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<del>1. cable</del>	<del>Amembassy Mexico to Secstate, re Ambassador's meeting with GOM President de la Madrid (2 pp)</del> <i>R 4/2/00 NLSF94-08N/1 #62</i>	<del>7/2/88</del>	<del>P1</del>
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[Countries] Mexico Box 92271			4/11/96

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- P-2 Relating to appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA].
- P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA].
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- F-8 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA].

*J. Mex*

# Mexico Frees Puerto Rican Wanted as Terrorist by U.S.

## *Extradition of 'Political Fighter' Rejected*

By William Branigin  
Washington Post Foreign Service

MEXICO CITY, June 25—A Puerto Rican nationalist wanted by the United States for terrorist activities has been released from prison here after serving five years for the murder of a Mexican policeman, a government spokesman confirmed today.

The release yesterday of William Morales, 37, came after Mexican Foreign Secretary Bernardo Sepulveda last week formally rejected a long-pending U.S. extradition request on grounds that Morales was a "political fighter for the independence of Puerto Rico" who had been "politically persecuted."

A U.S. Embassy spokesman here said the United States was "surprised and disturbed" by the decision not to extradite Morales, whose release appears likely to become an irritant in U.S.-Mexican relations.

According to an Interior Ministry spokesman, Morales was released into the custody of the ministry's agents after serving five years of his eight-year sentence, and immigration officials are determining his status. The spokesman said the government has not yet granted Morales' requests for political asylum in Mex-

ico and that it was possible he could be expelled to a country other than the United States.

Morales was arrested in New York in 1978 after a bomb he was making detonated, blowing off most of both hands and disfiguring his face. He was named as a leader of a Puerto Rican independence group called the Armed Forces of National Liberation, which had claimed responsibility for 110 bombings across the United States up to that time, and was sentenced to 99 years on state and federal explosives and weapons charges.

In 1979, Morales escaped from New York's Bellevue Hospital, where he was being fitted for artificial hands, by cutting through a wire-mesh window and shimmying down a rope of elastic bandages. According to U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Charles J. Pilliod Jr., two New York policemen were killed while trying to apprehend Morales.

On May 28, 1983, Morales was arrested in the Mexican state of Puebla after a shootout in which a companion and a Mexican policeman were killed. According to a confession obtained by Mexican police, Morales had been planning to bomb a conference of U.S. and Mexican congressmen in the city of Puebla.

*Mexico*

# U.S. Denounces Mexico's Release Of Convicted Terrorist, Recalls Envoy

By Bill McAllister  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Reagan administration angrily accused the Mexican government yesterday of committing "an inexplicable affront" by freeing and deporting a Puerto Rican nationalist wanted in the United States on terrorist charges.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater called the decision to deport the convicted terrorist, William Morales, to Cuba "outrageous" and disclosed that, in protest, the administration is recalling its ambassador to Mexico for consultations.

U.S. officials said Morales, 37, who staged a spectacular escape in New York City nine years ago, is implicated in more than 50 bombings by a Puerto Rican separatist group. He was imprisoned in Mexico for the murder of a Mexican police officer.

U.S. officials said they long had hoped that Mexico would return Morales to the United States to resume the 89-year prison sentence he was serving when he cut through a wire-mesh window at Bellevue Hospital in 1979 and shimmed down a rope of plastic bandages to freedom.

Mexico's decision to release Morales after five years of imprisonment for the officer's murder and to deport him to Cuba clearly infuriated the Reagan administration, which has sought to make improved relations with Mexico a cornerstone of its Latin America policies.

Fitzwater called the actions "a great blow to U.S. and Mexican efforts to combat the scourge of international terrorism," and State Department spokesman Charles E. Redman said the deportation "undercuts the fight against international terrorism by legal means."

Redman said the department summoned Mexican Ambassador Jorge Espinosa de los Reyes on Monday night to complain about the Mexican Foreign Ministry's declaration that U.S. authorities had prosecuted Morales because of his political views.

That ruling, which allowed Morales to be sent to Cuba rather than extradited to the United States,



William Morales, imprisoned on murder charges, was freed from Mexican jail.

"can only have been taken for political reasons," Redman said.

"We really can't say anything more than we just fail to comprehend and understand why this particular action was taken," he said.

Mexican officials had protested that their actions were taken in accord with Mexico's interpretation of its U.S. extradition treaty, but Redman told U.S. authorities "strongly reject these explanations and deplore that Mexico has chosen to free this terrorist."

A leader of the separatist group known as the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), Morales was 27 when arrested in New York after a bomb exploded in his face. The accident badly scarred his face and destroyed both of his hands. He was being fitted for artificial hands at Bellevue Hospital a year later when he escaped.

In 1983, he was arrested in the Mexican state of Puebla after a gun battle in which a companion and a

Mexican police officer were killed. He was charged with murder of a police officer.

Authorities there said when he was arrested that he had been plotting a bomb attack against U.S. and Mexican legislators meeting in Puebla.

Redman said U.S. Ambassador Charles J. Pilliod Jr. is being recalled to help assess whether release of Morales represents a significant change from Mexico's traditional friendly policy toward the United States.

Ramon Sanchez-Parodi, head of the Cuban Interests Section at the Czechoslovakian Embassy here, described Morales as a patriot defending the cause of Puerto Rican independence, an issue consistently supported by Cuba.

"I think we will grant . . . Morales asylum," the Cuban envoy told a luncheon audience after a seminar on Cuban issues at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Relations.

WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL, CASC, MX, PTER  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH GOM PRESIDENT  
- DE LA MADRID ON WILLIAM MORALES CASE

1. *2* - ENTIRE TEXT.  
>BEGIN SUMMARY>

2. SUMMARY: THE AMBASSADOR MET PRIVATELY WITH GOM PRESIDENT MIGUEL DE LA MADRID AT TWO P.M. JULY 1 TO PRESENT PRESIDENT REAGAN'S LETTER ON THE MORALES CASE. THE CONVERSATION WAS FRANK AND FRIENDLY AND ALL ISSUES CONCERNING THE CASE WERE DISCUSSED. THE AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED THE CONSTERNATION IN U.S. SECTORS CAUSED BY THE GOM'S DENIAL OF OUR REQUEST FOR THE EXTRADITION OF CONVICTED FELON WILLIAM MORALES AND THE GOM'S SUBSEQUENT DECISION TO PERMIT HIM TO DEPART FOR CUBA.

3. AFTER READING PRESIDENT REAGAN'S LETTER, DE LA MADRID ASSURED THE AMBASSADOR THAT GOM VIEWS ON PUERTO RICO'S STATUS (NOT ENDORSING INDEPENDENCE OPTION) HAD NOT CHANGED, THAT THE GOM OPPOSED PUERTO RICAN TERRORIST GROUPS AND TERRORISM EVERYWHERE AND THAT THE GOM WOULD PUBLICLY REAFFIRM ITS POLICIES IN THIS REGARD. DE LA MADRID INDICATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO STUDY CAREFULLY PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MESSAGE AND TO RESPOND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, HOPEFULLY WITHIN TEN DAYS TO TWO WEEKS. HE ALSO AGREED TO ENHANCE GOM-USG COOPERATION ACROSS THE BOARD, ESPECIALLY IN ANTI-TERRORISM MATTERS. PRESIDENT DE LA MADRID SAID THAT GOM COMMITMENT TO EXTRADITION TREATY WITH U.S. WOULD BE UNDERSCORED BY THE EXTRADITION TO THE U.S. NEXT WEEK OF NOTED GERMAN DRUG TRAFFICKER VERONICA KIERA WAHL. END SUMMARY.

>END SUMMARY>

4. THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH PRESIDENT DE LA MADRID THE AFTERNOON OF JULY 1 TO DELIVER PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MESSAGE ON THE GOM'S DECISION TO REJECT A U.S. REQUEST FOR EXTRADITION OF PUERTO RICAN SEPARATIST AND CONVICTED FELON, WILLIAM MORALES, AND TO PERMIT MORALES TO DEPART FOR CUBA. DURING THE COURSE OF THE FRANK AND FRIENDLY ONE-ON-ONE EXCHANGE THE AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE GOM ACTION AND NOTED ITS POTENTIALLY DAMAGING EFFECT ON U.S.-MEXICAN RELATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED ALSO THE CONSTERNATION AND DISMAY ACROSS THE BOARD IN THE U.S.  
5. AFTER READING PRESIDENT REAGAN'S LETTER,

PRESIDENT DE LA MADRID SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD EXACTLY WHY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WAS SO UPSET. HE ASSURED AMBASSADOR THAT THE GOM HAD NO INTENTION OF CHANGING ITS LONGSTANDING POLICIES ON PUERTO RICO'S STATUS OR PUERTO RICAN TERRORIST GROUPS AND DID NOT SEEK TO ENDORSE THE INDEPENDENCE OPTION BY ITS ACTIONS. DE LA MADRID SAID THAT HE CONSIDERED PUERTO RICAN TERRORIST GROUPS TO BE TERRORISTS LIKE ANY OTHER AND THAT THE GOM WAS AGAINST TERRORISM

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EVERYWHERE.

6. REITERATING MEXICO'S INTENTION TO COMPLY WITH THE 1978 U.S.-MEXICO EXTRADITION TREATY, DE LA MADRID INFORMED THE AMBASSADOR THAT MEXICO WOULD EXTRADITE TO U.S. SOMETIME DURING THE WEEK OF JULY 4 GERMAN DRUG TRAFFICKER VERONICA KIERA WAHL CURRENTLY IN GOM CUSTODY. (NOTE: PLEASE HOLD THIS INFORMATION UNTIL OFFICIAL GOM RELEASE.) IN VIEW OF THIS NEWS AND CLARIFICATION OF GOM POLICY THE AMBASSADOR ENCOURAGED PRESIDENT DE LA MADRID TO REITERATE PUBLICLY THE OFFICIAL MEXICAN POSITION ON PUERTO RICO AND TERRORISM LEST PUERTO RICAN TERRORIST GROUPS RUN RAMPANT. THE PRESIDENT AGREED. DE LA MADRID NOTED ALSO HIS GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO ESTABLISH CLOSER TIES WITH THE USG IN ANTI-TERRORISM MATTERS.

7. IMMEDIATELY SUBSEQUENT TO THE AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT DE LA MADRID, THE GOM PRESIDENCY ISSUED A PRESS RELEASE NOTING DE LA MADRID'S MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND REVEALED THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD DELIVERED PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MESSAGE TO HIM ON THE MORALES CASE. THE PRESS RELEASE NOTED ALSO THAT DE LA MADRID HAD INFORMED THE AMBASSADOR OF HIS INSTRUCTION TO THE MEXICAN FOREIGN SECRETARIAT TO REPLY TO THE USG PROTEST NOTE PRESENTED TO THE MEXICAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AND INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT DE LA MADRID WOULD RESPOND

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TAGS: PREL, CASC, MX, PTER

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH GOM PRESIDENT  
AS WELL TO PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MESSAGE AS SOON AS  
POSSIBLE. PILLIOD

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