

So here it is, the reason five men who risk all to prevent the scourge of terror from launching off the shores of the United States are brutally arrested and abused. The reason, after nearly six years they still languish in the vast system of super oppression that is the prison industrial complex of this country. The reason that now, six months after a panel of federal court justices heard the states attorney embarrass herself in front of all present with lame and excuse-ridden responses to valid concerns regarding the conduct of the clearly political and rigged trial - and there is still no verdict on the appeal. The reason you and your mother are refused the human right to visit with your father. Mendacity. Corruption and avarice most vile. As the tale of the King's New Clothes relates, the system stands naked before us and the case of these Five men is the sun shining light on it. The Big Lie is told from the highest point and repeated ad infinitum.

This would be a poor way to end a letter of such importance. We have never met, though I know your older sister and my son has met your mother, your picture is a constant image in my mind (the one with your sister and mother on the website). I am your humble admirer for the special way you support your father that becomes clear in his descriptions of the phone conversations you have with him. I am heartened by the story of Elián González and his

father Juan Miguel who overcame a similar attack on the institution of Family by many of the same culprits. In the end it was a combination of the people of Cuba and the people of the United States that forced the hand of the pretenders to legitimacy in this country. It will be the same for you. My son and I were with your father on Father's Day. We were poor substitutes. However it is an honor to serve in the legion of those who struggle for justice, and in that billion-fold army your father is my model. Soon, in the days and nights of freedom, we will celebrate together.

Your humble admirer,
Stephen Paulmier



Free the Five:

Fernando González Llort, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez,
Gerardo Hernández Nordelo,
Ramón Labañino Salazar,
René González Schweret

www.freethefive.cjb.net
www.freethefive.org

A letter to explain the shameful abuse of a child by the United States denying a visit with her father on Father's Day, 2004



Irmita, Ivett (René's daughters) and Olga (his wife)

August 9, 2004

Dear Ivett,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Stephen Paulmier; I live in the city of Philadelphia in the United States. I have the honor of calling myself a friend of your father as I have had the privilege of corresponding with him and visiting with him while the government of my country has detained and falsely accused him.

The reason for my letter to you now is to explain why on Father's Day this year my son Emile and I could visit with your father while your mother and you could not. This is not an easy matter for me to approach. With all my heart I love my country and the people, principles and ideas that make it a special place. However, in the matter of my country's relationship with Cuba and its wonderful people many issues exist which trouble me. I feel it is my duty to make the effort of describing to you the conditions that permit the unfair and inappropriate treatment of your father and his four comrades by the pretenders to authority in the United States Government. If not for their embarrassing and cowardly actions your family would be together today.

In this moment my country is filled with terrible dreams of power, strength and importance. In many ways we act like a young bully who is afraid of his own shadow because he knows what he brags about himself is a lie. I do not mean we are not powerful, strong or important. Just as the child who puffs himself up is in reality a human being filled with potential and infinite

resources and is too frightened to recognize his true self-worth.

As a nation we too are struggling with the real value we possess as a people for progress and unity in the world. Though our history is filled with examples of principled struggles for justice and dignity, for the most part the forces opposing these efforts have clung to power, deceiving, distorting and co-opting those efforts for purposes of profit and short-term wealth. Today the political leadership of the United States rails against terrorism, inciting the people to a fever pitch of fear and agitation. This same leadership is responsible for the most repressive and brutal attacks on the poor, weak and exploited masses of the earth. They project the worst of their own behavior upon a shadowy specter that is conjured to mislead and confuse the citizenry.

It is within this context these political leaders have prevented you and your mother from coming to this country to visit your father. For them René González represents the most dangerous subversion of all they hold dear. He and his comrades committed the most serious offence known in their world, that of exposing the truth.

In the short time that I have had to know and appreciate your father I have been overwhelmed by the direct and methodical orientation he has toward human relationships and understandings. His cognition and appreciation for the sweep of human longings and motivations is

comprehensive. As an ally, he represents the best that friendship and struggle could want, as a foe, he represents the epitome of an oppressor's nightmare. Of course I am undeserving in this task of describing father for daughter, my own daughter is nearly 14 now and knows my weakness for expressing myself incompletely, sometimes leaving important parts of the story out.

I must return to the subject of this letter, to explain how such an injustice is possible in a country so full of experience and promise. In my efforts to affect the release and exculpation of the Five I have encountered thousands of responses. We have a sign that we use to draw attention to the circumstances of the case. On the sign is the painted representation of an open hand, five fingers reaching out, purposefully preparing to manipulate the power that for so long has eluded us. Five fingers representing the five senses we use to survive in the world, sight, sound, taste, touch and smell. Five human beings, menschen, living heroes whose integrity and honor turn the earth around them into zones of freedom and dignity, making the concrete and wire dungeons of their detention shrines worthy of universal inspiration.

The youngest pedestrians come up to us and marvel at the “big hand” painted in red and towering above. Many ask to have their pictures taken in front of it. Most are moved by the story told. From that



moment onward a sense of dignity and purpose is kindled anew, fuelled and rejuvenated, ready to act and engage the perpetrators of this infamy. There are some we have come across who deny the veracity of our claim. They are never from the working classes; the oppressed identify strongly and sympathize quickly with the circumstances the Five face.

No, the few who reject the truth of our epistle come from another point of view. They espouse an infallibility of the United States, they challenge the trustworthiness of anyone else and they reject out of hand any suggestion of untoward motivation on the part of any elected (or unelected but in charge) official. The “free” press and most political representatives do their level best to ignore

20 degrees Fahrenheit. As we set up the sign we saw that several large television vans had pulled up and were beginning to set up their camera equipment. For a moment we thought the best was about to happen and our issue and sign would be featured on the television news that day. That was not to be. The story that day, January 15, 2004 was the cold weather on the plaza and our sign, this issue didn't fit.



this issue. On a bitterly cold day in January several of us took the sign out on a prominent plaza in the city to honor the Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. It was about 18 to