

The Cuban regime's elimination of detractors and opponents: in Cuba (Part I)

Since Raúl Castro became Cuba's "maximum leader" in July 2006 —after Fidel Castro's illness and retirement—, the number of mysterious "accidents," sudden mortal illnesses, alleged suicides and attempts on the lives of political opponents has multiplied. This coincides with the credibility and support, "normalization," that most of the world's democracies started affording the Cuban dictatorship. The regime's sense entitlement and impunity might explain this behavior.

Cuba Archive has documented the death or disappearance of numerous political opponents or detractors of the Cuban regime since 1959, both in Cuba and abroad. Many are shrouded in mysterious circumstances and some are in our database of documented cases given a presumption of state involvement (see database.CubaArchive.org). We have also received credible first-hand reports of seeming attempts against the lives of human rights' defenders, both in Cuba or abroad, who have survived. Systematic recording of these occurrences does not exist, but the number of occurrences appears to defy odds and points strongly to state-sponsored attempted killings.

The deliberateness and ultimate responsibility of most of these strange occurrences, with actual victims or lucky survivors, are very difficult to establish. Most leave no tracks and the perpetrators are seldom seen. In Cuba, the incidents are generally more brazen and the judiciary lacks independence and medical files, autopsy reports, and other forms of evidence are denied to the families or their legal representatives. When presumed targets survive, there is often no record to prove that the event even took place. Most incidents are usually dismissed or forgotten.

Opposition member **Juan Francisco Sigler**, who believes he was twice targeted, explained from Cuba in 2012: "We have no protection, no one to turn to for help. The police do nothing when we make claims — the perpetrators are the police." From Europe, **Miguel Sales** —a Cuban writer and former political prisoner who escaped one such attempt in Paris— illustrates the futility of seeking redress: "The perpetrator, if one were to be found, would have been a lowly hit man with no connection to Cuban espionage services, perhaps a marginal foreigner who had a few drinks that night and was probably driving without a license. In the worst case for him, a charge of involuntary manslaughter would entail a prison sentence of a few years that would turn into a few months thanks to sentencing reductions. He would then return to his country and get his payment. Twenty thousand dollars is not a lot in Paris, but it is a small fortune in Syria, Nicaragua, or Cameroon. Contrary to what we see in police flicks, the perfect crime does exist..."



A perpetrator came forward in the case of **Father Miguel Loredo**, a Cuban Catholic priest who died in exile in 2011. Father Loredo had served over nine years of political prison in Cuba in the 1960s, falsely accused of sheltering a counter-revolutionary at his church. After his release in 1976, the regime apparently continued to consider him a threat; he was a very charismatic and popular priest, especially among the young. In 1982, Loredo was run over by a truck during a daily walk he made from one church to another

in Havana. He survived badly injured. The driver was not prosecuted and years later went to ask Loredó for his forgiveness, confessing he had been forced into doing the sinister deed.

The Cuban regime's practice of eliminating opponents has been reported by former regime insiders and defectors; most are in hiding or changed identity for fear of becoming victims themselves. The surviving archives of totalitarian regimes of the former Soviet bloc have proof that Cuba's intelligence services joint training, strategies, and operations with the KGB, Stasi, and the political police of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and other Soviet bloc countries to repress and eliminate the opposition inside and outside Cuba. While most of these countries have built democratic societies since the fall of Communism, Cuba's repressive machinery remains in place and its Constitution and laws continue to disallow all activities contrary to the construction of communism and deny independent civil society actors any rights.

Over the course of six decades, the Cuban regime's preferences in the elimination of opponents have evolved. Just as in other former Communist regimes, the initial mass executions, overt extrajudicial killings, and widespread long-term political imprisonment gave way to a selective extermination of detractors using more sophisticated and covert tactics to diffuse international political pressure and gain access to global markets. From the 1970s onwards, political opponents mostly died in prison for induced health reasons, suicide, or hunger strike.

In 1971, a case stands out because it is exactly what the regime seeks to avoid. **José Ramón Guit Cruz**, a 16-year old who painted non-political graffiti in the city of Camagüey was arrested on trumped-up charges. This radicalized him and led him to organize public protests. After several more arrests, he was shot dead by police. The protesting crowd at his funeral was so large that the government had to send tanks to the streets to calm things down. This case explains why the killing of opponents is not overt.

Bad luck or extrajudicial killings?

Before 2006, there are few documented cases of opponents dying in mysterious circumstances. Three stand out:

- In 1975, **José Ángel Masó**, a political prisoner at the Kilo 5 1/2 prison of Pinar del Río who refused to attend political indoctrination sessions at the prison was subjected to daily injections of a mysterious substance that made him vomit. He died without receiving medical attention; prison officials claimed he died of a heart attack.

- In 1985, **Caridad Alpízar**, of Havana, was threatened by State Security agents with death if she continued collaborating with the incipient internal dissidence movement. They told her they knew she suffered from asthma and how easy it would be to asphyxiate her. A few days later, she was found dead at home. Her death certificate listed the cause of death as asphyxia from an asthma attack.

- In 1986, **Ormis Frometa**, had visited his brother, a political prisoner at Combinado del Este prison in Havana. Finding visible signs that his brother had been tortured, he told prison authorities he would denounce it internationally; they warned him not to do it or they would kill him. When he returned home to Guantánamo, he was run over by a truck.

Regime insiders

Historically, there has been a proliferation of suspicious heart attacks and alleged suicides of estranged regime insiders. The list of disaffected regime insiders who died mysteriously is long; some cases follow.

Javier de Varona, State Security headquarters, Havana, October 30, 1969

The 34-year-old leading member of the Communist Youth Party was arrested for his role in an infiltration of anti-regime elements into Cuba and died under interrogation, reportedly having committed suicide.



Manuel Méndez, State Security headquarters, San-ta Clara, July 29, 1971

The 35-year-old officer of the Ministry of the Interior (MININT) and President of the Revolutionary Tribunal of Santa Clara was arrested in July 1971; no explanation was given to the family. He died 29 days later, still in custody, of a gunshot wound to the chest. The government claimed it was a suicide. His widow believes he was assassinated; she later learned that he was a suspect in a plot to reform the political system.

Rodrigo Rojo, Paris, France, September 1975

The 35-year-old was found with his throat slit in Paris. He was on an official mission for Cuba and reportedly planning to defect. Another Cuban reportedly died that day, another government employee.



Rafael Alvarez, Havana, August 6, 1989

The head of the Finance Department of the Ministry of the Interior who allegedly committed suicide in the aftermath of the Ochoa trial and the purge of the Ministry of the Interior.

Enrique Cicard, alias Micky Solís, Havana, September 7, 1989

The head of the Illegals Department of MININT reportedly shot himself in the neck in September 1989 after having publicly criticized the firing squad execution of Tony de La Guardia.

José Abrantes, Guanajay prison, Pinar del Río, January 21, 1991

The former Division General of the Armed Forces and former Interior Minister had been sentenced to 20 years of prison during the General Ochoa/Ministry of the Interior purge of 1989. Defectors reported he had been subjected to a special nutrition regime to weaken him, that toxins were being added to his food and that concentrated doses and shots of potassium and digoxin had been administered to provoke a heart attack. Reportedly, he was finished off in the ambulance to the hospital, asphyxiated with a

pillow. No autopsy was performed and the family was not allowed to see the body.

Manuel Piñeiro, Havana, March 12, 1998

The 63-year old longtime head of Cuba's intelligence services had retired in 1992 purportedly for straying from regime orthodoxies. It was officially reported that he had been in a single-vehicle accident after fainting at the wheel while returning home from a reception in Havana. Though only suffering minor injuries, he had been kept in the hospital "for observation," but then died in his bed of a heart attack. A day before the accident, his bodyguard-driver had been instructed to take time off. Defectors reported that he had announced he was writing his memoirs and just knew too much.

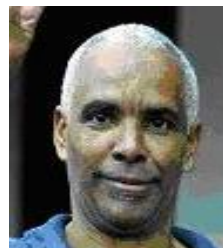
Fidel Castro Díaz-Balart, Personal Security Clinic, Havana, February 1, 2018

Nuclear physicist and eldest son of late Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro reported by Cuban state-run media to have committed suicide while being treated for depression. Media sources claimed he had thrown himself from the heavily-guarded 4th floor of a Havana clinic that is for the exclusive use of the high Cuban nomenklatura. No official information was provided and his immediate family members have not spoken publicly. Following his father's death, rumors had it that his children were being sidelined in favor of Raúl Castro's children.

The Raúl Castro Period

I. Death and disappearance of 27 political opponents in strange "accidents" or by alleged or induced suicides and health conditions: July 2006 to date.

Following are profiles of opponents to the Cuban regime killed or disappeared with varying degrees of intimation of state involvement.



Miguel Valdés, Havana, January 10, 2007

In 2003 the 50-year-old prisoner of conscience was sentenced to 15 years of prison in 2003. After just one year and one month of his sentence, he was

suddenly released due to a heart condition. However, he was denied permission to leave the country for medical treatment in Holland or the United States, countries for which he had visas, and was repeatedly threatened and harassed by State Security agents, even receiving a brutal beating by a 'Rapid Response Brigade' (government-organized paramilitary group). Just in the month of October 2006, he was picked up by police on several occasions, subjected to interrogations, beaten in the chest and head, and had his money seized. From December 31, 2006 to January 5, 2007 he was in intensive therapy for his heart condition at a Havana hospital, however, he was moved to a regular room to await treatment. Denied water for two days, the doctor ordered all patients in his room discharged. On January 10th, he died after allegedly suffering two heart attacks.

Luis Lima Machado, Havana, October 23, 2007

The dissident was found dead by hanging at his home. He had been suffering emotional problems that had been exacerbated by constant harassment from authorities.

Liborio Borroto, Jatibonico, November 19, 2007

The human rights' activist was run over by a horse-drawn cart. Earlier that day, three Communist Party members had visited his home to threaten him for placing stickers with the word "change" on the walls of his house, but he had then visited his son and insisted he was more committed than ever to the human rights struggle.



Roberto Franco Alfaro, Havana, May 20, 2009

Franco was member of the peaceful opposition group Movimiento 20 de Mayo (20th of May Human Rights Movement), named for the anniversary of Cuba's independence. He had been threatened with his disappearance by State Security if he did not abandon his opposition activities. On May 20th 2009, he left his home very early to go fishing from the shore nearby and told his wife he would be back by noon. He never returned and nothing is known of his whereabouts.



Alberto Sigas, Havana, January 1, 2010

The 32-year-old had been a policeman disaffected with the regime who had joined a peaceful civil society group. State Security agents began harassing him repeatedly and threatened him with his disappearance unless he abandoned his opposition activities. One morning, he left home to visit his mother's home at a nearby neighborhood but never made it. He was seen in the company of an individual the family later learned was a State Security collaborator or agent. His wife went to the local police station to inquire about him. Three days later, she received a call from the station informing her that her husband was being held at State Security headquarters, Villa Marista, and would be released in 48 to 72 hours. He was never heard from again and the authorities claim he was not in detention and deny knowing of his whereabouts.



Juan Wilfredo Soto, Santa Clara, May 8, 2011

Soto was member of a small group of peaceful opponents and assisted political prisoners. He had served three prison sentences for political causes such as "enemy propaganda." Soto was talking with friends during their regular morning gathering at a local park when a policeman approached only him, asked for his ID, and ordered him to leave. He refused and was hand-cuffed, brutally beaten by four uniformed policemen, and detained for three hours. Three days later he died from a pancreatitis caused by the beating, which the Cuban government denied despite the numerous witnesses. Opposition groups in Cuba and Amnesty International, among others, called for an investigation. Witnesses and relatives handed evidence over to authorities, but an investigation was not opened. Family members were pressured into silence by authorities.

Daysi Talavera Ortiz, Matanzas, January 2011

The human rights activist had served a 2-year prison sentence (2008-2010) for placing a poster

on the door of her home that read: "Freedom without exile for political prisoners and prisoners of conscience." In prison, she had been kept in a punishment cell with no sunlight. After her release, State Security agents had threatened her and, on several occasions, terrorized her by driving cars towards her. She died after being hit by a car in the city of Cárdenas, Matanzas, in the early morning hours.



Laura Pollán, Havana, October 14, 2011

The 63-year-old leader of the renown Ladies in White opposition movement died of a sudden and unexplained illness. Laura was healthy and active when she became increasingly ill with chills, vomiting, joint pain, and fever. Twenty days earlier she had been bitten and pinched by a government-led mob against her and a group of Ladies in White. Medical tests failed to deliver a cause or diagnosis. Her condition worsened and she was hospitalized under State Security control. A week later, State Security agents laughed out loud in front of the family when her death was announced. Her body was taken for cremation a few hours later. Her death certificate stated as cause of death ailments that were not life threatening. Those close to the events suspect Laura had been poisoned or inoculated with a biological agent and finished off at the hospital. In 2009, Laura had been riding in a car when a vehicle crashed into their car, forced it off the road, and sped away. Since 2009, several Ladies in White had reported developing physical ailments soon after being pricked with needles by regime supporters.

Sergio Díaz Larrástegui, Havana, April 19, 2012

Because the home of this blind activist had served as headquarters of a human rights' group, he had been expelled from his workplace and threatened with death by State Security. He enjoyed good health when he suddenly fell ill and was admitted to the hospital under State Security control. A hepatic cirrhosis was diagnosed, which can be caused by alcohol or chemicals (certain medications, viruses, and toxic metals), however, he never drank alcohol or had taken any medication. After ten days, he was sent home without medical treatment but soon became very ill again and was taken to the hospital, where he

died under State Security custody. The doctor was reportedly very nervous and said he did not know what Diaz had died of.

Oswaldo Payá and Harold Cepero, Bayamo, Granma province, Cuba, July 22, 2012

The 60-year-old Payá was Cuba's foremost dissident leader and founder of the Christian Liberation Movement. He was killed with the 32-year-old Cepero, an activist in his movement, in or after what was reported as a car crash in a desolate road of eastern Cuba. They were on their way to investigate a cholera outbreak with two foreigners, who survived unhurt but were threatened with long years of prison. The driver, a Spanish lawyer, was sentenced to 4 years of prison for homicide in a trial lacking due process of law. When a year and a half later he was allowed to finish serving his sentence in Spain, he denied the "official version" that his speeding car had hit a tree, insisting they had been forced off the road by a pursuing car. The other passenger, a Christian Democratic Youth leader, had sent text messages to Sweden indicating they were being followed and had been forced off the road. He was several days in



isolation, but when Swedish authorities negotiated his release he claimed having no memory of

the crash. Independent autopsies were not allowed and autopsy reports have been denied to both families; the death certificates do not cite cause of death. An investigation by the New York-based Human Rights Foundation concluded that the alleged accident did not occur as per the official version and that the evidence strongly suggested direct government responsibility. Shortly before his death, Payá and his wife had been traveling in their van in the outskirts of Havana when a vehicle forcefully hit it from behind, flipping it, but the couple had escaped serious injury.

Maximiliano Abreu, Ramón Estrada, Omar Pérez, Isidro Sánchez, and Alfredo Torres disappeared from Camaguey, Cuba, December 17, 2013

The five friends attempted to flee the island by boat and were never heard of again. Omar was an

independent journalist who had been repeatedly harassed, detained, and interrogated by State Security and threatened with a long prison sentence. His relatives believe they were entrapped and forcibly disappeared by state authorities.

Leonardo González Álvarez, Havana, January 24, 2014

Leonardo had emigrated to the U.S. on October 2011 but had returned to Cuba to visit his mother and decided to seek repatriation. Two months later he was attacked with a pipe and severely beaten on the head. He spent 8 months in a coma before dying. According to the family, he was killed because he had information of police corruption and the police knew who the assassins were.

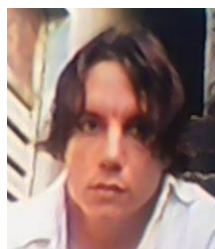
Vicente Medrano, Guantánamo, May 2014

The 58-year-old was found at home with his throat slit. State authorities had threatened him with death for expressing his gratitude publicly all over town to a peaceful opposition movement, UNPACU, for repairing his roof after Hurricane Sandy. The killing happened very close to a permanent police security ring surrounding the UNPACU headquarters of Guantánamo.



Yunisledy López Rodríguez, Las Tunas, September 26, 2014.

The 23-year-old mother of two small children was an activist in the Civics and Truth Movement. State Security was harassing her and trying to evict her and her children from their home. She had told fellow dissident Sirley Avila that her boyfriend, a regime agent, had been ordered to murder her and had also faced death threats from individuals she believed were linked to the state (which she denounced to police). Two days later, a man entered her house and stabbed her 18 times in front of her two children. Several months later, in May 2015, Sirley Avila was brutally attacked with a machete and lost a hand and endured severe injuries to the legs.



Addys Calzadilla, Holguín, June 25, 2015

The 33-year-old plastic artist committed suicide as a result of persistent police harassment. He wrote the word "Fidel" with his blood before he died.

Angel Herrera Oviedo, Havana province, February 17, 2016

The independent journalist and librarian was found dead at a beach with his hands and feet tied with his own belt.

Yusnel Contrera Kirskourt, Las Tunas, Cuba, July 28, 2016

Yusnel was shot to death by four police agents who had gone to arrest him after receiving a prison sentenced of 4 years even though he had not been charged with any crimes. According to a neighbor, the four agents were drunk.



Jorge Linares, Camaguey, November 14, 2016

The 67-year-old independent journalist and former political prisoner died three weeks after suffering a heart attack. He had been systematically harassed by State Security and felt ill after an argument with a State Security agent. First taken to a local clinic, then transferred to the Naval Hospital, he was harassed and interrogated even at the hospital. He died after being released from the hospital after eleven days despite not feeling better and over his objections and that of his friends.

Arcelio Molina Leyva, Havana, November 15, 2016

The human rights activist died in the early morning hours impaled on a fence after falling from the roof of his home. It was



reported he had been depressed and some people suggested he committed suicide, others suspected state action. He was a very active member of the Patriotic Union of Cuba (UNPACU), tended to political prisoners, and hosted the Western headquarters of the organization at his home.



Adrián Sosa Blanco, Havana, March 7, 2017

Cuban dissident found dead at his home cyanotic from head to shoulders and with a swollen abdomen. The cause of death was certified as a pulmonary

The cause of death was certified as a pulmonary thrombosis, although an autopsy was not performed, as is customary in Cuba, and his relatives insist he was in good health. Sosa was member of two peaceful opposition groups (banned in Cuba), and had endured consistent repression from authorities.

Ada María López, Havana, December 12, 2017

Member of the peaceful opposition group Ladies in White who, while in good health, died unexpectedly at the age of 54. A brain stroke was reported as the cause of death but circumstances were unclear. A participant of peaceful marches and activities of the Ladies in White, she had been violently repressed by police on multiple occasions and had received blows to the head. In June 2015 a mass mob had beaten her and she had lost several teeth. Her son claimed his mother was killed by the state.



Alexei Pécora Ravel, Santiago de Cuba, September 3, 2018

The member of opposition group UNPACU reportedly died of a brain hemorrhage that may have resulted from having been hit in

2012 with a vehicle by order of the political police. In 2015 he began to suffer strong headaches that persisted and culminated in his death. State

Security agents prevented fellow human rights defenders from attending his funeral.

II. 8 political prisoners died from induced medical conditions or alleged suicide: July 2006 to date.

Jesús Marquez, Department of State Security, Santa Clara August 5, 2006

Jesús had been arrested by the Cuban Border Guard for attempting to escape the country with twenty other people (their boat was rammed and forced to stop). Authorities reported he hanged himself with a sheet after being told he could be facing up to twenty years in prison. His family and friends believe he was murdered but were pressured by authorities to stop investigating his death.

Manuel Acosta Larena, police station in Aguada de Pasajeros, Cienfuegos province, June 24, 2007

The 47 year-old political prisoner had been detained for “pre-criminal social dangerousness” for gathering signatures to free all political prisoners. He was found dead in his cell hanging by his own pants. He was in good mental health and had never give any suicidal inclinations. His widow lost their house as punishment for denouncing his death.

Jorge Betancourt, National Center of the Technical Department of Investigation 100 and Aldabó, Havana, July 31, 2007



The 52-year-old had been arrested and held for repeated interrogations. A week later, when his family was able to visit for ten minutes, his wife noted that he had lost weight and was nervous and depressed. He told her that he had no appetite and was unable to sleep. Three days later, he was transported to the hospital, where he died.

Harold Brito Parra, Las Tunas Provincial prison, February 12, 2011

The 38 year-old political prisoner, died at the hospital soon after his transfer from prison in grave condition and without receiving required intensive care. According to authorities, he died of a

pulmonary edema after swallowing pills. The family had long claimed he was not receiving proper medical care for a tuberculosis acquired in prison and that the doctors had improperly reported he was suffering from severe mental health problems rather than tuberculosis. Harold was serving his 16th year of prison; at age 13, he had been accused of "ideological divergence" for his taste for rock music. From then on, he had been subjected to continuing harassment and successive detentions by authorities for disobedience, resistance, and dangerousness that culminated with a sentence for robbery with violence.

Yoelvis Delgado Albelo, Kilo 8 prison, Camaguey, April 21, 2011

The 25 year-old former soldier of the Ministry of Interior had been sentenced to life in prison at age 20 in 2007 for insubordination, attempted illegal exit from the national territory, desertion, disrespect to authorities and many other charges. He was serving his sentence in a strict prison regime, had repeatedly denounced abuses and torture in the treatment of prisoners and was often sent to punishment cells. Fellow prisoners reported he had grown incapable of facing further ill treatment and continued imprisonment. His body was found hanging in his cell the night of April 21st 2011. Earlier that day, he had told his mother that he had attempted suicide. Her request from prison authorities for medical attention for her son had gone ignored.



Darío Andino, Red Berets Military Unit, Cienfuegos, November 18, 2014

The 18-year-old had been completing his obligatory military service, enduring conditions known to be extremely harsh. While out on pass, he and some neighbors took to sea with in a rustic vessel attempting to flee Cuba. Five days later, after a sea ordeal, they were rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard and returned to Cuba. After several days in a hospital, he was imprisoned for deserting his military service and kept in isolation. Transferred to a punishment cell and left incommunicado, several days later authorities reported he had hanged himself with a sheet. Prisoners, however, are not allowed sheets or garments in punishment cells.

Hamell Mas, Combinado del Este prison, Havana, February 24, 2017



The 45-year-old member of the opposition group UNPACU had been imprisoned since June 2016 for disrespect ("desacato") and public disobedience after participating in a peaceful protest in Havana. Awaiting trial for which prosecution was asking a 4-year prison sentence, prison authorities informed the family he had died of a heart attack. Four days earlier his wife had visited in prison, found him to have lost around 35 pounds in three weeks and learned he allegedly had a kidney infection for which he was not receiving medical treatment. Mas had never had kidney problems.

Marcos Rivera Arma, Canaleta Provincial Prison, Ciego de Avila, July 23, 2017

Member of an opposition group accused with ten relatives of killing cattle after stating an anti-government protest. His family was told he had died of a heart attack but they do not believe it. He had been threatened with death by prison authorities on several occasions and he was just hours away from completing his sentence.

Survivors of strange "accidents"

Following are selected accounts of mysterious incidents believed to have been deliberately caused by state agents. Cuba Archive has received even more similar accounts.



Ladies in White co-founder, **Dolia Leal**, survived a furtive car accident in 2007. She had been warned by a State Security agent to tone down her activism or she could suffer a car accident.

About 20 days later, in June 2007, she was a passenger in her neighbor's car on the way to the Combinado del Este prison of Havana to visit her husband. A car traveling in the opposite direction reportedly made a U-Turn and crashed into their vehicle at high speed; the driver was reportedly a German citizen in a rental car. Dolia, riding in the

back seat, suffered the brunt of the impact and lost consciousness. She suffered multiple facial and bodily blows, a bitten tongue, cuts to her lips, and a vitreous detachment in the right eye. After the accident, the German was not to be found and Germany's diplomats in Havana first said they had no reports of accidents by their nationals and later told her they could not discuss the case. Cuban authorities never responded to Dolia's request for an investigation.

Since 2007, **Juan Francisco Sigler**, head of the extra-official opposition group *Movimiento Opción Alternativa* of Matanzas province has escaped two attempts to run him over. On January 25, 2007, he was heading for work riding his bicycle around 6AM, while it was still dark and foggy. He heard a car approaching at great speed and turned his head to look as it struck his bike. The brunt of the impact hit a supply box mounted on the bike, which he believes saved his life. As he lay sprawled on the ground, the car pulled over a few yards ahead in the deserted road with the lights off. Two men and one woman began yelling insults and these statements: "You were lucky this time, but we will squash you." "Mercenary, we are going to kill you." He suffered blows to the head and stomach and went to a clinic for treatment. Three months later, in broad daylight a white car he recognized as part of the Matanzas government fleet attempted to run him over on the highway as he was walking his disabled bicycle. He managed to duck, but the car went over the bike's tire and sped away.



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Wilber Sigler Gonzalez, age 37, is the son of Juan Francisco Sigler, whose case is discussed above. The extended Sigler family is well known for its brave and unrelenting activism in Cuba's peaceful opposition movement. In early 2012, a known regime official from Matanzas attempted to run him over with a truck, but he was able to duck by bolting towards the curb. The perpetrator stopped, stuck his head out the window to take a look, and sped away. Many people on the street witnessed the incident and yelled at the driver.

Dagoberto Santana, member of the Executive Board of the *Movimiento Opción Alternativa* of Matanzas, was heading home in his bicycle after visiting his mother on Mother's Day, May 13th 2012. A car hit him from behind and he was thrown to the curb. As he lay there stunned, the man driving the vehicle stopped and started yelling at him "lackey of the empire" and other insults.

No to impunity!

The Cuban regime has consistently demonstrated its disregard for fundamental human rights including the right to life and security. Having employed duplicity and terror to silence its detractors for decades, it continues to enjoy widespread impunity. Individuals, governments and institutions ought to demand comprehensive investigations of the above cases. Reputable experts (local and international) must be given full access to witnesses, family members, medical records, and other material evidence and documentation. If suspicions of state involvement prove well founded, the Cuban regime should be held fully accountable.

**See details of all cases cited above at
database.CubaArchive.org**


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