
The United States and terrorism against Cuba

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23/04/2024



Cuba has been included on the list of state sponsors of terrorism since 1982, with a pause between 2015 and 2021, which is ironic if we take into account that since 1960, Cuba is a country that has been the target of several terrorist attacks. Then again, what can you expect from a list made by the same government that has sponsored and protected the terrorists who attack Cuba?

Today, I will mention five of the times in which the United States was behind terrorist attacks against Cuba or protected those who did it. But this time let's see them from the damage to the human victims.

Air strikes against Cuban sugar mills

Although these attacks that took place between 1961 and 1965 were aimed at affecting the main branch of the Cuban economy, they were also aimed at causing panic in the residents of the area. And how can you not be scared if you wake up and see a bomb in the patio of your house that miraculously did not explode, as happened to Domingo Baños?

But not everyone was left in shock or lost their home alone like those who lived near the sugar mills. Four farmers: Eduardo Harga, José María Soa, Rogelio Pena Simón and Santiago González Linares were charred to death when they were trapped by the flames while trying to put out the fire caused in the sugarcane fields of the Venezuela sugar mill.

Being at home was not safe either. Fabric Aguilar Noriega was in his room when a bomb exploded and killed him instantly and injured three of his children.

In case anyone is wondering, all the planes and light aircraft responsible for the bombings came from the United States and although Orlando Bosch on more than one occasion took credit for the actions and was even caught trying to bring weapons into Cuba, he was not arrested.

Attack on fishing vessels and kidnapping of fishermen

These attacks are about a series of events that occurred between 1962 and 1973, and all followed a similar pattern. The fishing boats were attacked by pirate boats from Florida with machine guns, sunk, and the fishermen were abandoned to their fate on rafts or desert islands.

During the strafing there were always crew members who were injured or killed, others disappeared at sea and those who were abandoned or kidnapped spent days without food and water.

It is important to note that the fishing boats were unarmed and in most cases, given that almost all the attacks occurred during the early hours of the morning, the fishermen were asleep. Even on October 10, 1972, the pirates had already taken the fishing boats *Aguja* and *Plataforma 4* and although their crew members were still sleeping, they decided to cut the throat of fisherman Amado Jiménez.

There were 4 victims, 6 wounded and 51 kidnapped fishermen who were abandoned at sea or deserted islands. Again, although the criminals boasted to the American press about their actions, they were not arrested.

Bombing of a Cubana de Aviación plane in Barbados

It is probably the most notorious event of those that make up this list. It is also one of the cruelest.

At 12:15 on October 6, 1976, the plane took off from Seawell Airport in Barbados. At 12:23 the first explosion occurred, less than a minute later a second explosion occurred. Five minutes later, the plane lay sunken in the sea with its 73 passengers. There were no survivors.

Hernán Ricardo Lozano and Freddy Lugo, the perpetrators authors of the terrorist attack, were arrested and tried for the crime. In their statements, they pointed out Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles as the masterminds behind the attack. They even confessed how much money they got for placing the bombs: 25 thousand U.S. dollars. That is, approximately 342.5 dollars for each life they took.

Although other evidence was added to the testimony of the accused, it took 11 years for both the perpetrators and the masterminds behind such a terrorist attack to be arrested, Posada Carriles and Bosch did not remain there for long.

Posada Carriles escaped from prison and several years later managed to enter the United States illegally. Although Cuba and Venezuela requested his extradition to pay for the crimes committed against both nations, a U.S. court declared that he could only be extradited to any country except Cuba and Venezuela. In the end, he was only tried for illegal entry, acquitted of terrorism charges and released.

In Bosch's case, he was extradited to the US where he was released just nine months later.

Both terrorists died free, without paying for their crimes and were treated like heroes.

Sabotage against French steamship La Coubre

On March 4, 1960, the steamship *La Coubre* exploded at the Havana Bay dock, which was loaded with weapons that Cuba had purchased from Belgium.

After the first explosion, teams were organized to help the injured. 30 minutes later, when hundreds of people were helping the wounded people, a second explosion occurred, with a greater number of victims.

There were a total of 101 deaths and over 200 injuries.

When the Cuban government accused the United States, it denied the charges and blamed Cuba for an error in security measures, although it had already been tested by launching boxes identical to those transported by the steamer from planes flying to the same area. and even higher than the one from which they were transported. None of them exploded, so the possibility of not one, but two accidents was zero.

Later it was found that the CIA had begun to carry out sabotage in Cuba at that time.

Dengue hemorrhagic fever

Of the 158 fatalities, 101 were children.

The first three cases popped up in areas distant from each other and there was no trace of contact between patients, so it was not possible that one had infected the other. The duration of the illness ranged from three to seven days, but almost no children survived to the fifth day.

The third day of the fever was the day of bleeding in the skin, mouth and nose, and the warning signs: abdominal pain, frequent vomiting, irritability or drowsiness. On the fourth day, shortly after the fever subsided, shock came and in many cases major bleeding followed. The fifth day was the day of death.

Even in the midst of this situation, the United States Treasury Department refused to sell insecticides to Cuba that could combat the transmitting agent of the disease, so it took longer to obtain them through third countries.

This is one of the few cases where the criminal was convicted of terrorism in the U.S., but do not think they did it because of his actions against Cuba. No, the reason why Eduardo Arocena was sentenced to two life sentences is because more than 30 of his terrorist acts affected American streets.

And yet he did not serve his full sentence, since he was released in 2021 as a “merciful release” so that he could have a dignified old age and die in peace. I cannot help but think that whoever made the decision forgot about those 101 children who did not have a peaceful death and to whom Arocena denied the opportunity to at least reach adulthood.

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