

CONNECTIONS OF CANF'S TREASURER

By Jane Franklin

The Cuban American National Foundation is well-represented on the GOP's list of presidential electors from Florida by CANF's treasurer, Feliciano M. Foyo, who happens to be a good friend of Florida Governor Jeb Bush. Foyo has another friend named Luis Posada Carriles, one of the most notorious terrorists among Cuban expatriots. In an autobiography published in Honduras in 1994, Posada names Feliciano Foyo as one of his financial backers. What does it mean to be one of Posada's financiers?

Posada, along with three other well-known terrorists, was detained by Panamanian authorities November 17 for an alleged plan to assassinate President Fidel Castro while the Cuban leader addressed thousands of students at the University of Panama. If the plastic explosive discovered in Panama had been used, hundreds of people could have been killed or injured. But Posada does not seem bothered by "collateral damage."

Posada has previously aimed to kill Castro in several countries, including Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Peru. A sales representative for Firestone Tire and Rubber in Cuba, Posada started working for the CIA at least by 1960. Found out and forced to flee, for years he led raids carried out by Alpha 66, a terrorist organization that continues such raids to this day--with impunity.

In June 1976, while George H.W. Bush (the elder) was head of the CIA, a CIA operative, Cuban expatriate Orlando Bosch, founded and led the Commanders of United Revolutionary Organizations (CORU). Posada was one of those "commanders." As revealed later in FBI and CIA documents, CORU was soon involved in more than 50

bombings and, quite likely, political assassinations. Venezuelan and U.S. authorities reported that a network of terrorists carried out a "vast" number of attacks in seven countries against Cuba and against countries and individuals considered friendly to Cuba. This reign of terror culminated in October 1976 when a Cubana passenger plane was blown up after it took off from Barbados headed for Cuba, killing all 73 people aboard, including 57 Cubans.

With overwhelming evidence against them, Posada, Bosch, and two Venezuelans were arrested and held in Venezuela. Military courts in Venezuela acquitted them, not a surprising development since the CIA in 1967 had transferred Posada to Venezuela, using him as a leader of terrorist activities against Cuba in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the Interior Ministry, he ran the Intelligence and Prevention Services Division (DISIP), which persecuted, interrogated, and tortured Venezuelan citizens. Awaiting retrial, in 1985 Posada walked out of the prison.

According to Posada himself, his guards were bribed with money from Miami. One of the couriers of such financing was Gaspar Jimenez Escobedo, one of the terrorists now held in Panama. From Venezuela, Cuban expatriot Felix Rodriguez, another notorious terrorist, took Posada to El Salvador where Rodriguez was operating with Col. Oliver North in supplying Contras against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The exposure of that operation led to the Iran-Contra hearings of 1987. At those hearings before Congress, Rodriguez was asked about "Ramon Medina." He replied that Medina was an alias in El Salvador for Posada, a "good friend of mine," an "honorable man." He testified that he brought Posada to El Salvador from Venezuela, claiming that Posada "deserved to be free." Not another question was asked about Posada. Instead Rodriguez was complimented on his role by Rep. Bill McCollum (R-Fl), one of his questioners. Rep. Peter Rodino

(D-NJ) also told him that we all appreciate his fighting against communism.

Two years later, in a speech on the Senate floor, Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) said the American people "deserve a full accounting of [then Vice President] Bush and the vice president's office and its knowledge of Luis Posada's role in the secret contra supply operation." In his testimony before Congress, Rodriguez had bragged about meeting with Vice President Bush (he showed Bush a picture of himself with captive Che Guevara in the hours before Che was executed). Senator Harkin wondered "why Bush never bothered to use his good offices to investigate charges of Posada's links with the supply operation and Felix Rodriguez even after the press reported them in late 1986."

After El Salvador, Posada spent time in terrorist activities in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Money from Miami, said Posada, was used to finance the 1997 bombings aimed at the tourist industry in Havana--bombings that killed an Italian tourist, Fabio di Celmo, and injured several people. Posada admitted paying Salvadorans to go to Cuba to plant those bombs. After Posada and his three cohorts were detained in Panama, Justino di Celmo, father of the dead tourist, appeared on Cuban television to appeal to Panamanian President Mireya Moscoso not to release Luis Posada. The families of the 57 Cubans killed in the 1976 explosion of the passenger jet are pleading for justice. Time will tell if Posada's financiers can pay his way out of this one.

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