

I spent a fair amount of time with anti-Castro Cubans and Cubans who came to this country prior to Castro's victory and, as it may be difficult for Americans to understand how the Bosch mind works, it was difficult for me to understand all but a couple of these people because their minds worked like Bosch's. With very few exceptions they all appear to be nuts to us except, perhaps, to those Americans with political sympathy for them. The lawyer Bill Martin, on Garrison's staff and who still had an accent, took me one night to visit one whose name I've forgotten and who worked in the Ochsner hospital and who spoke as Bosch does. When they talked about Carlos Pringuier they referred to him as "el estupides." Martin explained to me that this did not mean "stupid." It means "the stupidity." Nutty as many of the others were, they had this opinion of Pringuier. Most considered the insignificant gestures they made were important in their opposition to Castro and except for alignment with the radical right, which enlarged the audience that heard them, it was all entirely futile and really meaningless. But not to them. Bosch differed in being able to ~~cause~~ cause more damage but the added hurt for which he is responsible was and is without any real significance. Except to him and those who think as he does and did. Their internecine warfare, which began almost as soon as they were in this country, wiped many of them out. In their political differences they certainly did more harm to themselves than they did to Castro, and the other violence from them was great. Those who'd been trained by the CIA used that training and, on occasion, some of the explosives they had not use for the CIA and had kept.

The Warrior Without

In a Fla. Prison, Orlando Bosch Faces Deportation and Remembers

By Paul Hendrickson
Washington Post Staff Writer

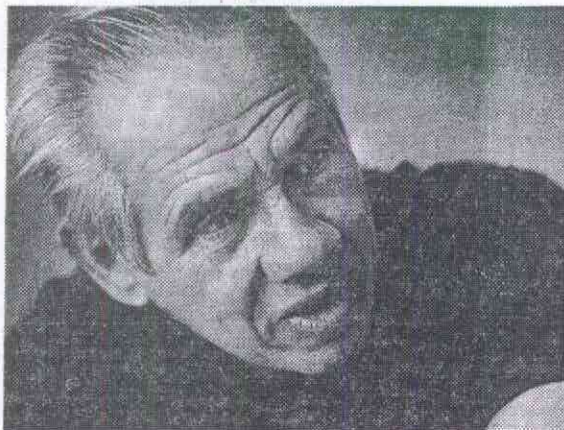
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MIAMI

“**D**octor to soldier,” the sorrowful-looking man in the prison-issue green is saying, almost as if no one else were here with him in this tight and airless little visiting booth where the talk has now been going on for nearly three hours, sometimes fevered and wonderful and sometimes as circular and scratchy as an old record stuck on terminal replay.

“How can this be? A doctor saves lives. He is the healer. A soldier kills, he is the destroyer. The conversion of doctor to soldier is something very hard to understand in a man, no?”

Yes. Orlando Bosch, Cuban baby doctor turned mythic defender of the struggle against Castro, doesn't really help with the paradox, instead says only this: “It was my duty to my motherland, to 10 million people.” And then he brings his



Bosch at his prison interview.

BY JAMES A. PARCELL—THE WASHINGTON POST

ex-pediatrician's hands up to his eyes and rubs fists into the sockets.

He is 63 now, and poorly, and scheduled for deportation, and he seems no more scary than some old broken *abuelo*, which is the word for “grandfather.” But looks can deceive with Orlando Bosch, MD, and riddles can come wrapped in riddles. Conundrum.

Actually, the hands alone would bring you straight to the former identity. They are long and tapered, smooth on the undersides, almost ladylike in their softness, the index fingers slender as Macanudo cigars. These hands once ministered to squalling infants and their worried mamas in the town of Santa Clara in the province of Las Villas on a narrow Caribbean curve of sand called Cuba. But that was a long time ago, before *el exilio*, before *la lucha*. *La lucha* means “the struggle,” although the English words are a pale substitute. Such a mellifluous little phrase, *la lucha*, such an impenetrable idea, at least for *norteamericanos*. Because if you are truly given over to *la lucha*, as Orlando Bosch has always been, then you'll throw away everything—home, profession, children, wife, health, friends, maybe even your sanity—in its pursuit.

“I know there are times when it seemed as though I was crazy,” he says. The “r” in crazy bearing a kind of trilled elegant little roll.

Crazy? Might an *hombre notorio* be alluding to the time he got arrested for towing a homemade radio-controlled torpedo through downtown Miami during rush hour? (This was '64, and what Dr. Bosch had in mind was never quite made clear, except of course blowing up Fidel or something connected with him.) Crazy? How about the time a physician in a Caddy convertible got stopped by Collier County police for transporting six 100-pound surplus aerial practice bombs across the Tamiami Trail toward the west coast of Florida? (This one was April '66, and the bombs turned out not to be duds, as many Bosch bombs have through the years.) Crazy? What about the day he tried to knock over a Polish freighter in the blue foam of Biscayne Bay with a jerry-built bazooka (*El Fanatico* got a sentence of 10 years in a federal pen; this was 1968. At the trial it came out that he'd crouched for hours with a *compadre* in the bushes of the median strip of the

a Country

His Long Struggle Against Castro



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bosch in 1968, right, with an unidentified U.S. marshal after his arrest on charges of threatening destruction of ships and planes.

MacArthur Causeway, then rose up with this crude plumber's pipe of a weapon balanced on his shoulder. It was all because he thought the boat was going to trade with Fidel.)

But that's history. Orlando Bosch, who doesn't much use the MD initials anymore, is apparently about to leave America for good, though not by his own will. An order for deportation by the Justice Department is in effect, but this doesn't settle the matter completely. For one thing, it depends in large measure on finding a country that's willing to accept him. The leaving, if it occurs at all, and there are those who doubt it will, could come as early as tomorrow morning, though it could also come six months from now, or even at a date beyond that. No one seems to know for sure.

For the past 23 months, ever since he returned on his own to Miami from Venezuela (where he'd been held in jail for more than a decade on charges, never proved, of blowing up

See BOSCH, B4, Col. 1

BOSCH, From B1

he of Fidel's airliners off Barbados in 1976), Orlando Bosch—arch-enemy of Castro, arch-symbol of the once-militant Cuban in exile—has been fighting his expulsion by the U.S. government.

Bosch reappeared in this country two years ago to voluntarily face charges stemming from a 1974 parole violation. According to Bosch's friends and family and attorneys, his relief at the time of his return was that he would settle the probation violation, serve what time was ordered, and then become a free man in America.

But things haven't worked out that way. Almost immediately after detaining Bosch upon his arrival at Miami International Airport on Feb. 16, 1988, government officials began stating their intention to deport him as an "excludable alien."

In the nearly two years since, the interim decisions and appeals and overrulings in Bosch's case have been playing themselves out, mostly in south Florida federal courts. Bosch himself has been held in a special secure unit of the Metropolitan Correctional Center southwest of Miami. He has been a presence felt if not seen in south Florida, where there are more than half a million Cuban exiles, and where old passions can still ignite at almost mere mention of the five-letter word "Bosch." Many people in the press have wanted to speak to him since his return, but until recently he has not broken his silence.

His attorneys say that the appeals and overturns in his case could have continued for another two or three years. They were willing to take the case to the Supreme Court to try to secure Bosch's release and political asylum in America. They insist his firebrand ways are over, that he is now just an old man who wants to go home to his family. But Bosch himself has grown weary of his "judicial limbo" and notified his lawyers that he declined any further chance to appeal, and so the State Department, having been handed the case by Justice, is now actively seeking a country to accept him. This much can be said: That country won't be Cuba. Bosch would be dead before he got off the tarmac in Havana, or at least that is the conventional wisdom, not only in the exile community of south Florida, but in the labyrinthine corridors of Washington.

As it is, Bosch believes he'll be

dead anyway—whether he ends up in Zimbabwe or the Dominican Republic. Castro and his henchmen are sworn to find him, he says. He has long been declared an enemy of the state in Cuba.

"Bosch is under an order of deportation," Robert Morley, a State Department officer, said recently. "Justice has asked us to identify a country willing to receive him. And we're actively looking for one. We're not going to send him to Cuba. We've said that. So far we haven't had any affirmative responses, but on the other hand we haven't heard from everybody, either."

That's U.S. officialdom talking. But here's a deportee in the Metropolitan Correctional Center talking: "I wish to die with dignity. This is not living. Suppose I live two years, five years more? In any case I don't think I will be 70. And then I would die like a convict. At least this way I will be leaving a message. I have been very worried to leave a message of my conduct to my son, to my daughter, to my people. Simon Bolivar said, 'It is best to have a risky freedom than to be a slave for certain.' And that's what I have here."

And then he adds: "I have no hope—this country, that country. What does it matter? The warrior had come back to America to rest." He pauses. "But now, they are sending me out." He pauses again. "For my death."

Warrior to rest. Who is this man—zealot, terrorist, bungler, self-aggrandizer, menace, absurdity, thug, prophet, mystic, hero, the last counter-revolutionary, the final exile joke? All have been alleged, all have seemed to fit the persona at one time or another. There are a thousand contradictions.

"You know," he had said a moment ago, leaning forward in a perfect seriousness through his stale captive air, a kind of bow in his guttural voice, "when I see an older man in jail, I really have a bad impression. So please, if you can, accept my personal apology for having to meet you today under these circumstances."

Conundrum. "Orlando Bosch has for more than 30 years been resolute and unwavering in his advocacy of terrorist violence," then-acting Associate Attorney General Joe Whitley said last summer in announcing an order for deportation. "Bosch has advocated, encouraged, organized and par-

ticipated in terrorist violence in this country as well as various other countries. He has repeatedly expressed and demonstrated a willingness to cause indiscriminate injury and death."

The Justice Department has said that between 1961 and 1968 alone, Bosch was involved in 30 acts of sabotage in the United States, Puerto Rico, Panama and Cuba. Bosch has been much accused in his notorious time, but rarely convicted.

Look once and see a supposed caring parent—who abandoned his fami-

ly. Look again and see the alleged cold-blooded mastermind of an airline explosion—some of whose other operations and capers and seeming haplessness these past three decades are right out of a Cuban version of the Three Stooges.

Was the truest Bosch all along the warrior and not the healer? In the popular imagination, at least, there was a point in time—somewhere in the mid to late '60s—that Bosch seemed to move from patriot to terrorist, from freedom fighter to fanatic.

"I am living in a box," he tells you, waving it off with a weariness that seems beyond weary.

"I am consecrated to death," he says, like a man playing Lear.

"The tragedy of Cuba is the fever that burns constantly in my heart," he says, curving back toward poetics.

"History forgets, history gets old," he says, moving his head back and forth.

"Noriega, he is for me a vulgar man," he says, like a man trying to push rotten food from his plate. "I mean, where is this man's dignity, being led from his cell to hold up his little sign with the numbers? At least have a moment of dying with dignity!"

Now, suddenly standing up, nearly kicking his chair out from under him: "Look, look, this is me." He is tearing through a cheap-looking paperback to a muddy photograph. It is of a fleshy-faced horn-rimmed idealist—say, 30 years old—in a lab coat. The man is Orlando Bosch, and he is administering Cuba's first polio vaccine. The date is April 1955.

"This is me, this is me," he repeats, studying the picture, as if even he can almost not imagine the self he once was.

He follows with: "These were peo-

ple who had *nothing*, you know." "Nothing" has small, bitter savagery in it.

"What is the capital of Ohio?" he inquires. "Oh, yes, Columbus. They wrote to me, after I had finished my residency, offering me \$150,000, plus commissions, to come and work in a pediatrics hospital there."

When was this? he is asked.

"Oh, '64 or '65 or '66, I don't remember about time. What I am saying is I could have been a millionaire. You know how many Cuban doctors were in Miami when I came to exile? Three."

That was the period when some of the more bizarre Bosch burlesques were staged. "People said I had an air force. We didn't have an air force. We had two planes with two engines."

Bosch. That's all you ever had to say back then in Miami. It was instantly understood.

In the '50s, before this madness, before his infamy, before his exile, a newly minted MD from Havana University did an internship in Toledo, his pediatrics residency in Memphis. Memphis was better than Toledo, he says. It's so cold in Ohio.

After the internship and residency, he went back to his homeland. He thought he was going to be a rural doc. For a time, in the mid-'50s, he had worked as a province leader for Fidel in the 26 Julio movement, in the national underground war against the hated dictator Fulgencio Batista. Batista fell, and then came the even larger perfidy of Fidel himself. The green-clad Jesus was the green-clad Judas.

"How can they regard me as a terrorist?" he asks you, palms turned upward, a look of deep doctory consternation on his face.

There is an interpreter in the visiting booth today (at least for the first several hours of the talk). This seems another of the mysteries. Bosch understands English almost perfectly, and he speaks it tolerably well (if a bit *Latino*-fractured), but he has nonetheless insisted on an interpreter, for those moments when he wishes to "philosophize." Yet it somehow seems more than that. Sometimes his sentences will begin in Spanish, come in to English, return to Spanish, find a penultimate word or phrase back in English. In a way it's almost as if he's attempting to hide with language.

"Be careful," he tells you, confiding

it, voice in a low whisper. "You are in a prison with a lot of nuts. You give them a finger, they take a hand. You give them a hand, they take an arm. You give an arm, they take a body." He italicizes the last word.

"The only thing they can never talk about me is that I did it to enrich myself," he says. The "it" seems everything and nothing.

Now he is searching another paperback on the table before him. (He has come armed with bulging envelopes full of yellowed clippings and documents and books.) He stops at another image. It's one of his old *compaños*, wearing *bandito* khaki and holding up for the camera a semiautomatic rifle with a banana clip beneath the stock.

"This is my weapon, my personal weapon," Bosch says, not even trying to hide the pride. "In the Escambray Mountains, when we were leading the counterrevolution against Fidel, before I fled into exile." The line almost sounds like something out of a bad six-reeler.

"It was my plan to have six children of my own, six adopted," he says in a completely different tone. "I said to myself, 'God, you have given me so much, I want to give it back to you.'" But of course fate had another plan. Bosch has had five children by two

marriages, and additionally he has an adopted son. All of these children are now in the Miami area. In the past months of his reemergence—as the name *Bosch* has become a fixture again in the Florida newspapers and on the evening news—his adopted son, Willie, has engaged in two hunger strikes.

"I want you to listen to this," he says. "I want you to listen to this. Jose Marti, who you know is the great martyr in the history of our independence, the patron saint of all our revolutions, said, 'A country can only be built on men and their passions.'"

Passions. "One day I have five dollars in the pocket, another time two or three thousand in the pocket," he says, speaking of his fugitive years in the mid-'70s, when he had fled this country and was turning up, often under an alias, in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela: a man in exile from exile.

In 1976 he was picked up in Costa Rica on a phony passport, believed to be plotting the death of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, due to arrive

five days later. Jack Anderson broke the story. The proof was not forthcoming.

So *did* he mastermind the blowup of Cubana Airlines Flight 455 on Oct. 6, 1976? Seventy-three died in that crash. Bosch, charged and jailed in Venezuela, was eventually acquitted by military tribunals.

He considers your question. Thoughtfully comes a reply: "Yes, many people think I am the mastermind." He doesn't say more. What he says instead is that the court acquittals speak for themselves. Then, so guilelessly: "What is that sport called, you put the screen on your face and you are fighting with the little stick?"

He means fencing. When the DC-8 went down, two dozen members of Fidel's national fencing team were aboard.

In person he seems so much older, wearier, than his chronological age. What he looks like is a man used up. But is he just a spent baby doc in a dry exile season?

His eyes are dark as agates. He has swept silver hair—surely, one of the keys to the not-so-hidden vanity. He walks slope-shouldered, and with a slight list, like a man who once carried heavy things—say, crates of TNT—as part of his work.

He's got on white sweat socks and little pointy-toed ankle-high black boots with high Cuban heels. The short sleeves of his zippered prison jumpsuit are elegantly rolled. In his breast pocket is a pressed white handkerchief, folded into neat fours. He has cried three times today, each time when talking of his mother and father, and each time he has taken out this handkerchief and wiped his eyes, then folded it neatly back into fours.

"They were living poor," he says of his long-dead parents, Rosa and Miguel Bosch. "All the money was for the education of their children. We are two sisters and two brothers. All four have a doctorate."

He has to eat his meals in small portions and in a standing-up position. Three-quarters of his stomach is gone, was cut out long ago, actually. His prostate is not in good shape. He's on Halcion and Xanax, which are anti-anxiety drugs. He's prone to vomiting and the runs. In the left breast pocket, along with the pressed handkerchief, are tabs of nitroglycerin. These tabs aren't for bombing the Metropolitan Correctional Center the first time the guards turn their heads,

but for becalming a cordoned heart when the angina comes, which it regularly does.

"I never had to do that in my life," he says, referring to the Halcion and Xanax. "Valium once in a while, oh sure. But I have so much anxiety, you

see. Can't sleep at night. I went to the prison doctor. He put me on sedatives. He had to double the doses. I was not quite out of control."

— Guards at the MCC—in south Florida the street nickname for the Metropolitan Correctional Center is "Mostly Cubans and Colombians"—would not describe Orlando Bosch as a man out of control. "Who, Orlando?"

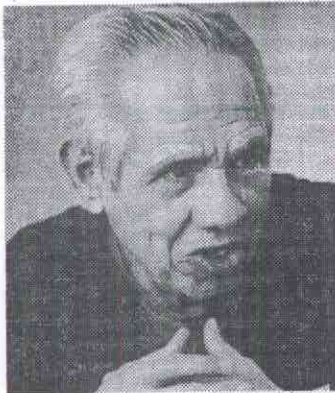
tervene, grant him his freedom? It's possible but not likely, according to Bosch's lawyers. Nonetheless in Florida these days, along with talk about Fidel-issued death warrants on Bosch, one hears speculation about a possible presidential intervention in the case. It is known that George Bush discussed Bosch last fall with south Florida Republican politicians.

"He knows my case," says Bosch.

THE WASHINGTON POST



Bosch's wife, Adriana, right, in a march in Miami last June to protest her husband's deportation order.



BY JAMES A. PARCELL—THE WASHINGTON POST
ORLANDO BOSCH

says Charles Davis, a high-ranking guard. "He's a very good inmate. No problem, really. He stays in his cell and paints. We help him with his oils and boards. He's a modest guy."

"I do landscapes," an impassioned man says of his curiously serene art. "You know, the lake. The tree. The ocean." He layers the oils on thickly with spatulas and inexpensive brushes. In south Florida, Bosch paintings command large prices. It's partly the way he has helped support his family through the years of imprisonment.

"Not want to die here," he says. "Humiliating, you see. Every time, every day, 'Count. Count.' They hold counts all day. They have to do this—11 o'clock in the morning, 11 o'clock at night. I'm tired of all that, 63 years old. I'm so tired."

Is it possible George Bush could in-

"After all, he directed CIA. I have asked my lawyers. I don't have an ounce of knowing whether it could happen." Then: "Oh, you know how politics are." And then, curiously: "I don't know where the lever is."

One of Bosch's attorneys is a Harvard-trained Cuban American named Raoul Cantero. "I check with Justice about every two weeks," he says. "Our request is that they deport him to a Spanish-speaking country close to Miami, so he can be visited by his family. Justice hasn't said they'd necessarily honor that request. In my mind, it's very much an open question whether they'll find a country for him, or whether they even want to. They haven't shown me that they're in any hurry."

Asked if he thinks Bosch will be a walking dead man as soon as he's off

U.S. soil, Cantero says, "I certainly fear that."

"I know I'm going to be attending my father's funeral [after he's deported]," says Myriam Bosch, one of Bosch's four daughters. Her family calls her "Chicky." She is 33 and part-owner of a south Florida court reporting firm. "What's he going to do for bodyguards in another country?"

"Do I stay in jail and live like an animal, or do I risk it and go out and be a free man? This is what he has had to ask. I know I'm going to have so many nightmares about him. 'How much did they torture him?' 'Where did the bullet hit him?' What keeps me half sane is that my father has chosen this life for himself."

Conundrum.

One of the myths attached to Orlando Bosch's life is his long-ago brotherly relationship with Fidel. They are almost exactly the same age, born five days apart in August 1926. ("I am the 18th, he was the 13th.") The myth says that the two were intensely close at Havana University in the mid-'40s, that they found their twin political fires at the same moment, when Bosch was leading protests by the medical students and Fidel was straining to be a leader over in the law school. (It is a fact that Bosch held higher campus offices.) Bosch himself insists, "I knew him as you can know your brother. He used to come to my room very often." He and Fidel were so close, he says, they used to break a single cigar in half and smoke it together. They'd sit all night in the cafes together. "He used to clap me on the back and call me *guajiro*." That is an affectionate term for "white Cuban peasant."

All of which, of course, would only make the subsequent break and the three decades of hatred between the two men that much more intense, that much more mythic.

Yet Tad Szulc, author of a massive and authoritative biography of Castro, says, "In all my research on Castro, in all my interviews with him, Orlando Bosch's name never even came up. I'm not sure he's even in Castro's mind. I'm not saying Bosch is a liar about that university stuff. I just don't know."

His cell. It's in the E Unit, which is

not "the hole," where the hard cases are, but still it's a secured wing cut off from the rest of the prison. Fifty-eight men are in the E Unit. The cell at the end of the corridor on the left of the main floor is Orlando Bosch's home. There are two bunks in this space, which is perhaps 5 by 8.

A commode. Two small metal lockers. A tiny desk, on which sits an Olivetti Lettera typewriter. Above the desk is a bulletin board, and one of the items thumbtacked to it is a St. Jude holy card. St. Jude is the patron saint of hopeless causes.

All around the cell—above the sink, under the bed, stacked by the door—are Orlando Bosch's oils. They're going on exhibit in Miami shortly to help raise money.

Five hours have elapsed. The interview is over, but a guard has consented to show you Bosch's box. This wasn't supposed to happen.

"Welcome, welcome," Orlando Bosch says, delighted, as if this were Sunday afternoon in Miami Shores and you had come calling. He doesn't seem so weary anymore. "I would like you to meet my roommate, Francisco."

Francisco, in his underwear, piles off the top bed, sticks out a paw.

The man himself has changed into gray athletic shorts and a T-shirt. He's in straw sandals. He's got an unlit cigar in his mouth.

"Lockup is not until 11 tonight," he says. "You can be out of your cell until then. But I usually just stay in here and keep to myself."

An hour earlier, when the interview was close to its end, Orlando Bosch had been asked whether it was possible Fidel could have a change of heart and decide to let him live, should he be deported.

His whole face had lit. The mouth turned upward, the head cocked sideways. "Maybe! Maybe!" he said. "I mean, you can never tell about these paranoid guys."