

Unacceptable protest

We hope the outrageous incident at the Torch of Friendship is not the forerunner of things to come in Miami's Latin colony as Washington prepares to negotiate a detente with Fidel Castro.

Maybe one must be a Cuban refugee to understand the total frustration that would lead a person to desecrate a monument of such solemn meaning to all of us — Latins and native Americans.

To the extent that the perpetrators, said to be long time political activists, were motivated by their outrage over the softened U.S. attitude toward Cas-

tro, their wanton act can be understood. But it can never be condoned. If they were determined to sacrifice their personal freedom to dramatize their cause, the court should accommodate them.

The Latin colony seemed as incensed by the desecration as the rest of the community, as indicated by the movement to pay for the damage. More effective, as emotions soar over the Castro issue, would be a movement to persuade the radical activists in the refugee colony that violent attacks on property or persons are criminal acts. They are not an acceptable form of protest.