

Castro's Cuba: Fact or Fiction?

As a non-government delegate to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which met in Geneva last month, I would like to respond to Alexander Cockburn's April 14 Viewpoint column ("Human-Rights Ruling on Cuba Twisted Into Victory for U.S.").

Mr. Cockburn has demonstrated once again his unashamed willingness to distort facts for the benefit of the Kremlin and its friends. Indeed, his article rings familiar to someone who attended the meetings in Geneva, for it amounts to not much more than a rewrite of the disinformation put out there by the Cuban government.

Two points he made deserve specific response. First, Mr. Cockburn contends that the commission's resolution came out to Cuba's benefit. His proof for this is that the Cuban mission in Geneva celebrated the outcome. Well, we did too, so that's no measure. More important is the result of the resolution: Entirely against Castro's

wishes, a U.N. commission of inquiry will soon be traveling to Cuba to look into human-rights abuses there. This is far more than the American resolution sought.

Second, Mr. Cockburn repeats the despicable (and illogical) charges Castro's minions have trumped up against Armando Valladares, head of the U.S. delegation. There is space here to address only the most important of Mr. Cockburn's accusations—that Mr. Valladares had served in Battista's police. Anyone at all aware of conditions in Cuba in 1959-1960 knows that none of Battista's police went to work (as did Mr. Valladares) in Castro's postal ministry. Further, every witness living outside Cuba has confirmed the falsehood of the Cuban government's charge.

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