

Ricardo Alarcón: “He said, I am totally responsible for all of those acts and others that will come”

AMY GOODMAN: We turn now to the President of the Cuban National Assembly, Ricardo Alarcon. I reached him on the telephone when I was at the studios of KUNM in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Saturday. This is Ricardo Alarcon speaking to us from Havana.

RICARDO ALARCON: Well, to me, it is absolutely clear that he's there. His lawyer has said that openly several times to the local media. It was shown there on TV, the papers of his application for political asylum. It was informed more than a month ago that that application has been sent to the Department of Homeland Security. People, friends of him, have spoken, have referred to conversations that they have had with him. I think it is a very, very strange case for -- now for more than two months a very well-known international terrorist, a fugitive, whose name can be found at Interpol, has been trained for Venezuelan courts -- long before Mr. Chavez has been president and redirected now by the head court of that country, as a person that was demanded by Venezuelan justice and “escaped,” (quote, unquote) from that prison. That man, who has been also years ago, 1998, interviewed by The New York Times, front page, July 12 and July 13 of that year, in which he recognized that he was at that moment directing terror attacks down here in Havana. Later, a few days later, he reiterated that on an American TV channel, CBS Telenoticias, a Spanish network at the time. He said that he was totally, totally, completely responsible for those acts. Now this man is there, according to his lawyer, according to his friends. Last Tuesday, on the local Miami TV, Orlando Bosch, another well-known international terrorist, who is free in Miami now, said -- I am quoting him, “Everybody knows that Luis Posada is here, including the government.” And he's referred to conversations that he has had with him now in Miami. I think that this is absolutely clear that that man has been living there for almost two months now and that everybody knows that down there, as Mr. Bosch said.

AMY GOODMAN: Can you give us the history of Luis Posada?

RICARDO ALARCON: I'm afraid that you won't have enough time on your program. It's a long, long history. Recently, this year, the F.B.I. declassified a report about him from 1965. In that report it is clear that he was involved in terrorist activities there in the U.S., directed against Cuba obviously, since the early 1960s. He was with the C.I.A. He was at the School of the Americas. He was trained there. As he said to The New York Times, “Everything I learned from them, from the C.I.A., how to make bombs, how to kill, how to exercise violence, and so on and so forth.” Later he became chief operation activities -- the chief operator of the Venezuelan political police at the time of the ARENA warfare in that country in the 1960s and 1970s.

Then in 1976, when Bush's father was head of the C.I.A., by the way, he was accused of having masterminded the attack on a civilian airplane, the first case of a civilian airplane being bombed in air, killing everybody. While he was awaiting for a decision of a Court of Appeals of Venezuela, he “escaped,” (quote, unquote). Later it was known -- it is in the Senate records, the U.S. Senate records -- that that man had left the Venezuelan prison to be immediately transferred to Ilopango base in San Salvador to work with Oliver North, who had organized his departure from the Venezuelan jail. A man that was accused of an international terrorist act escaped from prison thanks to the

efforts of an advisor to the President of the United States to continue working, now directly for the White House. Then when the Iran-Contra scandal came up, he had to disappear again. But he didn't go very far. He was appointed Security Advisor to the then President of El Salvador and later to the then President of Guatemala. Then he wrote a book, his memoirs, *The Roads Of The Warrior*, in which he described many of those things. And then in the 1990s, the bombings in Havana and in other places in Cuba took place and this man explained his responsibility of those acts at *The New York Times*, front page. Later, a few days later, he in person appeared on that TV channel I mentioned, CBS *Telenoticias*, and he reiterated that. Everybody, too, has seen that interview where he was asked straight: "Have you anything to do with those bombings in Havana?" He said, "I am totally responsible for all of those acts and others that will come," and so on and so forth.

And again, he disappeared and reappeared in Panama. That's part of the recent history. It's well known he was accused of introducing weapons and explosives, C4 and so forth, and entering illegally in Panama. He was planning an attempt against President Fidel Castro, as he has done before in other occasions and as he has described in his own book with his own words. But that man was supposed to be a fugitive of justice, but a very well known fugitive for the US. If you take, for example, the determination of the Attorney General during George H. W. Bush presidency, 1989, it is an official document signed by the Attorney General when Mr. Bosch showed up in Miami after having been acquitted. He was acquitted by the tribunal in Venezuela on very, very non-serious grounds, but anyway –

AMY GOODMAN: This is Orlando Bosch.

RICARDO ALARCON: Posada was declared a fugitive and claimed by the authorities in Venezuela at that time. Mr. Bosch, when he arrived, the Attorney General determined that he should be expelled for being a very well-known terrorist. But Mr. Posada was working with him, was the operative, the chief operative of that group, and in that document, signed by the Attorney General of the U.S. it said that they had clearly and unequivocally information that reflects that these people were advocating, encouraging, organizing and participating in acts of terrorist violence in this country, that means in the US, as well as various other countries, and specifically, specifically in this document, the Attorney General recognized once again that they had information reflecting that the October 6, 1976 Cuban airline bombing was a CORU operation under the direction of Bosch. CORU was an umbrella name for the various terrorist groups – of anti-Cuban terrorist groups, in which Mr. Bosch was the apparent leader and Mr. Posada was the chief executioner. That has been his entire life.

He has spent a long career, as his lawyer himself recognized. He said that Mr. Posada deserves political asylum due to his long services to U.S. policies. And he is right. He has been working at very -- with very high connections in your country for many, many years. It is very difficult to summarize that in a radio interview, unfortunately. But the important point is this. He's there now, not in a corner of the U.S. territory, in a very specific place, according to his friends and his lawyer, and his specific address is written in the application form that he had submitted to the Department of Homeland Security. What does this mean in your country? You spend billions of dollars, billions of dollars protecting U.S. borders. You have dozens of organizations that are -- also including now in Florida the local police -- involved in finding undocumented aliens that arrive in

that country. Thousands have been arrested during these two months in which Mr. Posada has been there, but not hiding, telling people that he's there, having a lawyer telling the same. Now they even brought to Miami lawyers from Venezuela associated with him in his past. They have also gone on TV saying that they are there to help in the process of his admission to the United States, and so it's a very strange case. Thousands of foreigners have been arrested, and at the same time the most [inaudible] guy on earth, Mr. Luis Posada Carriles, the only alien illegally there that is claiming – claiming for admission, filing papers for that. And nobody is going after him.

AMY GOODMAN: We're talking to the President of the Cuban National Assembly, number three man in Cuba, Ricardo Alarcon. We'll come back to him in a minute.

[break]

AMY GOODMAN: we return to the President of the Cuban National Assembly, Ricardo Alarcon. I spoke to him on Saturday from Havana. I asked why he thinks it is that no one in the U.S. government is going after Luis Posada Carriles.

RICARDO ALARCON: I assure that that's why we're very interested in that justice could be finally done. This man should be presented, should be detained, and the U.S. should tell what they know. That's the answer to your question. The U.S. should say why it still -- still not given to the public, to the Venezuelan authorities, the evidences that they had in the 1970s of who destroyed that civilian airplane and killed everybody, to tell also the world why they never share those information with the Venezuelan court, as was recognized by then, alleging there then that they didn't have anything to do with that, why the Attorney General in an official document later recognized that they did have confidential information about that action. They cannot deny that Mr. Posada later, 20 years later, had recognized that he was actively provoking terrorists in Cuba. He said that to The New York Times, and he repeated that to an American TV station, that his connections, as his lawyer himself has said, his services to the U.S. government, to the C.I.A., to the U.S. Army, to U.S. policy in general has been so great that they feel that he deserved to be received, be welcome in the U.S.

Those are very important questions that has to be answered now, because – because a simple detail: 9/11. After 9/11, the United States, this administration, established a policy that make it mandatory for every nation in the world to deny refuge protection not only to terrorists but to friends of terrorists, to those who protect terrorists. There is an exception. The exception is Dade County, specifically the City of Miami. There you have people organized, speaking loudly to everybody to listen that they are protecting this man, a man that has been accused of terrorism and a man that has recognized, that has proclaimed his exploits, what he has done, and a man, by the way, who according to the statements that's his friends have contributed in Miami is not going to Miami, didn't go to Miami to retire, but to continue doing what he has been doing in his entire life. It is a very clear case. Now that the Bush doctrine, those who harbor a terrorist are as guilty as the terrorist himself, should be proven. The proof of the pudding.

Now they have to eat that pudding, either by taking this man into custody and sending into Venezuela to finally be tried by that crime. They should send Posada and they should -- they have an obligation now also to give finally to the Venezuelan authorities what they have had in their archives, what they have now and they know that they have.

They have recognized that in official documents. Notwithstanding the fact that in those days in the 1970s none other than the President of Venezuela at that time, Mr. Carlos Andres Perez, a very well-known friend of the U.S., went to the U.N. I was there. I was ambassador of Cuba at the U.N. at that moment. And Carlos Andres made an appeal to the United States government, "Please help us to dispel the allegations that your agencies were involved in that terrible act of destroying a civilian airplane." They ask not only for money, but openly, publicly for the U.S. to contribute to the -- for the information that they may have and they did have later on, and I was also ambassador at the U.N. in 1992. In that year the Security Council passed a resolution condemning the attack, the U.S. Pan-Am and another attack on a U.T.A. Airline. We also condemned very clearly in those days, but we also asked, "What about our plane? What about the Cuban airplane? You should give what you have, and you should also condemn that attack."

Why did we do that? First, because the Security Council got involved in civilian airplanes being attacked for the first time in history, and secondly, because I had that document of the Attorney General that was used in 1990 when the Bosch admission into U.S. territory. And at that moment on May 21, 1992, the State Department issued a statement lying to the world, saying that they did not give any information to the Venezuelan court at that time in the 1970s, because they were not asked to contribute. And apparently the Venezuelan authorities thought that the U.S. had nothing to do with that. They were wrong, deliberately wrong on both grounds. First, Venezuela did ask, asked formally, officially, and publicly. And, second, they had a lot. They had a lot, perhaps the evidence that would have served the Venezuelan court in those days to make justice. But now they have more. Now they have the confessions of this man, his autobiography, his interviews on TV, in The New York Times, and so on and so forth. And they have the man. He's there. They have an obligation according to Security Council Resolution 1373, drafted by the U.S., adopted on September 2001 after the heinous attack of that the Americans suffered on 9/11, making it mandatory for every country in the world to prosecute terrorists, to deny refuge to terrorists, to deny any cooperation not only to terrorists but to those who support them. Now is the proof of the pudding. Let's see how it tastes in Posada's case.

AMY GOODMAN: We're talking to Ricardo Alarcon, President of the Cuban Parliament, joining us from Havana about Luis Posada Carriles, the latest news that he is in the United States. The Assistant Secretary of State, Roger Noriega, though, says they don't know that Mr. Luis Posada is in the United States. Your comment on Noriega's comments?

RICARDO ALARCON: I have seen Mr. Noriega's peculiar reasoning. On the one hand, he promised to have a serious, private, and transparent handling of this case. Are they accusing Mr. Posada's lawyer of lying? Are they telling us that he didn't submit to the obligation of his client, as he said publicly? Are they saying that they don't have the specific address of Mr. Posada as an answer to the questionnaire that he filled? Are they saying that a terrorist, a very well known figure, a person that appears on TV, that has given many interviews during many years, can enter the U.S., spend two months without being found? During these two months they have arrested thousands, thousands of poor Latinos who have gone there undocumented or whatever, not to kill anybody, just to work, to try to improve their living or their families. Only one person has been fortunate enough not to be found, the only one that is very well known and that -- who

has there to say that he is there; call his friends, speak with them, make statements, his friends gathering and promoting his goals and saying that he's there and so on. In this time after 9/11, after having spent so many billions of dollars in protecting your borders, in financing operations against illegal immigrants, how can they say that this man sneaks into from abroad, and we know that he is there from the mid-March. It's almost two months already. Nobody has denied that, and I repeat: His very close pal, Mr. Orlando Bosch, another well-known terrorist, pardoned by President Bush, living in Miami, told the truth. He said, "Everybody, including the U.S. government, knows that Posada is here."

AMY GOODMAN: Ricardo Alarcon, you say you have information that he didn't just come here to retire, that he is continuing to engage in activities. What information do you have?

RICARDO ALARCON: Well, there was a statement attributed to him, distributed by his friends in Miami, calling for action, for violence, for doing the same, that the purpose of his arrival in Miami is to continue doing that. But now from Miami, apparently, he considered that the proper time to do that, to move his headquarters to that place, that is what was attributed to him by these friends of him that in Miami now are in communication with him.

AMY GOODMAN: Ricardo Alarcon, President of the Cuban National Assembly, the number three man in Cuba, speaking to us from Havana.

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