

# Letter Tells Of Cuban Terror

By FLOYD ANDERSON  
Newark, N.J. — (NC) — It was a typed letter, in Spanish, single-spaced, and about three pages long.

It had come from Havana, and the writer said "there will be no signature so they will not know I am writing."

BY SOME QUIRK of circumstance, it had been passed by the censors. Perhaps they only check part of the mail; but perhaps — and more likely — it was read by a censor whose sentiments agreed with the letter, and who deliberately let it go through. Not everyone in Cuba today agrees with the dictatorship established by Fidel Castro. Cuban refugees in the U.S. estimate that 8 out of 10 in Cuba are against him. However, they point out, this does not mean that these are willing to gamble their lives to fight Castro.

The letter describes what happened in Havana during and after the ill-fated invasion.

It paints a picture of hate, persecution and terror — and yet one of high trust in God, for the writer says:

"It looks like it is our role to suffer all this to show the atmosphere here, what kind of a regime this is, but inside my soul I am confident because this is in the hands of God and I hope He will help us."

But let the writer speak in the words typed anonymously to a friend who knew from whom it came:

"I hope you will get this letter. I am writing this letter without knowing whether you will get it or not, and with the hope that it will pass through. Of course, there will be no signature so they will not know I am writing . . ."

"NOTICE BY a letter . . . that you are looking at it always from a high point of view and a Catholic point of view, thanking God for the fact that you and your children are safe and giving up and forgetting everything that is material. I think this is the only sensible attitude. It is in God's hands. And besides, there isn't anything else that we can do."

The writer had expected that the U.S. would have full news of the invasion, because there had been some reports over the Voice of America. And then:

"I will try to tell you about the nightmare, that in such a short time our beloved country has been transformed into a place of hate, persecution, terror, where no Christian can live and no peace can endure. It is so sad, so incomprehensible."

The writer points out that Castro had a "terrific Russian and Czechoslovakian armament, 1,000 times better than Batista ever had."

"It was no mystery," the letter said. "We have seen Russian tanks pass by many times and we all knew he had MIGs . . . They (the invaders) came to land without any protection against airplanes. Apparently somebody had squealed, because they were waiting for them . . . The ships were sunk, the people were machine-gunned, they took a lot of prisoners."

The writer also points out that "the underground here didn't know of such an invasion and apparently they were waiting for some signal that never came through."

THE PRISONERS have "been presented by TV in a sort of a trial which has no precedent in the history of the world. In very special cases you could see some of these men had been dugged, some others looked like spies . . . In any event they have said that it was U.S. mercenaries, but we have seen that all of them were Cubans. They were not mercenaries or Americans. Many of them were very well-known people . . . many of them friends of ours and yours . . ."

And then the writer describes what happened in Havana the first night of the invasion:

"On that very first night they jailed thousands — all the people of whom they had a little bit of suspicion, and all the well-known Catholics from the Bishops to many, many priests, to all the leaders of Catholic organizations. We don't know yet how many because some people say that here in Havana there were near to 80,000. There were places where four or five thousand were put together."

"The families didn't know to which place they were being taken, and no food was given to them. This remained like that for the first two or three days, until little by little relatives found out where they were and brought them food."

THE WRITER reported that the government "kept on searching. Of course in some places they found arms, but in other places there were no such things. They then would take away the food, the money, the passports — anything they felt like taking away, including automobiles. It became a city of terror."

"Later they started to release the people they had arrested, but there are still many held by the government."

The letter then described the May 1 parade. "The propaganda was terrific and they made attendance compulsory to all. Not even American certificates were of any excuse not to go. They went to all the houses and asked them to sign whether they were going or not. Of course, the parade was fantastic and very large because everybody was forced to be there. There were about 100 Russian tanks there."

"In the evening Fidel Castro spoke on the socialistic republic of Cuba and said all kinds of things against the priests. He told them to start packing their things because the decree would come out to expel all the foreign priests except those who defend the revolution. The other point was that they were going to nationalize all the private schools, including the University of Villanueva."

"Castro said that religion cannot be taught in any place except in the church, and that only by being very careful not to conflict with politics. And, of course, here everything is politics, according to them. You cannot mention the Pope because 'the Pope is a Rome priest and he is a foreign priest.'"

"THE DECREE is not out yet," the letter continues. "However it is being applied already . . . All the parish schools have been taken by the government. The nuns have been isolated; sometimes you cannot go in or out of these places. The atmosphere is one of desolation. All of them are getting ready and have their papers in order to leave."

The writer noted that "I don't hear Fidel's speeches, so that I can keep my serenity," but "this morning I was told that Fidel said he is going to bring over at the end of this month 250 Hungarian priests. You can well imagine that these must be the Hungarian priests under the direct order of the Hungary government."

Regarding the schools, the letter says: "Many fathers are in a panic to take their children out of Cuba. It is a good thing that the classes are over an invisible way. Although I



## Our Lady, Queen of May

May, the month of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, climaxed with coronation ceremonies in parish churches. At Sacred Heart Cathedral, Father Gerald Appelby with members of the Sodality and school children led devotions to our Lady there. Many parishes enrolled new members in Sodality or Legion of Mary groups at similar rites.

because they are planning to organize the new schools so the children will not get any teaching which is Catholic. The Catholic teachers are in agony because they are told that they have to sign unconditionally with the revolution, and you know what they must teach and the Catholic conscience is against it."

The writer says that "the Catholic associations all have been taken, and in many cases they have destroyed everything they found in them. Everything is done by force."

The letter ends on a high spiritual note that indicates the fine Catholic background and mentality of the writer:

"WE CAN DO nothing but pray and offer to God these sufferings and ask Him to give us serenity and strength. You face whatever He wants each of us to face."

"I have been very lucky and think He has protected me in a way that I cannot describe."

have had to forget and leave many things I have loved very much, and for which I have fought all my life. It has been done for Him and this is the way He wants it, so I hope later I will have peace.

"What is going to happen here? Everybody is very pessimistic."

"It looks like it is our role to suffer all this to show the atmosphere, the kind of a regime this is, but inside my soul I am confident because this is in the hands of God, and I hope He will help us. I don't know how."

"The hope I imagine will have to come from whatever is agreed by the Organization of American States because the United States alone doesn't seem to be in the spirit of acting by itself militarily. This is not changed with words or speeches or papers. It will have to be changed by action. I can see that they are talking and they are holding meetings — and, meantime, this regime is

getting stronger and stronger every day, and the brainwashing is more and more every day, and the whole thing is going to be more and more difficult every day . . ."

"You will, of course, understand that another letter like this cannot be received . . . As I said, all my faith is in God. We are in the hands of God. Keep your spirits up and He will take care of us."

### Carmen Basilio Joins Genesee Brewing Co.

Carmen Basilio, former welterweight boxing champion of the World, has joined the sales department of The Genesee Brewing Co., Inc., Rochester, according to statement issued by John L. Wehle, brewery president.

Basilio, who recently accepted a position as physical culture instructor at LeMoyne College, Syracuse, will be a special representative for Genesee and work with the public relations department on special activities.

## Gis Donate Car For Nuns

Ulm, Germany — (RNS) — The U.S. Army's 41st Armored Infantry Battalion stationed here has donated an automobile to the nuns of the Good Shepherd Orphanage in this South German center.

THE MONEY was raised by the American servicemen after they noticed the nuns had to carry sick children to the local hospital. A fund campaign collected enough money to buy the car and to pay for the automobile tax and insurance for one year.

The unit also gave the nuns driving lessons.

It was another in a long series of lend-a-hand projects by American armed forces in Germany. They have helped in fund-raising drives for children's homes, assisted in building churches and "adopted" a number of church-affiliated institutions, supplying them with gifts of food and clothing.

Grant Given  
Jersey City, N.J. — (NC) — The Seton Hall College of Medicine has received a grant of \$7,083 from the American Medical Education Foundation. The foundation is sponsored by the American Medical Association. The grant will be used in special school projects or to offset expenses outside the college budget.

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## Meeting Airs Faith Differences

Paris — (RNS) — History was made when Roman Catholic prelates and French Protestant pastors held a meeting recently and thus broke four centuries of mutually imposed isolation.

The get-together took place at a reformed center of the French Reformed church located at Taize, on a hilltop overlooking the rich Burgundy countryside near the ruins of

the great medieval Abbey of Cluny.

Although the meeting was held toward the end of September, the first news of it was contained in an official statement which said the group had convened for discussion of mutual problems of evangelization in the parish and in the world at large.

The statement did not disclose any details of the discussions or the conclusions reached.

It said, however, that the Protestant pastors regarded the meeting as "an event of great importance and thank God for leading us toward visible unity."

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