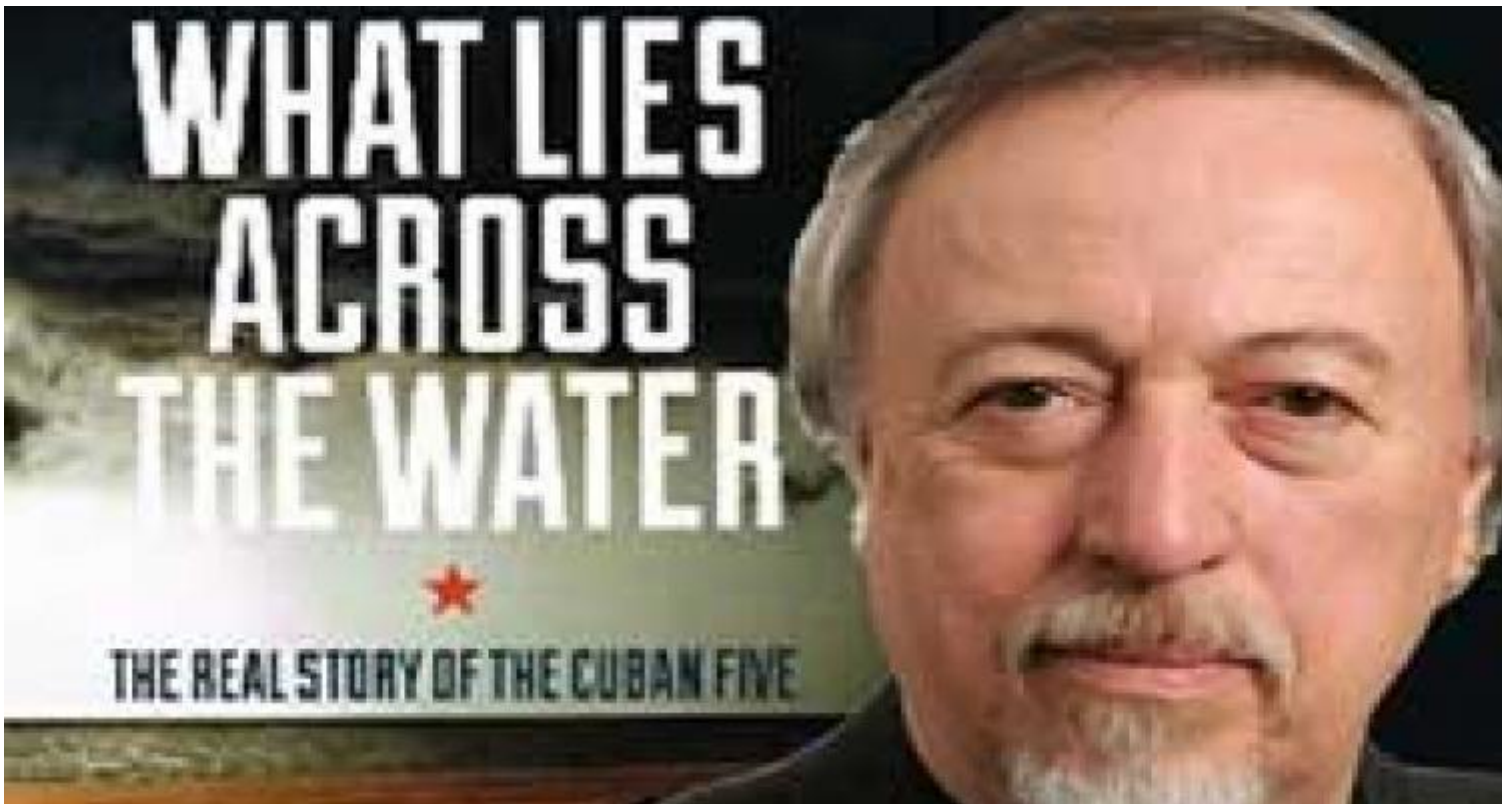


Canadian Writer Highlights “Selfless Friendship” of Cuba's Solidarity Groups



Halifax, Canada, January 5 (RHC)-- In the sweet afterglow of last month's historic rapprochement between the United States and Cuba, much has been made of the pivotal roles played by Pope Francis, the Canadian government, New York Times editorial writers, various American politicians and their aides, even "sperm diplomacy," Canadian author Stephen Kimber wrote in an article published by Counterpunch newsletter on Monday.

Kimber said everything was true, but added that "there are many other narratives in this larger tale too, perhaps none more compelling than the against-all-odds, never-say-never global campaign to free the Cuban Five." For a decade and a half, small, dedicated, disparate, sometimes competing groups of political activists in the United States and around the world have demonstrated, lobbied, lettered, conferenced, tribunaled, ... in a seemingly quixotic quest to win the release of five imprisoned Cuban men.

Kimber stated that none of 2015's hopeful rest might be possible, however, if not for the efforts of that eclectic collection of progressive political activists, Hollywood celebrities and ordinary people who refused to allow the story of the Five and the injustice against them to be forgotten.

The National and International committees weren't the only groups involved. Cuba Solidarity organizations in many American cities had already formed their own local Free the Five sub-committees. Similar groups sprouted in Latin America and Europe. Vancouver's Committee to Free the Five, for example, was especially active, staging more than 100 monthly, fifth-of-every-month protests in front of the U.S. consulate to keep up the pressure.

If the efforts of those solidarity activists and organizations around the world are now largely ignored by the U.S. press, the Cubans did not forget.

Stephen Kimber, a Professor of Journalism at the University of King's College in Halifax, Canada, is the author of [**What Lies Across the Water: The Real Story of the Cuban Five.**](#)

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