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PARTNERSHIP FOR CIVIL JUSTICE, INC.  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

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May 19, 2008

Office of Information Programs and Services  
A/ISS/IPS/RL  
Department of State  
Washington, DC 20522-8100

*Sent via certified mail and facsimile*

**Re: Freedom of Information Act Request**

Dear FOIA Officer:

We are writing on behalf of the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition and the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five to make the following request under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

Please provide a copy of all records including, data, memoranda, letters, alerts, correspondence, applications, bulletins, e-mails, electronic postings, reports, notes, images, balance sheets or any other materials in the possession of the Department of State regarding all grants, payments and/or funds transfers to Cuban citizens and other individuals in Cuba, from all U.S. government offices, related agencies, government officials, Cuban American individuals and organizations, including but not limited to the Department of State, U.S. Interests Section in Havana, National Endowment for Democracy, Cuban American National Foundation, Fundacion Rescate Juridica, Michael Parmly, Vicki Huddleston, James Cason, Santiago Alvarez, Osvaldo Mitat, Otto Reich, Martha Beatriz Roque, Jorge Luis "Antúnez" García, and former FBI agent Hector Pesquera, from January 21, 2001 to date.

This request is designed to encompass but is not limited to a list of all grants, payments and/or funds transfers to individuals, groups or political parties in Cuba from January 21, 2001 to date.

**Request for Fee Waiver**

The disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations and activities of the government. The requestor has no commercial interest in the information received.

The information requested herein is not intended to be used for commercial purposes, but for dissemination to the public and for public education. All information received shall be published and made available electronically for public access.

The ANSWER Coalition was expressly formed for the purpose of, and is primarily engaged in, disseminating information and informing the public concerning actual or alleged government activity, and mobilizing collective democratic action in response. The dissemination of such information is executed through: in-person distribution; through publication of articles; through the ANSWER web site; and through mass e-mail communications, many of which are then redistributed by other organizations or lists to their membership or supporters.

The National Committee to Free the Five is a grassroots organization for the purpose of research, documentation and dissemination of the case of the "Cuban Five," through printed publications, internet outreach, video documentaries and communications to the national and international media. The Committee also works in support of understanding and better relations between the people of the United States and the people of Cuba. Its work includes addressing matters of U.S. government involvement in the democratic processes in Cuba.

### **Request for Expedited Processing**

The requesters are primarily engaged in disseminating information to the public and the information is urgently needed to inform the public concerning some actual or alleged government activity affecting the peace and security of the people of the United States, the people of Cuba, and the people of Latin America.

The records requested are a matter of urgent public concern. As reported in the Miami Herald on May 19, 2008, the head of the U.S. Mission in Cuba is alleged to have served as an emissary between Cuban citizens in Cuba and a convicted terrorist from Miami who is serving time in prison in the U.S. for weapons possession. According to the report, the Cuban government is asserting that Cuban citizens received financial aid from Santiago Alvarez and that the U.S. Interests Section Chief, Michael Parmly served as an emissary for the transactions.

This is a matter of great public concern. The government of the United States has provided safe haven to Luis Posada Carilles who is known to have organized bombings of Cuban hotels and a civilian airliner carrying 73 people. Posada has publicly received financial assistance from Alvarez during Posada's detention and trial in Panama on terrorist related charges. After Posada's conviction and premature release from Panamanian prison, Alvarez financed his disappearance and personally transported him by boat illegally into the United States on or about March 2005, according to the FBI.

On May 7, 2008, President Bush communicated directly with Martha Beatriz Roque in an internationally publicized teleconference. Roque was at the U.S. Interests

Section in Havana while she talked to President Bush. Roque is alleged to have received funding of \$1,500 a month from Alvarez through the U.S. Interests Section. It is of critical importance to the safety and security of the people of the United States as well as Cuba and a significant matter of public concern to ascertain whether and to what extent persons with whom the President of the United States is in communication have been funded by a man who has been convicted for stockpiling weapons in South Florida, and further, the U.S. Interests Section role in these activities.

**In the Event of Denial**

If this request is denied in whole or in part, please provide the basis for each such denial or deletion by reference to the specific exemption of the Act which you assert is applicable.

**Request for All Portions of Material for Which No Exemption to Production is Claimed**

Please provide all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material.

We reserve the right to appeal your decision to withhold any information or to deny a waiver of fees.

Sincerely,

  
Mara Verheyden-Hilliard