

UNIÓN DEL BARRIO

Concientización, Organización, Acción y Liberación



uniondelbarrio.org

COMITÉ CENTRAL
(619) 398-6648
comitecentral@uniondelbarrio.org

POST OFFICE BOX 13036
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92170

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Unión del Barrio celebrates the recent release and return to Cuba of Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labaniño, and Antonio Guerrero - the final three of the Cuban 5 which had been imprisoned in the United States since 1998 for their counterterrorism efforts in defense of Cuban sovereignty. Furthermore, we congratulate the Cuban 5 and the worldwide effort to Free the 5 for this important achievement. For years Unión de Barrio has participated in this global campaign, and we identify this victory for the Cuban people as our own victory as well.

While we recognize the release of Gerardo, Ramón, and Antonio as an important political step forward, we urge our members and supporters to keep in mind that the changes announced today by Barack Obama represent only an easing of the ongoing blockade of Cuba. What is being celebrated in the U.S. media as a so-called “normalization” of relations between the U.S. and Cuba is very similar to what William Clinton attempted during his presidency in the 1990s. That process of feigned normalization ended with the imposition of the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, signed by Clinton, which resulted in a tightening of the illegal blockade by the U.S. against Cuba. Almost 20 years later, Helms-Burton can only be revoked by the incoming ultra-right wing congress. In other words, there is absolutely no chance of the U.S. ending its illegal blockade of Cuba in the near future. In fact, as a consequence of today’s “executive action” by Obama, it is far more likely that republican majorities in the U.S. congress will increase legislative aggression against Cuba, in the same way the reactionary and hypocritical outgoing U.S. congress recently sanctioned Venezuela for “violations of human rights.”

Unión del Barrio knows that the Cuban people are not fooled by Obama’s false promises. We also note that President Raúl Castro made his statement today while wearing his military uniform, demonstrating to the Cuban people and to the world that the illegal U.S. blockade of Cuba remains in effect, and that this policy is identified by international law as

an act of war. Even the most basic review of U.S. policy towards Cuba serves as evidence that we should maintain no illusions about trusting a completely untrustworthy compulsive liar such as Barack Obama. As Mexicanas and Mexicanos who have suffered over 2 million deportations under this president, our communities have learned the hard way to no longer waste our time with hollow speeches and false hopes.

We understand that if indeed there is any possibility of change in U.S. policy towards Cuba, it will develop as a result of pressure coming from U.S. economic interests, particularly U.S. corporations backed by Cuban-American interests based in Miami. These forces are more interested than ever in investing in Cuba, and this economic self-interest is what is truly motivating Obama and his ilk. For years now, these forces have lamented the money they have “lost” as a consequence of the 55 year old blockade of Cuba.

In conclusion, Unión del Barrio openly and unconditionally supports “Cuba libre y socialista,” and if the U.S. ruling class is willing to halt its aggression against revolutionary Cuba, then we truly have reason to celebrate. Short of that, we know now as we always have known, that we should trust no imperialist, even when he is in black-face, and finds it far too easy to quote José Martí.

¡Fin Al Bloqueo Económico y Financiero! ¡Viva Cuba Libre y Socialista!

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