

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 17, 2012

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary,

We write to express our outrage that you have provided entry visas to Communist Party representatives from Cuba: Josefina Vidal Ferreiro, Eusebio Leal, and Mariela Castro Espin in flagrant disregard of express Congressional intent and established U.S. foreign policy.

Granting visas to these members of Cuba's Communist Party is directly contrary to Congressional intent as expressed in the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (PL 104-114). Section 102(e) declares:

It is the sense of the Congress that the President should instruct the Secretary of State and the Attorney General to enforce fully existing regulations to deny visas to Cuban nationals considered by the Secretary of State to be officers or employees of the Cuban Government or of the Communist Party of Cuba.

In addition, Presidential Proclamation 5377, Section 1, prohibits nonimmigrant entry of—

(a) officers or employees of the Government of Cuba or the Communist Party of Cuba holding diplomatic or official passports; and (b) individuals who, notwithstanding the type of passport that they hold, are considered by the Secretary of State or his designee to be officers or employees of the Government of Cuba or the Communist Party of Cuba.

Because Section 2(c) of this proclamation provides waiver of these restrictions only by the Secretary of State or her designate, we may only conclude that responsibility for these entries rests squarely with you.

Josefina Vidal Ferreiro, from the Cuban regime's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was married to one of fourteen Cuban diplomats stationed at the Cuban missions in Washington D.C. and New York that reportedly left the United States due to evidence that they were collecting information on U.S. preparations for the war in Iraq to pass along to Saddam Hussein. Although it is unclear whether she was asked to leave, her husband, Cuban consul Jose Anselmo Lopez stationed in Washington D.C. was declared *persona non grata* and expelled for his "activities

hostile to the national security.” Since that time, Josefina Vidal Ferreiro has been one of the most vocal anti-U.S. mouthpieces of the Cuban regime. The primary duties of her high-level position appear to be spreading misinformation about U.S. foreign policy, defending the Cuban regime’s deplorable human rights record, justifying the dictatorship’s ruthless brutality against pro-democracy activists such as the Ladies in White, and maligning Alan Gross, a U.S. humanitarian aid worker whom the regime has held hostage without justification for more than two years. We also understand that she was invited to the Department of State to meet with U.S. officials, despite the lack of diplomatic relations between the United States and the regime in Cuba since 1961. That the stated purpose of Josefina Vidal’s trip was to participate in an anti-America propaganda event at the Cuban Interests Section, and that she nonetheless was permitted into the core of U.S. foreign policy-making, further highlights the remarkably poor judgment exercised by this administration in extending diplomatic courtesies to an agent of the Castro regime.

Eusebio Leal is a member of Cuba’s sham, one-party National Assembly and was appointed by Fidel Castro to head Habaguanex S.A., a regime-operated corporation created in 1993 to sustain the failing dictatorship with tourism dollars. He is frequently tasked with escorting foreign dignitaries, such as President Carter in 2011, and has been a devoted member of Castro’s Communist Party since 1972. His current priority is expanding tourism to channel hard currency to the Castro regime. The purpose of his trip was to headline an event at a Washington D.C. think tank aimed at encouraging tourism despite the express prohibition against tourism travel to Cuba in U.S. law. It is disgraceful that this administration would grant an exception for a Cuban regime operative to enter the United States for the express goal of undermining U.S. foreign policy.

Mariela Castro Espin, daughter of dictator Raul Castro, was appointed head of the regime’s National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX). She is a devout member of Cuba’s Communist Party who routinely rails against the “imperialist” United States and vilifies Cuba’s courageous pro-democracy movement. She recently parroted regime propaganda by referring to pro-freedom activists as “despicable parasites” and insinuating that the activists were paid mercenaries of the United States simply because they questioned her refusal to defend basic human rights for the Cuban people. Other than the dictators themselves, there can hardly be a more Communist Party and regime “insider” in Cuba than Mariela Castro Espin.

Permitting entry of Cuban operatives into the United States is also dangerous. As you know, the Cuban regime is one of only four U.S.-designated State Sponsors of Terrorism, and it engages in extensive espionage activities in the United States. Spies still serving prison sentences for conducting espionage against the U.S. on behalf of the Cuban regime include the five convicted Cuban spies of the “WASP” network (2001), Ana Belen Montes (2002), and two former State Department employees, Walter and Gwendolyn Myers (2010). Within this context, it is especially reprehensible that this administration would welcome the return of Cuban

operative Josefina Vidal Ferreiro into Washington D.C., the seat of our nation's government, and permit entry of other high-level operatives of this terrorist state into the United States.

Unfortunately, it appears that the Obama administration is continuing its failed policy of providing unilateral concessions to the Cuban regime despite its hostile actions against the United States, increased repression against its own people, and prolonged imprisonment of Mr. Gross for the "crime" of trying to connect Cuba's small Jewish community to the internet. Allowing entry of these regime operatives into the United States appears to be yet another gift to the regime in Cuba for continuing its atrocious behavior.

Allowing these Cuban regime operatives into the United States is dangerous, irresponsible, and contrary to longstanding U.S. policy toward a regime with one of the world's worst human rights records. We strongly urge you to exercise better judgment when reviewing entry requests from representatives of enemy states in the future.

Sincerely,



MARIO DIAZ-BALART
Member of Congress



ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
Member of Congress



ALBIO SIRES
Member of Congress



DAVID RIVERA
Member of Congress

cc: Peter King, Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security
Mike Rogers, Chairman, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
Kay Granger, Chairwoman, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs