



Areito magazine is being published in Miami once again after a 13-year absence.

Controversial Cuban political magazine returns to Miami

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When Areito first appeared in 1974, the magazine was so controversial among Cuban exiles that bomb threats forced its editors to move from Miami to New York.

Areito was reborn in Miami Tuesday.

"Good morning, Miami. Here we are again," reads a bright yellow streamer on the cover of the magazine's first issue, distributed by its editor at a press conference Tuesday.

Areito, a Spanish-language quarterly named after a Caribbean tribal dance, is not supermarket-counter reading for most Miami Cubans. For 11 years, until it ceased publication in 1985, the magazine's line was simple: support for Fidel Castro's revolution, attacks on U.S. capitalism and a continuous call for dialogue between Cuban exiles and the government in Havana.

The magazine's new editor, Andres Gomez, a founder of the original, played down the old

line Tuesday. The new Areito, he said, will accept editorial contributions from all over the political spectrum.

"They can say anything they want about the Cuban government. They can say anything they want about anything, as long as it's done in a responsible and intelligent manner," said Gomez, 39.

Political debate in Miami has been stifled by the right wing, said Gomez, a founder of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group which sponsors trips to Cuba by young exiles.

"Today we are faced with a rigid, violent and undemocratic climate from which we all suffer," he said. "This is precisely why Miami is the center of our efforts. We are determined to make Areito a vehicle for creating a fertile environment for political change."

Gomez is not expecting instant support. For security reasons, he would not say Tuesday where Areito's editorial offices are located, or identify its financial supporters. The magazine listed P.O. Box 44-1403 as its address.

Areito's first issue has a run of 10,000 copies at a cost of \$6,000, he said. It sells for \$3 an issue.

Gomez has 200 subscribers,

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no newsstand distribution and no advertisers. "Obviously it's going to be difficult selling this magazine," he said.

Areito's first issue contains many articles generally sympathetic to the Castro government.

The issue carries a story praising Cuba's economic growth and a first-person piece by Otto Fiffe, a Mariel refugee who longs to return.

There is also an interview with the bishop of Havana, Monsignor Carlos Manuel de Cespedes. Gomez spoke with de Cespedes in Havana last December.

The bishop said the Cuban government was "legitimate" and added that the Catholic church in Cuba is growing slowly, perhaps because some Cubans are not satisfied with the atheism of Marxist philosophy.

The first issue also has an article written by Nicolas Rios, a moderate free-lance journalist and former part-time translator at El Herald, The Miami Herald's Spanish-language edition.

Rios, a professor of philosophy at the University of Havana before he fled the island, urged support for the magazine's right to publish and the need for unimpeded debate.

"I left Cuba because I disagree with political totalitarianism," he said in the article. "But you don't fight a totalitarian society by erecting another one. The alternative offered to the people of Cuba has to be democratic, or it is no alternative."

Other Cuban exiles say they won't make judgments about the magazine until they see it.

"Areito's predecessor was an apologist for the Castro revolution," said Jose Antonio Font,

executive director of the Cuban American National Foundation, a powerful exile think-tank and lobbying group.

"If Areito will serve as a forum to seek the reunification and reconstruction of the Cuban nation within a democratic form of government, then indeed we welcome it," Font said. "However, if it will serve to promote the gospel of Marxism and totalitarianism, the Castro brand of communism, then it is incompatible with free dialogue."

Whatever the publication's ideology, Font said, "it has a right to publish. In that regard the foundation would vehemently oppose any violence upon the publication of any ideology."

Maria Cristina Herrera, a professor of social science at Miami-Dade Community College and a friend of some of the founders of the original Areito, called the new magazine "healthy for Miami."

"I agree with the right to express what you think. It's a right of democracy," Herrera said. "I don't necessarily agree with Andres Gomez and company, but I agree with their right to have their magazine."