



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

328 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.E.  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002  
PHONE 202-547-8189 • FAX 615-202-547-8190

**CHUCK CANTERBURY**  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

**JAMES O. PASCO, JR.**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

23 December 2014

The Honorable Barack H. Obama II  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police with respect to your recent announcement that the United States will seek closer ties to the Republic of Cuba.

Over the years, the FOP has consistently opposed any normalization of relations with the communist nation of Cuba until such time as that government extradites to the United States the violent criminals who are protected there by the Cuban government. In fact, we wrote to you about this issue in September 2009 when you first relaxed restrictions on trade with Cuba.

Cuba is still harboring scores of criminals, perhaps the most notorious being Joanne Chesimard, who murdered New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster and severely wounded his partner, Trooper James Harper in 1973. She escaped a maximum security prison in 1979 and fled to Cuba, where she now lives under the protection of the Cuban government as an example of “political repression” in the United States. In addition, Fidel and Raul Castro play host to at least two members of a group called the “Republic of New Africa,” who murdered New Mexican State Trooper Robert Rosenbloom in 1972. I think we can all agree that no responsible government should harbor and protect anti-police assassins from justice.

The Fraternal Order of Police believes strongly that before any further “normalization” is considered, the Cuban government must return those who murdered U.S. law enforcement officers and then fled our justice system. Simply put, we ought not to reward the Cuban policy of providing a safe haven for the murderers of Americans. For this reason, I urge you to condition any changes in our relationship on the surrender of these fugitives.

I realize that relationships with other governments are sensitive and complex, which require compromise and nuanced accommodation. However, the American people and the Fraternal Order of Police do not feel that we must compromise our system of justice and the fabric of our society to foreign dictators like Fidel and Raul Castro. I strongly urge you to reject any changes in our relationship with the Cuban government unless and until the issue of these murderous

fugitives is resolved to our satisfaction. The blood of American law enforcement officers doing their job on American soil is too high a price to pay for closer ties with the Cuban regime.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you for considering our views on this important issue. If I can be of any additional help, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Canterbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "C" at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that loops back under the name.

Chuck Canterbury  
National President

**cc:** The Honorable John F. Kerry, Secretary, U.S. Department of State  
The Honorable Robert P. Corker, Jr., Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate  
The Honorable Robert Menendez, Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate  
The Honorable Edward R. Royce, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Eliot L. Engel, Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives