

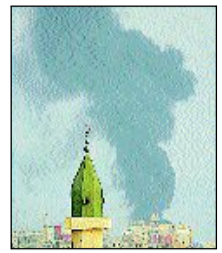


SECTION B
HERALDNEWS

Thursday,
September 14, 2006

Values

Caught in the crossfire
Teen and his family
in Lebanon.
clique, B7



SEEKING THE TRUTH

COUNTING THE DEAD

Documenting the murders
of Castro's regime

By CAROLINA BOLADO
Herald News

Maria Werlau flips through one of her many black binders and points to black-and-white photos, names and facts: dates, locations of executions. Each new face launches another tale of persecution, death and heartbreak.

"This was such a sad story," she says, indicating the profiles of Armando Hernandez and Ramon Toledo, two brothers-in-law executed on the same day at La Cabaña Prison in Havana.

She can tell that story, like so many others, by heart. For three years, the former business consultant has worked full-time from her Chatham apartment to document the death toll of the Cuban Revolution as part of the nonprofit Cuba Archive project. She and retired economics professor Armando Lago have assembled a database of the dead. To date, they've tallied 12,515 deaths, including 5,728 killed by Castro firing squads.

Werlau tries to distance herself, but it is a personal project; her own father, Armando Cañizares, is on the list.

The document will likely play an important role during any political transition in Cuba, a tool to help heal the scars of nearly a half-century of repressive government. The names on the list range from those who died fighting during the early uprising to those who drowned when the Cuban Coast Guard pelted their rafts with sandbags as they tried to flee the island. Werlau and Lago weave those stories into the greater saga of the Revolution.

"This thing has to be solved," says Lago, 66, who works from his home in Coral Gables, Fla. "I'm writing this for the people who will go back to Cuba and try to attempt to merge the Cuban nation after

Castro."

"Sometimes I can't sleep," Werlau, 46, says. "It consumes me when I deal with the families."

The story of the Toledo family — Hernandez was married to Toledo's sister — is a particularly harrowing one. In 1980 — two decades after Fidel Castro took power — family members distributed pamphlets and organized meetings to encourage people to stay in Cuba and work for regime change from within. The two were arrested, and their wives took the children into hiding.

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But Cuban authorities found them there, too, and arrested all the adults, leaving four children younger than 10 in the care of a 13-year-old aunt. In October 1982, family members learned that Hernandez and Toledo had been executed.

Almost every adult in the Toledo family served time in prison; two cousins died there. Life became so difficult that, in the mid-1990s, family members sought asylum in the United States.

It's this story, and countless others, that Werlau and Lago feel compelled to document, to let the world know the nature of Castro's government. While other groups and authors have made partial lists, no one has attempted to catalog the revolution's death toll so comprehensively.

"This is a war of information. The only thing we can do is just put the facts out there," Werlau says. "Castro has done very well with propaganda."

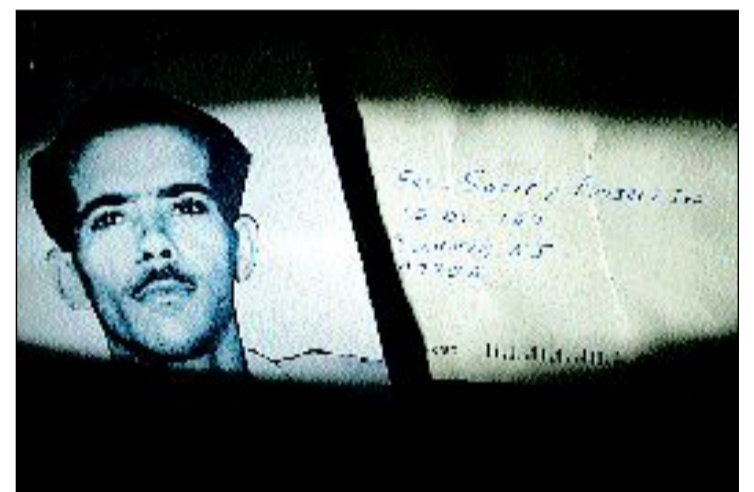
Werlau's father, Cañizares, initially fought with Castro, against dictator Fulgencio Batista. When he realized that the bearded revolutionary had no intention of establishing democracy, he joined an anti-Castro underground group. He, his wife and 8-month-old

Please see CUBA, B2



Photos by LESLIE BARBARO/Herald News

Maria Werlau of Chatham has compiled tens of thousands of names as part of her effort to document lives lost to the Cuban Revolution and the Castro regime. Below, some of people she has documented.



Clockwise from left, Benito Cortes, a native of Puerto Rico who moved to Cuba with his family, was executed in 1959 at age 39; Israel Rodriguez Lima, a day laborer in Miami, was imprisoned for two months while visiting relatives in Cuba and then executed in 1963 at age 30; Armando Martin Vasquez died in 1994 at age 34 while attempting to flee Cuba on a raft.

DEATH IN CUBA

CONFIRMED DEATHS

Castro firing squad executions: 5,726
Extrajudicial assassinations*: 1,198
Deaths in prison: 1,213
Missing and disappeared: 198
Direct anti-Castro combat deaths: 1,289
Cuba's armed forces lost in the Bay of Pigs conflict: 150
Deaths caused by Batista forces: 1,816
Deaths caused by anti-Batista forces: 925

ESTIMATED DEATHS

Balseros, or rafters, killed while trying to leave the island: 77,833
Cuban troops killed while supporting allied governments in Africa: 13,400
* Those who are killed from beatings during interrogations or by Castroite militias and revolutionary police on the street are counted as extrajudicial assassinations.



VALUE JUDGMENTS

ART AND FREEDOM AND SPEECH

Fighting terrorism in common, and uncommon, ways

By JOSEPH P. GRIFFITH
Herald News

My father, who immigrated to this country in 1926, once told me about the week or so he spent cramped in steerage on a ship en route to Ellis Island from his native Brazil. The journey was difficult, the quarters dirty and uncomfortable and the outcome uncertain, but when he and the other aspiring citizens walked onto the deck at the end and saw the Statue of Liberty — "the greatest sight in the world," as he called it — they were filled with tears of hope and joy. They knew they had finally made it, to freedom and a

better life.

There is something about the statue that inspires people. Whether it's wide-eyed tourists on a sightseeing outing, jaded hipsters on a music cruise or cynical journalists on a press junket, when the boat passes Lady Liberty, people stop whatever they're doing to gaze at her elegance and grace, and muse upon what she means.

The statue was, of course, given to the people of the United States by the people of France in 1886, a gift of friendship and a universal symbol of freedom and democra-

Gifts of sculpture to the U.S. from other countries say much about people everywhere.

cy. It was not surprising that the subject of the statue came up several times on Monday at the dedication of "Tear of Grief: To the Struggle Against World Terrorism," a gift from Russian President Vladimir Putin, the people of Russia and sculptor Zurab Tsereteli to the people of the United States.

The 100-foot-tall, 175-ton

bronze monument, which encloses a 40-foot steel teardrop, bears the names of those who perished at the World Trade Center in both the 1993 and 2001 attacks. It sits on the site of a container port on Bayonne Peninsula, with lower Manhattan in the distance. Few, if any, passenger boats will pass by, making the destination one

reached mostly by land, and unlikely to inspire many travelers by sea.

Yet in comparing Russia's gift to France's, New York City Controller William Thompson, one of the invited speakers, said that "in times of crisis, our world becomes very small." He and others, like former President Bill Clinton, spoke of the camaraderie of all people in the struggle of good against evil.

As heartfelt as these sentiments may have been, and as inspiring as it would be to believe the view of

the world as politicians see it, there are the grim realities of the times in which we live. Five years ago, the attacks of Sept. 11 seemed to change Americans' way of thinking and galvanize us into the New World Order previously discussed in only the most abstract ways. We seemed to put aside partisan politics, the frivolity of our popular culture and our differences, and gain a seriousness we had lacked.

It has been said that America has not matured as a nation because we have not suffered the privations of other countries, or endured attacks on our soil. That in-

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