arguments presented by his brilliant and persistent lawyer Leonard Weinglass, all other legal and political personalities from Cuba and all over the world, the products of the tiny yellow pencil are a majestic condemnation of the lies and disinformation used by the US legal and political system against Tony. The US authorities put the Cuban Five through a kangaroo court over eleven years ago and through the same subterfuges have kept them in penitentiaries for all this time, mostly in the "hole" or lock-down; in two cases without the right of visits from their respective wives. The result of putting the tiny yellow pencil to paper, in the form of this simple but profound poem and other writings, shows that they are innocent. Here we have before us men of culture, persisting in defending personal and political convictions focused on opposing terrorist activities against their own people and organized from the south of Florida such as from Miami. They are not spies. They did not in any way put US security in danger.

Tony describes with the tiny yellow pencil the confinement of his cell. He also, with the most profound insights, paints a poetic portrait of the outside world (Miami) that he observes from the window in the "hole" where he was kept. The streets of Miami surrounding the jail! This is the Miami in which a real terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, responsible for the bombing of a Cubana Airlines flight off the Barbados coast killing 73 innocent people, walks the streets. The Miami streets are the host to this Washington-protected terrorist who is also responsible for the death in a Havana hotel of Fabio Di Celmo, an Italian-Canadian, as part of the US policy to disrupt the Cuban tourist industry.

Tony's poem, revealing both his humanism and the cruelty of his confinement as is the case of the four others, amounts to a powerful appeal to President Obama to use his

constitutional right to pardon in order to free the Cuban Five immediately. There are many events and incidents in the history of a country such as the US and of an individual such as President Obama. However, the fate of the Cuban Five is a litmus test of whether the claim for change is, or is not, sincere. No one can seriously and with a straight face look at the peoples of the world and talk about change, while five innocent men, whose only crime is opposing terrorism, linger in jail. No one can talk about opposing terrorism while refusing to concede to the Venezuelan demand for Carriles' extradition in order to stand trial. Tony has the little yellow pencil. President Obama has access to a pen. He can use it, and with the stroke of this pen, free the Cuban Five now. As long as Obama does not do so, the little yellow pencil will continue to reverberate from the cell to the whole world, Tony's words spreading to all corners of the planet, including the USA, with the help of the supporters of the Cuban Five.

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