

Committee for the Release of Farouk Abdel-Muhti

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December 12, 2002

Hipolito Acosta, District Director
Immigration and Naturalization Service
126 Northpoint Drive
Houston, TX, 77060
Tel: 281-774-4610, fax: 281-774-5989

Dear Mr. Acosta:

We are writing to protest the Immigration and Naturalization Service's detention of Róger Calero, a permanent US resident who lives and works in the New York metropolitan area. He was detained in Houston on December 3 while returning from an assignment in Latin America for his magazine, *Perspectiva Mundial*; he had been covering an international conference in Havana on organizing resistance to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a US-sponsored plan that has encountered bitter resistance in Latin America and a growing opposition here.

We understand that the INS is attempting to exclude Mr. Calero and deport him to Nicaragua because of a conviction from 1988, when he was in high school. We also understand that the INS was fully aware of this conviction when it granted Mr. Calero permanent residence in 1990 and when it renewed his permanent residence in 2000.

We have difficulty understanding on what legal grounds the INS would attempt to exclude Mr. Calero now. The situation raises the disturbing possibility that Mr. Calero is being held to keep him from carrying out activities like reporting on opposition to the FTAA and other projects promoted by the present administration. Reinforcing this concern is our experience with our friend Farouk Abdel-Muhti, a New York-area activist who was detained last April after he began appearing on a community radio station arranging interviews with human rights activists in his native Palestine.

The Committee for the Release of Farouk Abdel-Muhti asks the INS to release Mr. Calero's immediately, end its effort to deport him, and allow him to continue serving our community through his work as a journalist.

Sincerely,



David L. Wilson

For the Committee for the Release of Farouk Abdel-Muhti

cc: Farouk Abdel-Muhti
Perspectiva Mundial