



Office of the General Secretary

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*Most Reverend John L. May, D.D.*  
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November 8, 1989

Mr. Jose Antonio Arbesu Fraga  
Counselor  
Cuban Interests Section  
2630 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear Mr. Arbesu:

I write to express the concern of the U.S. Catholic Conference for the well-being of the three remaining historic plantados, Mario Chanes de Armas, Alfredo Mustelier Nuevo, and Ernesto Diaz Rodriguez, and to urge that they be finally set at liberty and permitted, should they so desire, to come to the United States.

Whatever offenses against the State they may be thought to have committed, they have surely suffered far too long. Each has been imprisoned more than twenty years, the maximum sentence at this time, I understand, for non-capital offenses. Indeed, Mr. Chanes has been in prison since 1961 and may be now the longest serving political prisoner in the Americas. In addition, Mr. Mustelier is reported to have begun a hunger strike over two weeks ago which, if continued, can only have direst consequences.

Consequently, I appeal to the humanitarian values which we share in asking that your Government restore these men to freedom at the earliest possible moment.

With sincere gratitude for your own efforts in this regard, I remain

Respectfully yours,

Reverend Monsignor Robert N. Lynch  
General Secretary