

Free or deport Bosch

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THINK WHAT you will of Orlando Bosch: that he is a true Cuban patriot, as many exiles believe, or a dangerous terrorist, as the U.S. Justice Department asserts. The fact is that Bosch has now been sitting in legal limbo in a South Dade jail for over two years, and there still is no sign that the Federal Government is anywhere close to resolving his status.

That is an outrage — regardless of what one believes about this anti-Castro militant.

Bosch is not in jail for having committed a crime in this country. He did that, yes, in 1968, when he attempted to sink a Polish cargo ship at the Port of Miami. But he served four years for that. It's also true that he became a Federal fugitive by fleeing the country, and thus violating his parole, in 1974. But he served time for that as well, shortly after illegally returning to the United States in February 1988.

This newspaper does not question the legal basis of Bosch's indefinite detention. More than once, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that excludable aliens — Bosch's status — have no Constitutional rights. Bosch forfeited those rights when he fled the country in 1974. And even though Venezuelan courts thrice acquitted him of the

DON'T LET HIS CASE ROT

1976 bombing of a Cuban jetliner that killed 73 people, the Justice Department opposes his release because the FBI still considers him an unreformed terrorist.

What this newspaper *does* question is the morality of imprisoning a person — any person — indefinitely without bringing charges against him. Bosch can't be deported to Cuba, because there he would face certain death. The Justice Department says that it's waiting for the State Department to find another country that will accept him, but State says that it can't find one. Meanwhile, Bosch sits in jail.

Frustrated over his continued incarceration, Bosch has begun a hunger strike to call attention to his case. He demands that he either be deported or set free.

It may be legal, but it's no less immoral, to keep Bosch in jail indefinitely. If the State Department and Bosch's local supporters, after diligent efforts, cannot find a country that will take him, then he should be paroled — under the strictest conditions of behavior — into his family's custody.