

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 25/27/97

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Further information on UA 273/97 (AMR 25/26/97, 14 August 1997) - Prisoners of conscience / Legal concern

CUBARaúl RIVERO CASTAÑEDA, journalist and founder of *Cuba Press*, aged 52
William CORTÉS, correspondent for *Cuba Press*
Efrén MARTÍNEZ PURGARÓN, correspondent for *Cuba Press*

Raúl Rivero Castañeda, the founder of *Cuba Press*, who was detained on 12 August, was released without charge on 15 August.

From interviews with Raúl Rivero himself, after his release, it emerged that he had not, in fact, been held in *Villa Marista*, headquarters of the Department of State Security, as his wife had been informed when she went to *Villa Marista* on 13 August. Instead he had been taken by state security officials to a house in the Siboney district of Havana. There he was reportedly questioned several times, both at night and during the day, and watched around the clock. He stated that he was treated with respect but that he was strongly urged by the authorities to give up his work as an independent journalist and to leave the country.

Books, family photographs, a camera and a telephone, which had been confiscated during the search of his home on the day of his arrest, were returned but he reported that his typewriter had not been not returned.

Another independent journalist, who left the country on 28 July after being subjected to serious threats and harassment because of his journalistic activities, also reported having been taken to a house in Havana and questioned by state security officials, just before leaving Cuba. He also reported that he was urged by officials to try to persuade Raúl Rivero Castañeda to leave the country as well.

No further information has been received concerning the detentions of William Cortés and Efrén Martínez Purgarón and they are both believed to be still in detention.

Action on behalf of Raúl Rivero Castañeda should cease (note: no more appeals to address 3 at Villa Marista), but appeals may continue on behalf of William Cortés and Efrén Martínez Purgarón as specified in original UA.