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Edmundo García in Havana: «What's Bad is to be Afraid of Fear»

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After living almost twenty years in Miami, where he defended Cuba and its Revolution, Cuban journalist Edmundo García decided that Havana should be the core of his life and work.

«I returned to reside here as a cornerstone of my life and work in Cuba, but my goal is to transmit the issues of immigration, which the great majority is in Miami, from anywhere, from Cuba, from Spain... that doesn't mean that I will go into exile from Miami. I will keep travelling to Miami when they invite me to participate in any debate», he said in conversation with CubaSí which we transcribe here below:

**MHL:** Let's speak of the news. The New Herald has just given you a full column. I don't recall they mention you before...

**Edmundo García:** The New Herald mentioned me and Diario de Cuba, CiberCuba and a group of similar media follow suit, they all wanted to mention me. I posted in my Facebook that: who understands the media of Miami, because when I was there the only one who dared to invite me over, with all the wrongs and grief of sharing a TV studio with María Elvira, because she always assumed the position against my opinions, I must acknowledge that she was the only one who dared. The other ones didn't dare to debate neither to invite me. And now they want to publish my laundry receipts. They are willing to do everything or anything with me. There is even a newspaper of Miami offering money for an exclusive interview, but come to think of it, I give you the exclusive interview for free. Do you here in CubaSí pay?

**MHL:** No, we don't pay...

**Edmundo García:** I don't get it. What it does prove is that they listened to me; it's that although they didn't invite me, they were indeed aware of my existence, of my opinions, because they have referred to them and, therefore, they listened to me...

**MHL:** Could it be considered the publication of a photo where you appear next to the Five Heroes as an act of intimidation?

**Edmundo García:** On my side?

**MHL:** On their side...

**Edmundo García:** I don't know that... Well, later I published one with Raúl Castro. Look I am not afraid of fear. What's bad is to be afraid of fear. I am a transparent man and, supposedly, they should understand that I move among the standards of journalism and the life of a free man. I don't know why all the fuss. Although, in the end of the bottle, as Lezama Lima would say, it does create some intimidation.

**MHL:** You are a very peculiar émigré. You were first an economic émigré who was later politicized. You are the opposite of the old émigrés of Miami who are political émigrés. You were politicized in Miami taking Cuba's side.

**Edmundo García:** Firstly, it's good to clarify that I was always an economic émigré. I never had any problem with my ideas around the Revolution, around the history of Cuba, and I ended up in Miami for personal reasons. Now, there is no doubt that Miami gets into you. Even people who don't have it in them the public attitude because they are not journalists, because they don't have media, I believe they are awakening. I get many messages telling me that, what it meant for them to hear and see the attitude that somehow I kept, unwavering, without hesitations. Miami is a *Ñico López*. Here there is a school for the Communist Party named *Ñico López*. Because when you hear the extreme right of Miami refers to Cuba... we must remember that they began hating Fidel and Raúl... and ended up hating the people of Cuba. If you have a shred of patriotism, ideologies aside, you don't have to be communist neither socialist, you can be more capitalist than Wall Street itself, but if you have a shred of patriotism, you will reject the extreme right of Miami. They hate the Cuban people. Let's not forget the attitude of the Cuban-American congressmen, their celebration and boasting, when the measures against the Cuban families were passed when George W. Bush was in office that limited the travel of Cubans to once every three years and limited migrant remittances and so on; let's not forget the celebrations those sectors had.

I remember he was very confused Lincoln Díaz-Balart, because I was working for Univision—everybody knows what's channel 23—, and at a press conference he asked me if I wasn't going to ask any questions. It seems that I had caught Lincoln's eye, a bit of my irreverence already showed. And I told him: Look, congressman, when I hear you speak I feel a strong desire to return to Cuba and become a militiaman. That left him very confused.

**MHL:** And speaking of measures: the fabricated story about the acoustic attacks and the closing of embassies, consulates, employees... How does the ordinary Cuban of Miami see all that?

**Edmundo García:** Look, I believe is common knowledge that all that is a hoax. What's the gain for Cuba in doing that? Do they want to raise enmity with the United States? It has never been in Cuba's will to have enmity. Cuba is indeed a sovereign country. It's mutual respect. Cuba doesn't have a budget for that or Task force whatsoever to undermine the North American politics. That topic is really to please... This is Trump's commitment with Brigade 2506, with Marco Rubio, and the followers of people like Ninoska Lucrecia Pérez Castellón, Armando Pérez Roura, those oral clowns of Miami. The scientific community has disproved that. Cuba has always been very respectful. In Cuba there was always a concept of integrity, and still is, respect to the Vienna Agreements regarding diplomatic relationships. In Cuba there has always been a strict ethics in the treatment to diplomatic offices, and this comes since Fidel Castro until the President Díaz-Canel. The rumor that there is a sector of far left in the Cuban services is really an attempt to fool people...

**MHL:** And do people let themselves be fooled?

**Edmundo García:** I think that people know that it's not true. Who benefits from what you do? When you do something, somebody obtains a benefit...

**MHL:** There must be a motive...

**Edmundo García:** And which is the motive? I think that is horseplay. I am sure that within the very FBI know that that is horseplay. My personal opinion, I can't prove it—if I had how to prove it, I were Superman—, but in my personal opinion, this is a CIA operation. Let's not forget who was the former CIA director, the person who now works as Secretary of State. Let's not forget his relationship with senator Marco Rubio and let's not forget the

triangle with Donald Trump's presidency. You can't be deceived. You can be anti-Castro all you want, you can be also anticommunist, and now if you wish you can leave this part out, but from there to be an asshole, there's a long stretch.

**MHL:** Did you participate, being there, in the summoning made to Cubans to participate on the debate of the Constitution Draft?

**Edmundo García:** I was aware of the debate on the Constitution Draft. I was aware through internet of the participation of Cubans. I think is very interesting and useful that Cubans participate. And I connect that with the topic of repatriation again. I believe that Cuban emigration should have greater presence inside Cuba. More sense of normalization, better communication. The repatriation doesn't force you to return to live in Cuba. You can live where you wish, however, you start having certain rights, including the right to vote. And also, it's to settle the belonging to the roots, to strengthen the trunk to the roots.

**MHL:** While you have been here, did you see the debates on television...

**Edmundo García:** I don't know any process in the world, in the so-called democracies, and in the championships of «democracy», I don't know any referendum as the one Cuba is making in the topic of the Constitution. Summoned by Cuban authorities beginning with the first secretary of the Communist Party, the Army General Raúl Castro, to the common citizen. If anyone knows, I would like, if there has been a similar process since the Greece of the democracy until today please tell me, because in my illiteracy I don't know it.

**MHL:** And The Afternoon...

**Edmundo García:** The Afternoon Moves (La tarde se mueve) is the project I want to continue developing. Me, as presenter, my expertise is Cuban emigration. And that can be broadcasted from Cuba, from Miami, from Madrid. What I want is for my headquarters to be in Havana, but I can also spend time in Miami. Go to Miami and shoot programs, and participate in debates. I am a free electron; I am not bound to a specific geographical location. Ah, that Cuba is the natural scenario to address the emigration, of course is the best, because what I want is to magnetize the emigration with its origin. And we'll see how we can guide again The Afternoon Moves, but my main topic is emigration. And, of course, that city that I won't say that it's an illegitimate province, because I believe there are a lot of good people in Miami, most people are good, but with the attention in particular to that city, because I know it and because it really has a specific weight in the politics of the United States towards Cuba.

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