

# *The last journalist assassinated in Cuba*

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**The last journalist assassinated in Cuba, with Fidel Castro. (Photo: RHC file)**

Those of us who support the work of the United Nations remember well that November 2nd was proclaimed as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.

Therefore, I believe this is an important date to remember and pay tribute to the last journalist murdered in Cuba -- the young Ecuadorian Carlos Bastidas Argüello -- who was assassinated in Havana on May 13, 1958, only a few months before the end of Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship.

Journalist Carlos Bastidas was murdered at the age of 23 by a hitman of Batista's tyranny named Orlando Marrero -- alias "Gallo Ronco" -- a thug with extensive criminal records who was subordinated directly to Brigadier General Pilar Garcia, Chief of the National Police of Batista's regime.

Obviously, the secret services of the tyranny knew that Carlos Bastidas had been in Sierra Maestra for approximately two months, where he collaborated with Radio Rebelde broadcasts under the name of Atahualpa Recio, and made it clear that he sympathized with rebel groups under the command of Fidel Castro that fought for national liberation.

Once there, Carlos Bastidas met with Argentinian journalist Jorge Ricardo Masetti, founder of Prensa Latina News Agency in 1959, who in his book entitled "LOS QUE LUCHAN Y LOS QUE LLORAN," affirms that the young Ecuadorian journalist fell in love with the Cuban Revolution.

The perpetrators of Bastidas' assassination -- Orlando Marrero and his boss General Pilar Garcia -- fled to Miami after the Cuban Revolution came to power. Miami is a perfect place to escape justice, and they joined other criminals who had served Batista's dictatorship, some of whom had been part of Brigade 2506, defeated in April 1961 in Playa Giron, the Bay of Pigs.

The murder of Carlos Bastidas Argüello was one of the bloody events that guaranteed the promotion of Pilar García to the rank of Brigadier General on August 10, 1958. A man with a woman's name and the soul of a criminal.

Most of the murderers and corrupt people who served Batista's regime for 7 years managed to leave the country and found refuge in the United States.

For this reason, and as to ensure the historical memory, we recall the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. This is our tribute to the young Ecuadorian journalist Carlos Bastidas Argüello, whose remains lie in Havana's cemetery, and is seen as the honorable successor of Ecuadorian National Hero Eloy Alfaro.

Written by Pedro Martínez Pérez

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