



Juan Pérez Cabrera, 36, was killed for resisting the extraction of his blood before his execution on April 15, 1963 at Boniato prison in Santiago de Cuba

Juan was from Camagüey. For eight months he and a fellow resistance member had hidden at his brother's house, fearing for their lives. When they learned that a neighbor was going to report them, Juan's brother drove them to Guantánamo to try to reach the United States naval base and request asylum. They were captured, the friend was shot dead, and Juan's face was rubbed in his friend's blood. The friend's name is unknown; he was only 18 years old and was from Bayamo, his nom de guerre in the resistance was Andrés and his surname Rodríguez.

Juan's brother managed to escape but the authorities had his license plate and captured him in Bayamo. He was sentenced to prison, tortured (almost losing his sight), and ended up serving five years in prison. Juan was tortured during the three months he was imprisoned before he was killed. When the family visited him, they found him in terrible shape. As he was taken for his execution, he resisted having his blood drained and was fatally shot in the forehead. Cuba used to extract blood from those sentenced to death before their execution and sold it to other countries for hard currency. The prisoners were taken to the execution wall practically unconscious.

Juan left a wife and four children.

*Sources: Written and telephone testimony of Juan's sister-in-law, Mirtha Pérez, 2005 and 2006. Testimony of the doctor who was present when the blood was drawn. Inter-American Human Rights Commission, OEA / Ser. L / V / II.17, Doc. 4, April 7, 1967. Report on the situation of Human Rights in Cuba, <http://www.cidh.org/countryrep/Cuba67sp/indice.htm>. Juan Clark, *Cuba: Myth and Reality*, 2nd edition. Miami-Caracas: Saeta Ediciones, 1992. <http://database.cubaarchive.org/case-record-simple-search/8956/>*

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