

When Fighting Terrorism is a Crime: The Story of the Cuban Five

Global Research News Hour Episode 76

By [Michael Welch](#)

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"The Cuban Five are heroic men, five heroic men who made enormous sacrifices to ensure that their country not be the subject of terrorist attacks. They did a work, and in any other situation they would be men that would be awarded and considered heroes in this sense, and the trial that they received in a very hostile atmosphere in Florida was a tragedy and an act of injustice not only to the five men, but the Cuban people, and also those conscious people in America as well, and around the world who really want to have a war against terrorism."

-Actor Danny Glover, September, 2012 [1]

"The story of the Cuban Five is one of courage, great sacrifice and love. It is a story for the ages; especially for those of our people who have suffered under the implacable oppression of white American supremacy, a rule of color and power the rest of the world appears destined to experience."

-Alice Walker [2]

"...in fact we know that these kinds of tactics by the US government against the Cuban Five have been meant to try to pressure them. The FBI even has recently approached the Cuban Five and said 'you know if you collaborate with us, if you give in, if you say you're guilty, then we'll consider letting you go.' And that's not what these men are about. They have principles, their mission was honorable, and they refused to collaborate with the US government against themselves and their people."

-Gloria La Riva, organizer with the National Committee to Free the Five

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For decades, groups based in Miami, Florida have launched literally hundreds of terrorist attacks against the Cuban people and Cuban Nationals. These include bombings, assassinations, and particularly boatloads of weapons sent to Cuba to be used against its citizens. It is estimated that at least 3,478 people have died, and 2,009 have been injured as a direct result of these acts of terrorism. [3]

The Cuban government, quite reasonably, sought to thwart such attacks. Five Cuban Intelligence officers: Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González were dispatched to infiltrate and monitor these Miami-based groups to protect their countrymen. They did succeed in uncovering some of these plots.

On September 12, 1998, these men were arrested and indicted on a charge of Espionage Conspiracy. [4] They were sentenced to lengthy prison sentences including 17 months in solitary confinement!

Supporters of the Five argue that the trial which indicted the men was fundamentally unfair, that they have been subjected to cruel and unusual punishment and that the prosecution was politically motivated.

Two of the Five, [Fernando Gonzalez](#), and [René Gonzalez](#) have been freed, but the other three remain locked up. One of the men, [Gerardo Hernandez](#), faces TWO life sentences plus a fifteen year sentence on top of that.

In this episode of the Global Research News Hour, special guest interviewer Lesley Hughes interviews Gloria La Riva, an organizer with the National Committee to Free the Five (quoted above) and the first of the five to be freed, René González.

President Obama, **YES YOU CAN** free the Cuban Five!

People wishing to get involved in current and ongoing solidarity efforts to free the Cuban Five, or who merely wish for more background are encouraged to visit the following sites:

www.freethefive.org

www.theCuban5.org

There are also two important books on the subject:

Letters of Love and Hope: The Story of the Cuban Five with an Introduction by Alice Walker [5]

What Lies Across the Water: The Real Story of the Cuban Five by Stephen Kimber [6]

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[CFRU 93.3FM](#) in Guelph, Ontario. Tune in Wednesdays from 12am to 1am.

Notes:

1. <http://www.thecuban5.org/2012/09/13/danny-glover-the-cuban-five-are-heroic-men/>
2. <http://www.freethethefive.org/store.htm#books>
3. <http://www.counterpunch.org/2014/03/20/the-u-s-s-terrorism-double-standard/> ;
<http://www.freethethefive.org/whoarethefive.htm>
4. <http://www.cubadiplomacia.cu/canada/EN/FiveHeroes/SummaryoftheCase.aspx>
5. <http://www.freethethefive.org/store.htm#books>
6. ibid

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