

Memorandum to the Libertarian National Committee (LNC)

Regarding Jailed Libertarian Activists

This memorandum seeks to provide documentation for the situation surrounding the arrest and detention of two Cuban libertarian activists.

Ubaldo Herrera Hernandez and Manuel Velazquez Visea were arrested on February 2. To be absolutely clear, these men are Cuban citizens.

The founder of Mises Cuba, Joisy Garcia Martinez, posted about their arrest on the Mises Cuba Facebook page.¹ I have been in regular contact with Garcia, a Cuban national who currently lives in Miami as a political refugee. Mises Cuba is an independent unaffiliated organization based on the Mises Institute in Auburn, Alabama. Mises Cuba consists of 14 activists including one volunteer in Argentina. These libertarian activists have no one to speak for them.

Garcia briefly recounted the events in the original Facebook post but has since recounted them again to me in our ongoing instant messaging sessions.

According to Garcia, on the night of February 2, Herrera and Velázquez were approached by an agent from State Security, the secret police. The agent was an undercover operative dressed in civilian clothes and did not identify himself, but demanded Herrera and Velázquez show ID. The two men refused to identify themselves to a man in civilian clothes.

The man returned later with agents of State Security and the National Police. Herrera and Velázquez were both arrested at 8pm by State Security and National Police officers. They were arrested in Mayabeque Province and are being detained at a facility in Quivicán. Both men are still being detained on falsified charges of attempted assault. Garcia asserts that this is a common tactic for silencing dissidents in Cuba.

According to Joisy Garcia, the dissident activities the two men were targeted for are the same peaceful activities we Libertarians do on a regular basis: meeting in a room and discussing how great capitalism is and how terrible government is, organizing other people to do the same, and distributing literature.

The LNC needs to understand that this situation involves the night-time arrest of political dissidents by the secret police in a third world Communist country. There is no

1

<https://www.facebook.com/misescuba/photos/a.918766948198688.1073741828.898210033587713/1332134443528601/?type=3&theater>

documentation of the arrest or detention. We are forced to rely on testimonies and documentation of past incidents.

The Editor and Community Manager of Mises Cuba, Mamela Fiallo Flor, sent me a video which was uploaded to Mises Cuba's Facebook page. In the 79-second video, Ubaldo Herrera's mother claims she has not been allowed to see her detained son at all.² Mises Cuba member and lawyer Nelson Rodriguez Chartrand is the main person talking to Herrera's mother in the video.

No one has any information on Manuel Velazquez yet. State Security has threatened the other members of Mises Cuba with arrest if they approach the facility where the two political prisoners are being detained.

I'm currently waiting for Nelson Chartrand to give me his written testimony over Facebook Messenger. While Mises Cuba founder Joisy Garcia is in Florida, Nelson Rodriguez is still in Cuba.

Previous publications available online confirm Ubaldo Herrera Hernandez's status as a Cuban dissident and political activist.

F.A.C.E. Cuba, a human rights watch group, reports that Ubaldo Herrera Hernández was previously arrested and detained simply to prevent him from appearing in public during the official week of mourning for Fidel Castro.³

The University of Miami's Institute for Cuban-American Studies reports that on April 7, 2015, Herrera was arrested and detained for 8 hours for hanging up posters with anti-government slogans.⁴ He was arrested again 11 days later for participation in dissident activities.⁵

The Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation reports Herrera was previously arrested in Havana on January 1, 2015 for dissident political activities⁶ (likely for distributing literature).

Herrera was also arrested a year prior on January 15, 2014. In this incident, he and other dissidents were detained for the day and then left stranded on the outskirts of the metropolitan area.⁷

² https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1339719902770055&id=898210033587713

³ <http://www.facecuba.org/cuba-on-track-for-10000-politically-motivated-arrests-by-end-of-year/>

⁴ Page 3,

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://ctp.iccas.miami.edu/HumanRightsViolationsinCuba-April-June2015.pdf>

⁵ Page 10,

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://ctp.iccas.miami.edu/HumanRightsViolationsinCuba-April-June2015.pdf>

⁶ Page 2, <http://ccdhrn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015.01-CCDHRN2.pdf>

⁷ Page 6, <http://ccdhrn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015.01-CCDHRN2.pdf>

Apart from the state party affiliates of Nevada, New Hampshire, and Oklahoma, the Libertarian Party of Spain has also denounced the Cuban government and demands the safe release of the jailed libertarian activists.⁸

I will provide the LNC with further updates as warranted.

Zach Foster

Senior Contributor

LP Nevada

⁸ <http://www.p-lib.es/internacional/condena-del-p-lib-ante-el-encarcelamiento-de-dos-libertarios-cubanos/>