

The Bosch case

Miami Herald 7-24-90-13

(Editor's Note: The following editorial appeared in Friday's *New York Times*.)

THE RELEASE from jail of Orlando Bosch, convicted of terrorist violence and officially deemed a most undesirable alien, is a startling example of political justice. The Justice Department, under no legal compulsion but conspicuous political pressure, has let him out, winning cheers from local politicians — and squandering American credibility on issues of terrorism.

Dr. Bosch, a Cuban pediatrician known more for bombings than medicine, has been a hero in the anti-Castro communities of South Florida. He was imprisoned two decades ago for planting bombs on ships and firing a bazooka at a Polish freighter in Miami's harbor. Later he jumped parole and fled to Latin America, where U.S. authorities say he engaged in numerous anti-Cuban bombings. He returned illegally two years ago and was held for deportation. The Government says that only Cuba is willing to accept him.

There's a growing revulsion about terrorism even among the bitterest Cuban exiles, but Sen.

Connie Mack, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and other politicians have lobbied intensively for Dr. Bosch's release. President Bush's son, Jeb, a Republican leader in South Florida, joined the political chorus. Their cries were heard. Justice got the prisoner to accept a form of house arrest and agree not to consort with violent people. As soon as he was released, however, Dr. Bosch vowed to conduct himself as he pleased during his daily three hours outside his home.

Justice contends lamely that its hand was forced by a Federal judge who seemed to be pressuring for this release. But Judge William Hoveler, who last November emphatically affirmed the Department's power to lock up a deportable alien, had merely inquired whether the Government intended to jail Dr. Bosch indefinitely.

In the name of fighting terrorism, the United States sent the Air Force to bomb Libya and the Army to invade Panama. Yet now the Bush Administration coddles one of the hemisphere's most notorious terrorists. And for what reason? The only one evident is currying favor in South Florida.